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Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

Taking shelter from the rockets

Residents of Kiryat Shmona were forced into their bomb shelters last week after Katyusha rockets were fired at their city from Lebanon. One house was badly damaged in the attack, but no one was injured. In response, the Israeli Air Force attacked a PFLP training base south of Beirut the next day. The Lebanese government criticized Hezbollah for launching the attack. *[Isranet photo]*

Israeli spies rap *Munich*

By DAN BARON
JTA

TEL AVIV — Fact may be stranger than fiction, but when it comes to espionage, fiction makes for better storytelling.

That was the conclusion drawn by many veterans of, and experts on, the Israeli intelligence service Mossad when they heard about Steven Spielberg's new thriller *Munich*, which open last month in North America.

"The basis for this film has no relation to reality, though it may be a cracking tale," said Eitan Haber, a Mossad historian.

In his portrayal of the Mossad's retaliation for the Palestinian terrorist attack on its athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics, Spielberg has drawn on George Jonas' book *Vengeance*, despite the fact it has been discredited in Israel and abroad.

The killing of senior Palestinians blamed for the Munich massacre – in a series of shootings, booby-trap bombings and commando raids in Europe and the Middle East – is beyond dispute.

What irks those few Israelis with direct knowledge of the top-secret missions is the way Spielberg's Mossad hit team functions, a depiction they say owes more to a romantic idea of the Zionist fighting ethos than to accurate historical research.

"The *modus operandi* is entirely wrong," said Gad Shimron, a former Mossad operative turned journalist.

Spielberg insists that he consulted with a former Israeli agent for *Munich*, and he opens the film with the disclaimer that it was inspired by real events.

Like *Vengeance*, Spielberg's film focuses on an Israeli assassin, Avner, who suffers a crisis of conscience over his country's reprisal policy.

Continued on page 27

20 Quebec groups urge Israel boycott

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Twenty Quebec organizations, including the Fédération des Femmes du Québec (FFQ) and the provincial union of CEGEP teachers, have endorsed a new campaign to boycott Israeli products and companies deemed to be supporting the Jewish state's "apartheid politics."

They are protesting Israel's "occupation" of Palestinian territory, the West Bank security fence and alleged Israeli violations of international law.

Jewish community officials did not react and, in fact, were not aware of the campaign at first, because its launch received no mainstream media coverage.

"I think that's the most eloquent statement – that there was no media coverage. I would call that a catastrophic failure," said Sara Saber-Freedman, the Montreal-based chief executive officer of the Canada-Israel Committee.

She doubts the campaign will have a practical impact or generate sympathy among the Quebec public.

"While not minimizing the seriousness, my sense is [boycotts] tend not to get much traction. There have been attempts like this in the past and they have settled down… Nevertheless, it is deplorable, reprehensible and wrong-headed… There is no question this kind of thing is not good for Israel and has to be countered."

FFQ president Michèle Asselin and actress/singer Carmen Ferlan, president of Les Artistes pour la Paix, were among the speakers at a media conference launching the proposed boycott, which is being led by the Coalition pour la Justice et la Paix en Palestine.

Continued on page 20

Vayigash
Candlelighting: 4:38
Havdallah: 5:15

Greater Toronto Area

Israeli defence officials warn of Al Qaeda plotting — see page 27

The News in Brief

CANADA

Rabbi Speaks to Iran

TORONTO — A leading Conservative rabbi in Toronto called for more interfaith dialogue among Canadian Muslims and Jews in an interview with a Tehran-based news agency last week. Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, senior rabbi of Beth Tzedec Congregation, Canada's largest shul, told the Iranian Quran News Agency that Jews and Muslims should see themselves as children of Abraham. "We should look for ways to overcome our differences while remaining true to who we are," Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said, repeating a message he delivered earlier in the week at the fourth annual Reviving the Islamic Spirit Convention, attended by 12,000 North American Muslims last month in Toronto.

Critics Assail Museum

WINNIPEG — A coalition calling for a national museum to commemorate all genocides is questioning Gov.-Gen. Michaëlle Jean's backing of a proposed human rights museum in Winnipeg because they say it will put too much focus on the Holocaust at the expense of other human rights abuses. Canadians for a Genocide Museum (CGM) – which says it represents 43 groups, including Greek, Ukrainian and Arab ones – wrote to Jean last month with their objections, the *Globe and Mail* reported. The Canadian Human Rights Museum was the idea of the late media mogul Israel Asper, founder of CanWest Global Communications, and his family is backing the $311 million project. Ottawa has pledged $100 million to it and Jean has agreed to be its patron. CGM wants the museum to be independent of the Asper family, its secretary James Kafieh, a former head of the Canadian Arab Federation, told the *Globe*.

Zundel Loses Case

TORONTO — Ernst Zundel's $10-million lawsuit against Ottawa for unlawful detention and deportation has been dismissed, and he was ordered to pay the Crown's costs. The Nazi propagandist said the two years he spent in jail under a security certificate was unconstitutional, but the Federal Court said he had no basis for that claim. In March, he was removed to Germany, where he was charged with inciting racial hatred. His trial was postponed when the judge fired his defence team for including a far-right figure.

WORLD

Manor in Court

TEL AVIV — Boaz Manor, co-founder of the failed hedge fund Portus Alternative Asset Management, made his first appearance in court last week as part of an effort by receiver KPMG to locate $800 million in missing investor assets. The closed-door hearing in Tel Aviv lasted more than two hours, the *Globe and Mail* reported. The OSC has laid three charges each against Manor and Portus co-founder Michael Mendelson, saying they destroyed documents and improperly sold products to investors. Manor, who fled to Israel last March when the Toronto-based firm collapsed, denies wrongdoing and has said he's mentally ill and can't answer questions.

N.O. Chanukah Relief

NEW ORLEANS — Scores of Jewish volunteers were in New Orleans over Chanukah to help clean up and provide services in areas devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Students on a Chabad Lubavitch-organized trip helped clean homes, shuls and schools, while a dozen Jewish communities donated more than 500 chanukiyot and dreidels to area families, and the American Jewish Committee donated $575,000 (US) from its Hurricane Katrina Relief Fund to four institutions. As well, a group of 18 Reform Jews, including several teens and their families, was in the city helping to repair homes. They were part of the Adult Mitzvah Corps project sponsored by the Union for Reform Judaism and Temple Shalom in Succasunna, N.J.

Comic Loses Lawsuit

PARIS — A French comic who tried to suppress passages in a new book about his anti-Semitic remarks has lost his case on appeal. Dieudonné Mbala Mbala, who has been repeatedly sued for his anti-Semitic comments, had won a case against publishing house Editions Plon, which recently published *The Truth About Dieudonné*, a book with passages discussing Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism in Dieudonné's comedy routines. Plon appealed and last month won the right to reprint the book with the suppressed passages. It plans to promote the edition as "the book Dieudonné wanted to censor."

Deportation Allowed

CLEVELAND — A U.S. judge ruled last week that John Demjanjuk can be deported to his native Ukraine. Chief U.S. Immigration Judge Michael Creppy rejected Demjanjuk's contention he would be tortured in Ukraine. Demjanjuk, 85, can appeal. Demjanjuk, who lives near Cleveland, was a guard at the Sobibor, Majdanek and Flossenburg camps, but lied about his past when he applied to enter the United States in 1952. In 1993, he was acquitted in Israel of being "Ivan the Terrible," a notorious Nazi guard.

Czechs Reportedly Talked Nukes With Iran

PRAGUE — Czech government officials secretly negotiated with Iran on possible co-operation with the Islamic regime's nuclear program, a Czech newspaper reported.

Industry and Trade Minister Milan Urban said he discussed aiding Iran's civilian nuclear aims during trade talks in early December, and top Czech politicians – including Prime Minister Jiri Paroubek – secretly negotiated with Iranian deputies on possible co-operation shortly before Iran's president called for the destruction of Israel, *Respekt* reported.

Their actions were condemned by the newspaper and by Jana Hybaskova, a pro-Israel Czech member of the European Parliament, and Josef Jarab, head of the Czech Senate's foreign affairs committee. Jarab was one of several legislators who refused to meet their Iranian counterparts.

Tomas Kraus, head of the Federation of Jewish Communities in the Czech Republic, expressed astonishment at the prospect of a Czech official discussing a commercial nuclear deal with Iran. Paroubek admitted to *Respekt* that as Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad continued making outrageous anti-Israel statements, "maybe doing business" with Iran on nuclear power "would be a problem right now."

The Canadian Jewish news

Vol. XXXVI, No. 2 (1,729)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation: 38,949 copies.
Total paid circulation: 38,099 copies.

CCNA verified circulation Sept. 7, 2005

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada: $35.95, 1 yr. incl. GST. $63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST.
U.S.A.: $100 U.S funds, 1 yr.
All other countries: $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr.

Postmaster: Please return 29Bs and changes of address to Toronto office.

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.

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Edmonton shul struck by vandals on Chanukah

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

An Edmonton synagogue that was the subject of an arson attack five years ago was vandalized with anti-Semitic graffiti last week.

Worshippers attending services at the Beth Shalom Synagogue on the morning of Dec. 25, prior to the onset of Chanukah, noticed a large black swastika drawn on the shul's west wall next to the acronym, ZOG, which was crossed out. ZOG stands for Zionist occupation (or occupied) government and is a term employed by white supremacists who believe Western governments are controlled by Jews.

"People are disturbed that these kinds of things could happen in Canada," said Rabbi David Kunin, spiritual leader of the synagogue. "It does not reflect what Canada is about but is an aberration."

Police were called to the scene and were given a digital copy of data collected by the synagogue's security cameras. "Hopefully, the tapes will reveal some information," Rabbi Kunin said.

Const. David Huggins of the Edmonton Police Service's hate crimes unit told reporters that they "haven't seen too many [cases] of graffiti where ZOG is used. The acronym is quite unique, but not the idea."

The western wall of Edmonton's Beth Shalom.

He declined to release details of the tapes, saying that might compromise the investigation.

The Edmonton hate crimes unit has recorded some successes recently. It laid the groundwork for the conviction last month of Reinhard Gustav Mueller for promoting hatred of Jews on an Internet website. Rabbi Kunin said there was no evidence to link that case with the synagogue vandalism, nor with an incident a few months ago when paint balls were hurled at the house of worship.

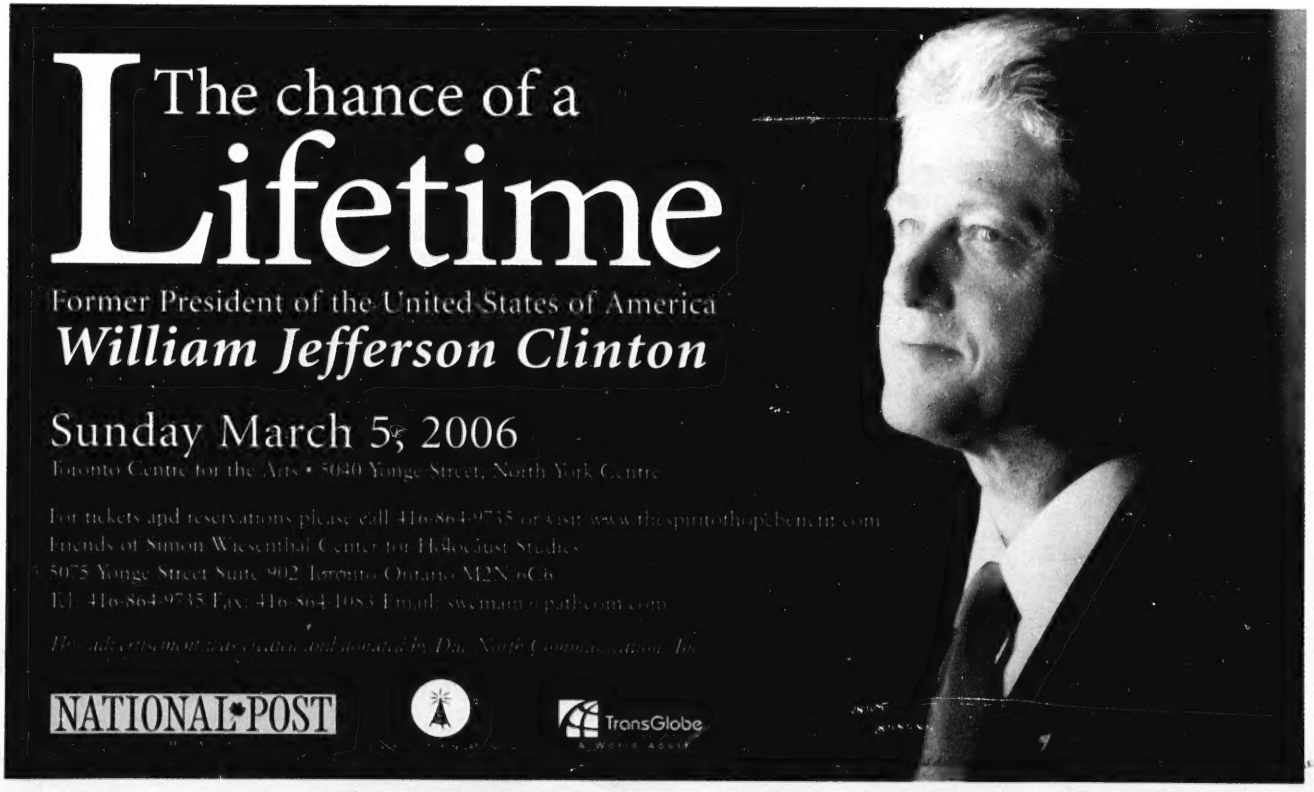
Rabbi Kunin said news of the vandalism prompted an outpouring of support from the broader community. In addition to receiving numerous phone messages, on Dec. 26, about 20 clergy and political leaders gathered outside the Jasper Avenue synagogue to stand in solidarity with the Jewish community. Representatives of Christian, Sikh and Muslim communities attended along with members of the legislative assembly and former senator Doug Roche, Rabbi Kunin stated.

In addition, Prime Minister Paul Martin condemned the anti-Semitic attack while attending a Chanukah celebration in Montreal.

"This is not Canada, what happened in Edmonton," the prime minister said. "Let us understand that and we will condemn it with every fibre of our being."

Edmonton Mayor Stephen Mandel, who is Jewish, commended the response of the city's religious community. "A great deal of credit has to go through to the leadership of each of those groups who have come together on an ongoing basis to make sure things like that don't happen. And if they do happen, they speak with one voice," he told the *Edmonton Journal*.

Rabbi Kunin suggested an education program directed at young people would prove useful. "What we're looking at is to build stronger community relations and teach young people this is not what Canada is about. Canada is a country that respects diversity and multi-ethnicity," he said.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Greater Toronto Area

Can this message bring peace?

From the editor's desk

If peace, rather than merely an end to the conflict, is ever to emerge between Israelis and Palestinians, all the educational instruments – broadly defined to include religious, cultural, political, media, labour, military, medical institutions and, of course, schools – will have to be mobilized to inculcate into Palestinian society values of tolerance and acceptance toward Jews and their right to live in Israel.

Even if the massive educational effort were to begin this month, it would take years, indeed even decades, to plant the seeds and sow the harvest of bona fide feelings of neighbourliness toward Israelis.

But such a harvest seems far away. For there is scant evidence that any seeds are being planted.

Even Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, in whom Israel and the European Union have placed so much hope, is equivocal and ambivalent toward the Israelis.

It is true that he telephoned Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to convey his best wishes to Sharon after the Israeli leader suffered a mild stroke.

But it is also true that he has never condemned Palestinian violence as unjustified or wrong or immoral or otherwise odious in its own right. Rather, he has always criticized the violence as being inimical to Palestinian interests. Indeed last week after the barrage of Qassam rockets from the Gaza Strip toward Ashkelon, those were his precise words. He condemned the rockets as being "against Palestinian interests."

The "ordinary" Palestinian would undoubtedly fully understand the intended nuanced meaning of so vacuous a condemnation of violence. With no example of positive attitudinal change toward the Israelis emanating from the highest elected political office, is it any wonder, then, that there is so little change in the vast mainstream of Palestinian society?

And we have not even taken into account the unalterably murderous attitude toward Israel and its Jews by the fundamentalist Islamic groups within that society.

Itamar Marcus and Barbara Crook of *Palestinian Media Watch*, based in Jerusalem, carefully monitor the content of newspaper, radio and television programming in the media outlets under Palestinian auspices. Last week, they reported on the broadcast of a dismaying message toward Jews in a Palestinian television program about the city of Jaffa that was telecast on Dec. 20.

"It is time for you [Israelis] to be gone. Live wherever you like, but don't live among us. It is time for you to be gone. Die wherever you like, but don't die among us. We have the past here. We have the present, the present and the future. So leave our country, our land, our sea, our wheat, our salt, our wounds. Everything. And leave the memories."

Marcus and Crook provided the context of the program's message. "These words of hate are the parting moments of yet another program on Palestinian Authority television calling for the destruction of Israel. The words, calling for the expulsion of every last Israeli from Israel, are spoken while the screen is showing Jaffa-Tel Aviv, Israelis and Israeli flags. Official PA TV has aired this twice in recent months."

The message unsubtly echoes the views of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who believes with all his heart that the Jews do not belong in the Middle East. Sadly, the Palestinian and Iranian messages are the same.

Only the Palestinians can reform their own society. It is wrong, if not also disingenuous, to suggest that the Israelis can bring about that change. But where are the signs that the majority of Palestinians even want to?

* * *

Anyone still looking for a calendar for the new year might consider acquiring *A Kindness a Day 2006 Calendar: 365 Ways to Make the World a Better Place.*

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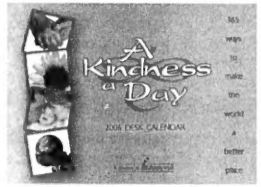


Each day is noted in both the Gregorian and Hebrew calendars and the entry in the calendar provides a suggested act of kindness for that day, as well as a reference from classic Jewish sources.

The closest approximation in English for the meaning of the Hebrew word *areyvut* in this context is mutual responsibility.

Some readers might be familiar with the rule of life propounded by our ancient sages, "*Kol Yisrael arevim zeh lazeh*," which means "All the people of Israel are responsible for each other."

Established in 2002, Areyvut uses the very meaning of its name as its mission statement. It reaches out to Jewish day schools, congregations and communities regardless of affiliation.

The calendar it has produced is handy and pleasant, and is quite possibly a modest, uncomplicated route to improving oneself along with the world. It is available through Amazon.com, JudaicaPress.com, Areyvut.org and local Jewish book and gift stores.

— MBD

SeeJN

CANDLES FOR MATTI: **For the sixth year in a row, the Jewish Russian Community Centre (JRCC) honoured Matti Baranovski by lighting Chanukah candles in his memory. Several hundred people attended a chanukiyah-lighting ceremony last week in G. Ross Lord Park, near the spot where the 15-year-old boy was killed by a teenage gang in November 1999. Rabbi Chaim Hildeshaim, JRCC's rabbi in Thornhill Woods, is speaking. Behind him from right, are Olga Baranovski, Matti's mother; Allan Shefman, a Vaughan city councillor; Minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services Monte Kwinter; Rabbi Yoseph Zaltzman, JRCC's senior rabbi; and federal Conservative candidates Anthony Reale, Michael Mostyn and Peter Coy.**
[Shlomo Vorovich photo]

Greater Toronto Area

Centre helps vision-impaired gain independence

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

There are more than 20,000 blind and vision-impaired men, women and children in Israel, but not enough resources to help them, Rena Cohen says.

Cohen, the director of development for Beit Yael, the Center for the Advancement for the Blind in Safed, said she is frustrated by the lack of support her organization receives.

"Part of the problem is that when people do become blind, they have no idea what their resources are, what is available for them," said Cohen, who was in Toronto recently to raise awareness of the centre. "There are few social workers working with the blind in Israel who really have the ability or the time to function with the blind.

"I'm trying to commission Partnership 2000 people in the different locations [to help]."

Under the Partnership 2000 program launched by the Jewish Agency for Israel in 1994, communities in Israel are twinned with cities in the Diaspora, with the goal of strengthening Israeli society.

But the organization is not interested in educating the blind, she said.

"Part of our mission is to try to make the Partnership 2000 communities aware of the needs of people within their communities who, until now, have been completely overlooked," said Cohen, who was the first Canadian to make aliyah after the Gulf War 15 years ago. She has been working for Beit Yael for six years.

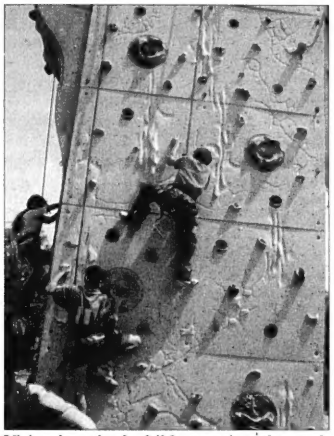
Beit Yael, which has been offering resources to help the blind gain their independence for more than 30 years, provides services that are unlike anything else in Israel or many other places in the world, she said.

"Our challenge is to empower people who are vision-impaired, whether they were born that way [or] they have become that way, and to make them capable of functioning on a dynamic basis.

"We empower people by teaching them how to walk with a cane, teaching them how to cook, teaching them to take care of themselves on a physical level and just become independent," Cohen said.

Among the services the centre offers are counselling and guidance, research, early detection and rehabilitation of blind and vision-impaired newborns, a Hebrew ulpan for low-vision and blind immigrants, and crafts and activities for the elderly with sight problems.

Beit Yael, which is strictly kosher, offers two residential programs each year, a study camp for children age nine to 13 and a residential rehabilitation program for adults over 40. Both programs run from Sunday to Thursday so that participants can go home for the weekends to experience Shabbat with their families, Cohen said.



Vision-impaired children enjoy the rock climbing wall at the summer camp program offered by Beit Yael.

She described the summer camp program. "There are about 900 vision-impaired kids in Israel of whom about 300 live in the north. We want them to have a fun kind of camp just like sighted kids.

"So we take them boating, rafting, horseback riding, on jeep tours, and we have access to a therapeutic swimming pool... They just have a wonderful time."

Although it costs about $400 to send a child to the camp, the child is only responsible for $60 and the centre raises the rest. Beit Yael gets some support from the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Israeli Government, but it relies heavily on private donations, Cohen said.

The residential rehabilitation program runs once a year, she said. "For one month, people come to live with us from Sunday to Thursday. We can take 15 people and we start with the very basics. These are people who are newly blind or going blind. There are about 2,000 people who fall into this category each year."

Once the participants are screened to ensure they are mentally prepared and are genuinely interested in the program, teachers provided by Migdal Ohr (Hebrew for "lighthouse"), an Israeli organization that provides education and social guidance to the underprivileged, begin to teach them how to cope with their disability.

"It is an incredibly rewarding job because on a daily basis, you see how important what we are doing is and the impact we have in people's lives," Cohen said, adding that about 200 people have gone through the program successfully.

"Now I have glaucoma, and I'm even more aware of the challenges faced by people who wake up one morning and don't know they have had it. It is so important to get your eyes checked," Cohen advised.

For more information about the centre, visit www.beityael.org.

SHIFTING LINES:
Can Ariel Sharon Draw the Borders of Peace and Security?

Isabel Kershner
Associate Editor, *The Jerusalem Report* and author of *Barrier: The Seam of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*

WED. JAN. 25 at 8:00 pm
Holy Blossom Temple
1950 Bathurst Street, Toronto

Isabel Kershner writes about Palestinian affairs, including political and social developments in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. She was one of the first Israeli journalists to interview Yasser Arafat, and has written in depth on such issues as the Arab minority in Israel and the Jewish settlement movement in the West Bank.

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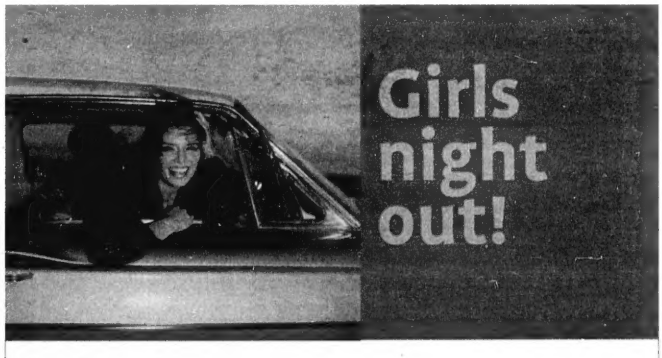

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High-profile candidates square off in St. Paul's

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

It's always humbling to re-apply for a job, says Carolyn Bennett, the incumbent MP in St. Paul's, but she's confident her constituents want her back.

Election 2006

"Some people don't want to hear about another election, but I'm pleased in terms of their support [of the Liberals]," said Bennett, a family physician who is seeking her fourth term.

Her opponents are broadcaster Peter Kent for the Conservatives, economist Paul Summerville for the New Democratic Party, and Kevin Farmer for the Green Party.

In the 2004 election, Bennett beat her nearest competitor, Conservative candidate Barry Cline, by 20,945 votes, but this year's vote could be much closer, as both Kent and Summerville are high-profile candidates.

This affluent mid-town riding includes Forest Hill and multicultural neighbourhoods along St. Clair Avenue. It's bordered by the CP Rail line, Yonge Street, Rosehill Reservoir and Moore Avenue in the south and Eglinton Avenue West, Yonge Street and Broadway Ave in the north. It also lies between Bayview Avenue in the east and Ossington Avenue, Winona Drive, Holland Park Avenue, Rogers Road and Dufferin Street in the west.

Considered a federal bellwether, St. Paul's has the second-highest average family income in Canada, a large Jewish community, and 36 per cent of its residents are immigrants, according to the 2001 census.

Bennett, appointed minister of state for public health in 2003, has served as chair of the standing joint committee on the Library of Parliament, the human resources sub-committee on the status of persons with disabilities and the Canada-Israel Parliamentary Friendship Group.

Long considered a friend of Israel, Bennett said the two countries have a "robust relationship on so many files."

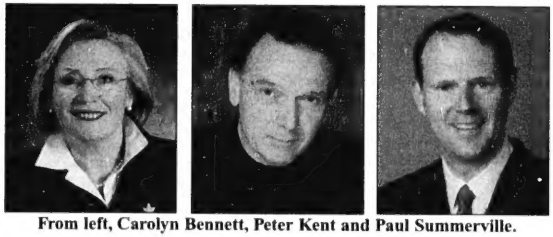
"Plans are on the way for a Canada centre for peace and democracy in the Middle East, and we're able to be helpful behind the scenes in the region. Our relationship with Israel is not foreign affairs, it is family," she added.

"With regard to [Canada's UN General Assembly votes on annual Arab-sponsored resolutions on Israel], there has been progress, but but we know that ritualized anti-Jewish resolutions have to stop," Bennett said, referring to recent change in Canada's voting pattern at the world body.

An issue close to her constituents' heart is health care, she said. "Wait times have been a talisman, but they are shrinking. Pandemic preparation and integrated disease strategy have been a fabulous beginning. Prevention of disease is the ultimate solution to wait times."

She said highlights of her party's 10-year plan to strengthen health care include shorter wait times, more doctors and nurses, expanded home care, and a national drug plan.

Another issue of concern to people in her riding is the funding of private faith-based schools, but she said, "I believe in a publicly funded system with a curriculum that teaches equity and fairness."



From left, Carolyn Bennett, Peter Kent and Paul Summerville.

Alluding to the Conservative promise to give money directly to parents for child care, she said the Liberals' national child care plan also has "flexibility" in that it "allows for the ability to fund small boutique centres [aimed at a specific heritage] such as Jewish or French."

Kent, a longtime broadcast journalist who has covered stories at home and abroad for CTV, Global, CBC and NBC, said he believes "society is evolving and so should education. The [Ontario policy of only funding Catholic and public schools] is anachronistic and offensive in today's multicultural environment. What is good for two groups should be good for all."

The Tories' first step in improving health care would involve getting "billions of federal tax dollars back into Ontario. We have to overhaul fiscal federalism," Kent said.

"We will work with the provinces to develop a health care guarantee that ensures patients receive essential medical treatment within clinically acceptable waiting times."

Hospitals have a huge amount of money tied up in bricks and mortar, he said. "If we could use this money on programs, the waiting list would be down and health care would be better."

On the issue of child care, Kent said that "the $1,200 a year [per child] we've promised to each family with children under six, regardless of income, allows for unorthodox childcare. It doesn't involve cost-heavy bureaucracy, but it recognizes that parents are the experts in deciding what is best for their children."

Kent, who has covered Israel several times in his almost 40 years in broadcast journalism – "including both intifadahs" – said Canada needs to stand up for the only democracy in the Middle East.

He accused Prime Minister Paul Martin of having a "fuzzy foreign policy that is soft on terrorism."

Summerville, an investment banker and former chief economist at RBC Dominion Securities who as a student in 1978 spent a year at Hebrew University in Jerusalem on scholarship, says that anti-Semitism in the Middle East today "is as virulent and potentially lethal as [it was in Europe in the 1920s.]

"When a leader can stand up and talk about its neighbour Israel in public and say it should be wiped off the map, that tells you something," he said, referring to recent comments by Iran's president.

Canada must guarantee the security of Israel, Summerville said, "because without it there will be no peace."

He said the NDP stresses that a strong economy and social justice are two sides of the same coin. "The investment we make in education, health care and public transportation is key to social justice."

The NDP will defend public health care in the next Parliament, he said, by refusing to permit the dismantling of Canada's single-payer medicare system; by prohibiting the use of federal transfers to subsidize a new, profit-making private insurance system covering medically necessary services; and by ensuring that no federal money is used to cover the salaries or costs of doctors or other medical personnel involved in a new, separate, profit-making private insurance system.

On the issue of funding private schools, Summerville said, "Our society is not tribal, and we should celebrate our differences. A number of faiths are represented in our public schools and we should celebrate that. [That can only be done by supporting a public system.]"

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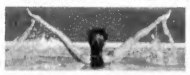

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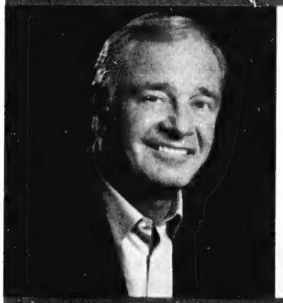

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Dry Bones
THE GOOD NEWS IS THAT, AT LONG LAST...
...THE PALESTINIANS HAVE A STATE IN GAZA!
AND THE BAD NEWS ?
IT'S A STATE OF ANARCHY.
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As Abbas weakens, extremists gain

The beginning of a new year is often accompanied by looking toward new possibilities and a sense of optimism. But optimism is decidedly not the prevailing mood in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. Indeed, there is an ominous feeling that the possibility of peaceful coexistence between the two societies, at least in the near future, is slipping away.

Anarchy is quickly encroaching upon the Palestinian-controlled territories. They are, alas, in the main, already lawless places. Last week's blotter of criminal activities included the following partial list of incidents:

• Three British citizens were kidnapped by armed Palestinian thugs in the Gaza Strip. They were the latest in a wave of kidnappings of foreign nationals there. Palestinian Authority police officers set up roadblocks throughout the area – not unlike the Israelis – to try to find the missing Britons.

• Shooting erupted near PA President Mahmoud Abbas' home in Gaza during a funeral for a police officer who was killed in clashes that erupted between two rival families.

• A Palestinian suicide bomber was thwarted in his attempt to penetrate into Israel near Tulkarm to perpetrate his bloodlust atrocity upon innocent Israeli civilians. But the Israeli army officer who stopped him at the roadblock, Lt. Uri Binamo, 21, was killed along with two other Palestinians.

• Palestinians launched a barrage of Qassam rockets toward Ashkelon and other parts of Israel from northern Gaza.

There is also distressing evidence that radical extremism is increasingly taking root in Palestinian society. *Palestinian Media Watch* reported that a poll conducted among Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza by Fafo, a Norwegian-based NGO, "to assess political feelings after Israel's voluntary withdrawal from Gaza," found that 65 per cent of Palestinians "support Al Qaeda actions in the USA and Europe." The poll results appeared in the PA daily *Al-Hayat Al-Jadida* on Dec. 23.

Abbas' refusal to assert control over the gangs of thugs and fundamentalist zealots who brutalize Palestinian society has weakened both his authority and that of the Palestinian National Council. Indeed, Abbas is openly ridiculed within his own Fatah party by its younger members. They even temporarily submitted a separate, breakaway list of Fatah party candidates for the upcoming national elections.

But the loss is not to Abbas' authority and prestige alone. It is also to his people, to the possibility that they could imminently build a society governed by the rule of law. And that is a great pity. For once again, the Palestinian leadership is squandering the opportunity that Israel and history have placed before them. Israel cannot be expected to come to an agreement on which the safety of its own citizens depends with a Palestinian governing authority that does not, or cannot, govern.

The situation leaves little room for optimism at the start of this new year.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• Canada and 15 other nations voted against a UN resolution demanding a complete and unconditional Israeli withdrawal from the "occupied areas." An External Affairs press officer said the resolution would arbitrarily impose a settlement in the region.

• John Hirsch was named artistic director of the Stratford Festival.

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Rabbi Creditor 'has it all wrong'

In "Conservative rabbi's comment sparks outrage" (*CJN*, Dec. 22) Rabbi Menachem Creditor is quoted as follows: "I believe that a movement that espouses conscious change of tradition as part and parcel of tradition cannot advocate change, legitimize a moral response to a question, and then allow the inherited tradition which posed the problem to remain a legitimate option." In my humble opinion, he has it all wrong.

The responses given to questions of Jewish law in the Conservative movement are halachic responses. Going back to the earliest of talmudic authorities, we have lived legitimately with competing interpretations of Halachah on many issues, be they moral, sociological, economic, ritualistic or otherwise. His seeming understanding of an absolute morality for the movement is the antithesis of Conservative Judaism. The inherited tradition on so many topics continues to be morally and halachically sound for many members of Conservative Judaism, as well as the larger group, Clal Yisrael, which according to Rabbi Solomon Schechter and Rabbi Robert Gordis meant all Jews who are committed to the authority of Jewish law.

Has Rabbi Creditor excluded from the halachic world not only non-egalitarian Conservative Jews but also the various segments of Orthodoxy? Are they, too, immoral in his opinion? Or are they given a deeper measure of sensitivity because they are aligned with different institutions?

Rabbi Howard Morrison
Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue
Toronto

* * *

Overreaction to Rabbi Creditor

As an ordained Conservative rabbi who grew up in Toronto and yet is not counted in most minyanim in Conservative synagogues in my home city, including the synagogue where I grew up, I am dismayed and troubled by Paul Kochberg's overreaction to Rabbi Menachem Creditor's challenge to non-egalitarian synagogues ("Conservative rabbi's comment sparks outrage," *CJN*, Dec. 22). For let us be quite honest: given that the essential characteristic of Conservative Judaism is its commitment to an evolving Halachah, the absolute refusal of some Conservative rabbis to acknowledge that our understanding of Halachah has indeed evolved when it comes to the inclusion of women in minyanim is experienced not by a few of us, and certainly not by Rabbi Creditor alone, as fundamentally based less on religious scruples than on an insistence on the preservation of male privilege – in other words, misogyny.

An Orthodox synagogue that makes no claims to evolving Halachah at least has a certain integrity. A synagogue that maintains membership in a movement that ordains women as rabbis and yet refuses to include them in a minyan, with its obligations and its privileges, is just insulting and hurtful.

Before Kochberg continues to denounce a rabbi who had the courage to speak words many of us have felt in our hearts, I would urge him to take some time to speak with Canadian Conservative women rabbis to find out the spiritual and familial costs of the exclusionary policies he so adamantly defends.

Rabbi Robyn Fryer
Chicago

* * *

Support for 'Jewish Singles World'

I was dismayed to read about the problems that Judith Weinroth and Jerry Maser were facing in finding funding for their proposed "Jewish Singles World" ("Media blitz proposed to halt population decline," *CJN*, Dec. 8). Surely it is the responsibility of the organized Jewish community to support and fund "Jewish Singles World."

We are so terrific in raising money for buildings. We improved the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre at Bloor and Spadina. We will be rebuilding the Jewish Community Centre on Bathurst Street. We will be building the new Lebovic Jewish Campus in Vaughan. Wonderful!

But where will the Jews come from to use these remarkable facilities? The Toronto Jewish community is not growing – in fact, it is declining.

We grew when the Montreal Jews came to Toronto. We grew when the Russian Jews came to Toronto. Where will our future come from?

We must find a way for 56,000 Jewish singles in Toronto to meet, fall in love, marry and have children.

Several years ago, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto set aside funds for a new initiative – Jewish continuity. Isn't "Jewish Singles World" what continuity is all about? Accordingly, it seems to me that support for "Jewish Singles World" must come from the federation, and we must start now.

Ruth Adams
Toronto

* * *

Ahmadinejad 'needs a trip to Auschwitz'

I am a Grade 12 student at Ulpanat Orot Girls' School. I cannot begin to believe how Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad could do something as absurd as even attempting to deny the Holocaust ("Political leaders condemn Iranian president," *CJN*, Dec. 22). How does he account for the loss of more than six million lives? I was a participant on the March of the Living this past May and visited numerous concentration camps. My grandfather was a Holocaust survivor. How dare someone deny such an atrocity such as this where more than six million Jews perished! I believe he needs a trip to Auschwitz.

Shira Slutsky
Thornhill, Ont.

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World Jewry today: a demographic snapshot

By LEO DAVIDS

Demographers are social scientists who study population changes and try to explain why they have happened. Jewish demographers, in particular, examine trends in the number of Jews in various countries or cities, with a view to understanding what is causing increases or declines in those totals. This essay will provide a brief overview of how Jewish demographers obtain their data, and it will also look at the shifting balance between Israeli Jewry and the Diaspora, as well as what's been happening demographically in the world Jewish family in general and Canadian Jewry in particular.

There are many data sources for this field of scientific focus, some more reliable and believable than others. The published information from Israel is very important and credible in knowing about the Jews there, as well as about aliyah to the Jewish state. For everywhere else, there is a mix of sources, including governmental data such as censuses (in Canada, one occurs every five years) and marriage records, plus Jewish communal sources such as day school enrolment figures, Jewish federation reports, academic surveys and so on.

Sometimes, one must supplement those numbers with a little guesstimation. Although one can't be sure about every detail, or about some Jewish communities where solid information is not available, there is no doubt about the overall world situation. As well, we know something about the relevant trends for Canada as a whole, and for Canadian Jews in particular.

A great deal of demographic information from every reasonable source finds its way to Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where it is extensively studied at the Institute for Contemporary Jewry. Well-known scholars such as Prof. Sergio Della Pergola are in touch with all major Jewish communities around the world, and they provide annual overviews on the Jewish population picture that try to deal with current realities and the underlying factors and causes involved, as well as project what is expected for the various cities and countries throughout the Diaspora. Although there are always problems with missing or unreliable information when these analyses and forecasts are prepared, experts in the field are confident that the "big picture" is clear, based on the available scientific evidence.

One key fact about the world's Jewish population is the increasing proportion of Israeli Jews compared to Jews in the rest of the world (what we call the Diaspora). In 1948, when the modern Jewish state was established, the Jewish population there was a tiny fraction of the world's Jewish population. Only about five per cent of world Jewry lived in Israel at that time. However, continuing aliyah from many sources – such as the displaced persons camps of post-Holocaust Europe, Jews fleeing from Arab countries such as Iraq, and a small numbers of idealistic Zionists from North America and other prosperous lands – has boosted the number and percentage of Jews in Israel compared to the rest of the world.

Recently, close to one million immigrants arrived from the former Soviet Union (not all of whom are Jewish). The bottom-line result of these population flows is a Jewish population in Israel that stands today at about 5.25 million people and constitutes not less than 40 per cent of the world's Jews, and it is growing steadily. Given the ongoing shrinkage of Jewish populations elsewhere, which we will be discussing shortly, it's anticipated that Israeli Jews will constitute more than 50 per cent of the world's total quite soon, probably within the next decade.

What is the big picture concerning Jewish population in the Diaspora? To be brief about it, the numbers are not very encouraging. The overwhelming majority of Diaspora communities are facing serious population declines, as the number of deaths is greater than the number of births. This is not the case in Israel, where the Jewish and other populations continue to grow. But in New York, Miami or Montreal, the Jewish family is losing ground and the population is either static or shrinking.

Why is this happening?

The major literature studying these issues tells us that the trends toward late marriage, small families, same-sex and other alternative family forms, more divorce, and other such life choices now common throughout the developed world are also appearing strongly among Jews. Although the Orthodox and haredi sectors appear to be somewhat immune to these phenomena, most younger Jews are very much part of the societies they live in, and they have participated fully in the cultural movements and trends of recent years. The Orthodox and haredi sectors live by different values, however, and are producing a growing percentage of Diaspora Jewish children.

Young Canadians visit Israel under the auspices of birthright Israel, a successful program which the author points to as an example of communal leaders taking new approaches to the problems facing world Jewry. [Israel photo]

So, a major part of the story we hear in Jewish population reports is simply the Jewish angle on what is going on throughout the nations and cultures of the developed world.

On the other hand, a big part of our story has to do with intermarriage. As readers of *The CJN* know, Jews have been increasingly marrying "out" in most countries over the past century. Nowadays, this is very common and well-tolerated by most people and communities, and rarely does anyone really demand or expect the conversion of a gentile partner. Whereas there was once much distress and resistance when intermarriage was pending, most Jewish parents today take such news without visible agitation or unhappiness, and few of us are particularly upset at incorporating non-Jews into our families. About half of American Jews now marry an unconverted non-Jewish partner.

From a population standpoint, all this is not good news. Years ago, some researchers thought we might break even as a result of intermarriage trends, gaining about as many Jewish grandchildren as we lose. But more recent studies indicate that we are losing ground in these transactions: most children and grandchildren of mixed unions (that is, with no conversion) consider themselves not Jewish, whatever their halachic status may be. In reality, therefore, the trend toward the free choice of marriage partners and mates has cost us dearly at the collective level, as the number of Jewish offspring declines. Converts to Judaism have long been appreciated, but the general absence of such a commitment these days means population shrinkage for the Jewish people.

The double whammy of high intermarriage and low birth rates, it must be remembered, is largely a Diaspora reality. In Israel, births are far greater in number, and marrying out of the faith is not common among Jews. Thus, the Jewish demographic picture in Israel is generally positive, and there are more Jews there every year due to natural increase, apart from immigration.

But what is the Jewish population situation here in Canada?

For Canada as a whole, population shrinkage is a constant threat, as both the national birth and marriages rates are at historic lows, and immigration accounts for some two-thirds of current overall population growth. As well, the average age of Canadian society is rising, as is the case in all industrialized societies.

Canada's Jewish population is also not growing, despite a small flow of immigrants to our Canadian communities. Between 1991 and 2001, the number of people in Canada citing Judaism as their religion rose by less than four per cent, which is not much over a 10-year span. Jews from Argentina, France, Iran and other countries are still coming here, but not in large numbers. We are coping quite well with these new arrivals, but they are not changing the overall Jewish population picture at present. The number of deaths in our community is about the same as (or slightly higher than) the number of births, so the total Jewish population is going in the same direction as the population of Canada as a whole – toward shrinkage in the near future without immigration to sustain it. However, Canada is maintaining its demographic health by receiving hundreds of thousands of immigrants each year, while the number of immigrants to our Jewish community is nowhere near that.

So, the underlying cultural and domestic realities for Jewish demography are well known: many mature singles who are not producing offspring; two-career, highly educated couples with small families; many young, Canadianized Jews who marry gentile classmates from high school, university, or professional circles; and a lack of interest among younger parents in things Jewish.

The insanely high cost of a Jewish day school education is certainly not helping matters, particularly as a majority of Canadian Jewish children live in the Toronto area, where the provincial government gives religious schools – apart from Roman Catholic ones – no funding at all. As well, the Jewish community's financial support for Toronto-area day schools is not yet sufficient.

So, the Jewish population is of high average age and has relatively few children. As well, many mixed-faith offspring are not being raised as Jews, and although a few find their way into our ranks later, we are not winning this battle. Little is being done within the community to address these challenges in an effective and large-scale manner, despite the dire outlook for the future of Canadian Jewry. And perhaps not much can be done without finding new and very substantial resources to support Jewish matchmaking, young parents and education.

However, the successful program birthright israel, which takes Jewish young people on free trips to Israel, has shown that new approaches and programs can achieve a great deal when supported by a strong coalition of communal leaders. We need the vision and resolve to act together in order to meet our demographic challenges – once we recognize what is happening and stop the denial. This is not a situation that lends itself to a quick fix. It will be, rather, a multi-generational struggle for survival.

Some very good ideas have been proposed, including strong outreach to Jewish singles through the Internet (as reported last month in *The CJN*), but our UJA donations are still supporting business as usual, rather than innovative programs to cope with this crisis. Something significant needs to be done about the community's demographics, and soon.

Leo Davids is a professor emeritus of sociology at York University.

Opinions

On the threshold of a new year

As I write this column, it is still 2005. When you read it, it will be 2006. Although Jews may celebrate the new year in September and do not accept the Christological meaning of the date, we are still part of the secular world and this transition to a new date on the Gregorian calendar can be momentous and worthy of note.

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

Facing a new year requires some form of preparation and/or reflection. We humans habitually mark the significant transitions in our lives. We have very clear and important ceremonies to mark our life-cycle passages at birth, puberty, marriage and death. As studied by social scientists, we see that life-cycle rituals – or *rites de passages* – come in diverse forms and configurations, but are ever present. Being on the threshold of a new experience, a change in social status or membership, and facing the unknown, seems to necessitate some form of ritual or formal notation.

So marking the new year is an appropriate activity. But how do we note calendrical passages? Many people will have parties or watch a traditional program on TV. Surely that is the purpose of New Year's resolutions. Yet, it seems to me that we do not take these moments seriously. It is fitting that some people celebrate with parties and great joy in welcoming the new year. It signifies their optimism and hope for the new and the improved. We will do better!

But seriousness is also required. Just as we celebrate a wedding with great joy, and all the seven blessings recited emphasize the joy and gladness of the couple, so too we recognize the significance and even gravity of the marriage act. Two people are changing their lives forever and the wedding ceremony notes this transition with both cheerfulness and contemplation.

At Rosh Hashanah, Jews try to face the year ahead with that dual sense of joy and gravity. We are hopeful that the new year will be granted to us with health and happiness. We also take the time to look back at our performance, atone for mistakes and pledge improvement. Thresholds of all sorts involve this dual mode. Undeniably, they require reflection.

Accordingly, I am sitting here and wondering at the speed of time, the flow of the years and my own aging process. I am worried about my own mortality. (I have been to too many funerals lately.) But at the same time, I rejoice in this life and look to this new year for growth, accomplishments, friendship and love. Perhaps writing this column is part of my ritual process: taking the time to reflect on my life, on transitions in general, and on my hopes for the future.

Salvation and damnation at the movies

Maybe it's something in the water, or air pollution, but the recent search for theological authority in Hollywood movies has to be explained.

Folks, these are movies. They are made, for the most part, by people who do not believe in organized religion. Mel Gibson is an exception – I'll come back to him in a moment. I'm talking here about the endless media focus on whether a particular film gives a Christian – or demonic – message.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

Take for example the *Lion, Witch and Wardrobe*. This children's story, which my daughter found too boring to read, is being held up as either a prime example of the Christianity of its author, C.S. Lewis, or a subtle attack on that same religion by its inclusion of all kinds of pagan creatures.

My take on the movie? It's loud, long and has lots of special effects. It also demonizes women – see the wicked white witch – or makes them subservient to the boys in the picture. Jesus as a lion? Give me a break. It's Satan who "goes about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." Plus, Lewis clearly had some serious issues with women, but let's not go there.

Or take Harry Potter. Now there is a continuing story that I love. But the books and movies no more promote Satan worship, or witchcraft, than my Aunt Susie. So when the Christian right starts howling about how evil Harry Potter is, you have to wonder what they're smoking.

One final example: The early *Star Wars* films – the old ones with neat characters like Han Solo, Obi-Wan Kenobi, and Yoda – could be easily viewed as a subversive attempt at promoting Jewish values. How? Just look at the Force. It can be good, when wielded by Obi-Wan, or evil, when the dark side takes hold of Anakin Skywalker and turns him into Darth Vader. (Stop laughing, you in the back row.)

How is this Jewish? By having the *yetzer hatov*, the good inclination, face the *yetzer hara*, the evil inclination, that's how. Judaism teaches that these two forces exist within all of us, and we choose between them. So with a wave of my wand, I've turned some good rollicking cinema into a theology lesson.

I can only wonder how our society has come to such a point that it needs to look to movies to validate its salvation. What are people really looking for that they must seek it while inhaling popcorn?

With Mel Gibson, you have an answer. Gibson, who finds the current Catholic Church too liberal, has the means and motive to make a slasher flick starring Jesus as a way to trumpet his brand of Christianity, and he makes no apology for this. So you know what you are getting with him. I can hardly wait to see what he does with his latest project, a film about the Holocaust.

But how to explain the explosion of discussion around other cinematic theologies?

An answer came to me when I read about the Christian right's latest boycott of stores that were not sufficiently "Christmasy" and dared to wish people "Happy Holidays." Or when I read that anti-gay groups were targeting a local credit union, VanCity, because it pitched its ads to gay and lesbian groups. This is not about Jesus, or Christianity or devil worship or witchcraft or gays. It's about power.

The more North America becomes a multi-ethnic and multi-religion society, the more the old-timers feel threatened. The more we are different, the more the Christian right wants us to be the same. They will do anything, including making ludicrous claims about films and advertisements, to make those of us who stand a bit apart feel the weight of being non-Christian.

By exerting the power of boycott, intimidation and raucous slander, they appear to be the ones in charge – the real citizens of goodwill. That leaves the rest of us to either shout louder, by which we reveal our own, undeserving agendas, or keep our heads down until the storm passes.

This trend comes perilously close to revealing ugly prejudices. Finding no way to express themselves openly by saying "your religion, your immortal soul, is damned," the Christian right says it in other ways, indirectly, and with the full force of religion behind them.

Broadening horizons one paper clip at a time

We each live in multiple communities. Most readers of *The CJN* naturally belong to a Jewish community. At the same time, we're part of large urban or small rural communities, which, in turn, are part of the larger Canadian community. And, with the pervasive influence of the powerful North American media machine, we also are an integral part of our continental and global communities.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

With these highly integrated and overlapping communities, one would think that our fellow North Americans would share a certain core knowledge of history and have something in common with our view of the world.

This, of course, is not the case. Take, for example, Whitwell, Tenn., a small town with a population that is almost entirely white and Christian. It's a community where teaching the science of evolution in school might lead to a teacher's reprimand or outright dismissal. Tennessee was, of course, the site of the famous Scopes trial, which pitted believers in evolution against those who subscribed to creationism.

Like hundreds of similar communities throughout the American south, and indeed throughout much of the United States, Whitwell is a town whose citizens coalesce around the influence of football played by youngsters from almost every level of the school system.

Whitwell is also a place that has gained considerable attention as a result of courageous and visionary teachers and students at the Whitwell Middle School. Led by principal Linda Hooper and assistant principal David Smith, the school embarked on an ambitious and unprecedented project to teach the Holocaust to students in a community that had never heard of the Shoah and whose members had never even met a Jewish person. In fact, in a word-matching exercise at school, students related the term "Jew" to Jesus.

In order to promote an understanding of the enormity of the Holocaust, Hooper and Smith proposed the collection of six million paper clips – one for each Jew murdered in the Holocaust. The project grew beyond the school's expectations and amassed some 11 million paper clips, representing all the victims of the Nazis, Jews and others.

The project also attracted a great deal of attention, including from the motion picture industry. This led to the production of *Paper Clips*, a highly acclaimed 2004 documentary. The film received positive reviews, widespread accolades and many awards. It also led to a permanent exhibit in Whitwell, where the paper clips are displayed in a World War II German rail car that has become a striking part of the exhibit.

Paper Clips has been screened throughout North America, including in several Canadian cities. In fact, the Toronto Jewish Film Festival brought Smith, the assistant principal, to discuss the project and the film with members of the Toronto Jewish community.

There are many significant aspects to the paper clips project and movie. First, it's clear that there are many North American communities where people are not aware of the Holocaust and where its history is not taught in schools.

Secondly, the project reminds us that with the will and energy of administrators, teachers and students, the lessons of the Holocaust need not be lost to a large segment of the North American population.

Thirdly, while the Holocaust itself is stark evidence of the dark side of human nature, *Paper Clips* reminds us that there are positive and uplifting sides of the human experience. As Smith explained, there was significant parental and community support throughout the project.

Finally, and most importantly, the project shows how all communities are capable of embracing a forward-looking approach to issues of diversity, acceptance and, indeed, human rights.

There are other instances of communities working together to embrace the notion of acceptance and support for minorities. *Paper Clips* is the most recent example of the potential of all communities to confront historical reality and share in the life experiences of their continental and world neighbours.

The Kirshner File

Letter from France

The Théâtre Des Champs-Elysées in Paris glows in the dark, casting light on Avenue Montaigne, an elegant street whose sleek, upscale shops bear such eye-catching names as Dior, Prada, Valentino, Louis Vuitton and Harry Winston. The five-storey Canadian embassy building is close by, and the iconic Eiffel Tower glimmers enticingly in the distance.

Sheldon Kirshner in Paris

On this chilly night in the City of Lights, Parisians line up to watch a live performance of *La Flute Enchantée* (*The Magic Flute*), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's passionate, playful opera. The thirtysomething performers, dressed in contemporary clothes, put on a rousing show. There is thunderous applause as they take their bows and the curtain falls.

Avenue Montaigne, a symbol of the bourgeois comforts and delights of a historic and cosmopolitan city, is far from the bleak *cités*, the low-income public housing projects in the troubled northern suburbs of Paris.

Late last autumn, in the worst civil unrest France has endured since the 1968 student revolts, the youthful inhabitants of depressed *cités* such as St. Denis, Clichy-sous-Bois and La Courneuve went on a violent three-week rampage, torching thousands of cars and burning hundreds of buildings. The riots – spearheaded by disaffected, alienated Arabs and Africans from mostly immigrant families – spread throughout France, greatly embarrassing the French government. Facing the spectre of a European intifadah, Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin and his interior minister, Nicolas Sarkozy, clamped down, declaring a three-month state of emergency.

These events brought into sharp relief a whole host of simmering social problems that France may have underestimated or misunderstood. The have-not residents of *cités* are shackled by an unemployment rate that is twice the national average and are victimized by various forms of discrimination, said Marilou Jampolsky, the press secretary for SOS-Racisme, an organization dedicated to fighting racial prejudice and improving conditions for immigrants and their offspring.

It goes without saying that these embittered youths in the drab suburbs have not been properly integrated into French society. As a result, France, which regards itself as a secular bastion of human rights and a beacon of egalitarian ideals, all rooted in the 1789 revolution, has an immense problem on its hands.

France responded to the rioting by tougher policing and with belated promises to defuse the grievances in the *cités*, some of which have been breeding grounds for Islamic radicalism and anti-Semitism. But Jampolsky is skeptical that the government really means business, claiming it has not seriously addressed the grievances of the rioters. "It's blah blah blah," she said cynically.

Significantly, though, the riots did not affect France's Jewish community, the largest in Europe, with a history dating back to Roman times. True, two synagogues in the Paris suburbs of Pierrefitte and Garges-les-Gonesses were attacked, but the rioters do not appear to have known that they were shuls.

Until quite recently, French Jews were the objects of a flurry of anti-Semitic attacks, which broke out after the second Palestinian uprising began in September 2000. Synagogues, schools and institutions were subjected to random attacks, as were individuals, especially Orthodox Jews. Many of the perpetrators were identified as North African Arabs from the *cités*.

The Jewish intellectual Alain Finkielkraut drew flak by alluding to their religion and ethnicity. His comments caused outrage because religious affiliation is supposed to be a private matter in France. Having breached a sacrosanct republican convention, he apologized for having singled out Muslims, who comprise roughly 10 per cent of France's 60 million people.

Nonetheless, the consensus in the Jewish community is that Muslims, both Arabs and Africans, have been largely responsible for the recent wave of assaults, with neo-Nazis having played a secondary role. The conventional wisdom is that Muslims have lashed out against Jews to avenge the deaths of Palestinians in the intifadah and to register their disgust with their lowly status in France.

I discussed that sensitive and explosive issue with Haim Musicant, the director general of the Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France (CRIF), France's equivalent of Canadian Jewish Congress.

"I have a feeling that Muslims used the intifadah as a pretext to attack Jews," said Musicant, whose utilitarian office is just blocks away from the former offices of *Le Monde*, France's premier daily, as well as an unobtrusive bookshop specializing in Quebec literature. As far as he is concerned, Muslims have scapegoated Jews in retaliation for the discrimination they have encountered in French society when seeking jobs and housing.

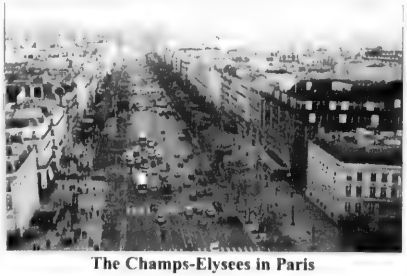
Not surprisingly, Musicant is worried about the rising phenomenon of Islamic fundamentalism. "There are networks of radical Muslims in France," he said. "This is a problem not only for Jews but for the French Republic."

As worrisome as anti-Semitism has been lately, it pales into relative insignificance compared to the past century. The Dreyfus affair, which converted the assimilated Viennese journalist Theodor Herzl into a political Zionist, polarized France. It was the cause of the formal division of church and state in France in 1905, a defining moment in modern European history.

Like Germany, France has produced a steady stream of anti-Semitic agitators, from Charles Maurras and Maurice Barres to Edouard Drumont and Henri de Rochefort.

In 1936, when France's first Jewish prime minister, Leon Blum, introduced his government, a parliamentarian named Xavier Vallat, said, "To govern this peasant nation of France, it would be better to have someone whose origins, however modest, lie deep in our soil, rather than a subtle talmudist."

By no coincidence, Vallat became a top official in the pro-Nazi Vichy regime, which governed France from 1940 to 1944 and worked closely with Nazi Germany in the deportation of tens of thousands of Jews.



(Sheldon Kirshner photo)

The Champs-Elysees in Paris

Despite these black clouds, there was a silver lining: France was the first European country to offer Jews full citizenship and emancipation.

Since the 19th century, France has produced a dazzling array of Jewish luminaries in a multiplicity of fields: Pierre Mendes-France and Simone Veil in politics; Henri Kagan and François Jacob in science; Henri Bergson and Jacques Derrida in the social sciences; Sarah Bernhardt and Claude Lelouch in theatre and film; Jacques Offenbach and Camille Pissarro in music and art; Marcel Proust and Romain Gary in literature; Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber and Anne Sinclair in journalism; Bernard-Henri Levy and Paul Celan in philosophy and poetry; and Andre Citroen and Edmond James de Rothchild in business. Last month, Alexandra Rosenfeld, 19, was crowned Miss France for 2006.

No one here is sure of the precise size of the community. "The last exact figure was arrived at in the early 1940s, when Jews had to register with the police," Musicant explained. Today, France is home to about 600,000 to 700,000 Jews. Half live in and around Paris and many of the rest in cities such as Marseilles, Lyons, Toulouse and Strasbourg.

Since 50 per cent of French Jews are of Middle Eastern, Spanish or Portuguese origin, France has the world's biggest agglomeration of Sephardi Jews after Israel.

When the yoke of the Nazi occupation was lifted in 1944, 180,000 Jews lived in France. From 1945 to 1948, more than 35,000 Jewish refugees, all European Holocaust survivors, poured into France. North African Jews from Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria streamed into France in the 1950s and 1960s, revitalizing the community. The Algerian Jews were French citizens, having acquired their nationality by virtue of the 1870 Cremieux decree. In the past decade, an additional 2,000 Moroccan Jews have joined them. "It took them about 20 years to find their footing," said Musicant of the North African Jews.

Jews from the former Soviet Union have not settled in France. "They were not of French culture," Musicant noted. "They felt the gates were open in Germany."

He claimed that the vast majority of Jews are confident they have a bright future in France, notwithstanding the anti-Jewish attacks since 2000 and the subtle anti-Semitism of right-wing politician Jean-Marie Le Pen.

Yet, a trickle of Jews are leaving France. On average, 2,000 have emigrated per year since 1995, most having made aliyah. But a growing number have immigrated to Quebec, according to Miguel Banet of Montreal's Jewish Immigrant Aid Society. JIAS processed 58 French arrivals in 2001 and 96 in 2002. In 2003 and 2004, the figures jumped to 206 and 430, respectively. Last year, JIAS handled 580 applicants from France.

These are not alarming statistics by any means, but they suggest that a small minority of Jews feel ill at ease in France.

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Jewish Life

Every Jew counts

By RABBI AVRAHAM E. PLOTKIN

RABBINICAL REFLECTIONS

The census taker was canvassing a neighbourhood. At one house, he was met by a chassidic mother of many children.

"How many children live here?" he asked.

"Well, there's Mendy, Chaim, Sara, and..."

"Never mind the names," he interrupted. "Just give me the number."

"They haven't got numbers mister," she insisted. "Every one of them has a name. Every one counts."

The story of Joseph and his brothers in this week's parshah has been widely popularized. After being betrayed by his brothers and sold into slavery, Joseph miraculously becomes the viceroy of Egypt. Jacob, his father, is under the impression that Joseph was dead and is initially doubtful about the turn of events. Only upon seeing the royal chariots that Joseph sends to him is Jacob convinced that his son is alive, and his spirit was revived.

What was it about these royal chariots that revived him? What convinced him they were Joseph's royal chariots and not a hoax? And even if Joseph was physically alive, what assurance did Jacob have that he was spiritually alive?

According to the medieval commentator Rashi, it was not the chariots themselves but rather a message encoded within them from Joseph that impressed Jacob.

You see, the last Torah lesson that Jacob taught Joseph just before his abduction was about finding the body of a murdered person whose killer is unknown and the associated ritual of "eglah arufah." (The Talmud says the patriarchs studied the Torah even before it was given to us.) The Hebrew word for chariot, "agalah," is almost identical to the word "egla." By sending his father chariots, he was reminding him of their mutual secret – the last piece of Torah they studied privately together. Only the real Joseph would have known this.

It was also a message about Joseph's spiritual wellbeing: After all these years, he was still thinking of the Torah that he and Jacob studied together before their tragic separation. Joseph may have become the viceroy of Egypt, but he was very much spiritually alive.

The secret message gets even deeper: The ancient murder mystery ritual, while being one of the most misunderstood rituals of Judaism, contains some of the most sensitive and moral teachings of the entire Bible. The ritual was to be performed by the elders of the city closest to the body found on the roadside. They were obliged to come out wash their hands and recite the words: "Our hands did not spill this blood."

Rashi asks the obvious question: "Is there even a remote possibility that the elders killed this poor soul found on the roadside?" Of course not. Yet the elders take responsibility for his death because perhaps they failed to offer him food or to escort him. This is the Jewish way: true Jewish leaders take responsibility for every Jew, even for the lost soul found dead on the roadside. Everyone counts.

This was Joseph's profound and comforting message, encoded in his royal chariots, that he sent to his aging father: "You can be very proud of me father. I have internalized our last Torah lesson. I have not become the self-centred Egyptian monarch you expected. Rather, I have grown into an altruistic Torah-Jew, basing my kingdom on the Jewish teachings I have studied with you. Like the elders of old, I have a sense of responsibility for the simple man on the street. My kingdom is predicated on the principle that 'everyone counts.'"

A Jew from Panama once wrote a letter to the Lubavitcher Rebbe and signed it as "A small Jew from Panama." The Rebbe promptly responded that there was no such thing as a small Jew. On another occasion, a philanthropist told the Rebbe about his outreach activities to Jews with no Jewish background. The Rebbe responded "No background? Every Jew is a child of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!" The Rebbe's message, echoing our parshah, is clear: Every Jew – scholar or ignoramus, rich or poor, religious or not – counts!

It is written that the Mashiach will gather every single Jew from exile. At that time, we will appreciate the value of every Jew and understand that we are not mere numbers, like our enemies or statisticians would have us believe. Having a Godly soul within us, we are each an integral part of Am Yisrael. In the end of days, no Jew will be left behind, because every Jew counts.

Rabbi Plotkin is spiritual leader of Chabad Lubavitch of Markham.

Thinking outside the ortho-box

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

Guest Voice

I'm now officially numb to Toronto's Orthodox community. It happened during a Shabbat meal a few weeks back when two friends of mine proudly denounced an enlightened and well-respected member of the Orthodox community – someone we all knew – as "non-religious."

Now, my buddies readily admitted that said individual kept strictly kosher and adhered to the laws of Shabbat, as set out in the Orthodox tradition. They were even pretty sure that he prayed three times a day. What possible reason, then, could they have to lash out in such a disgraceful manner?

"It's his ideas," explained one. "They're too modern."

What they meant is that this "non-religious" person looks at our tradition with a view that looks beyond the shtetl and the haredi yeshiva to see what Orthodox Judaism means today. And any lens that hints of the current, this reasoning goes, is too modern a lens.

It was a shocking outburst, one made all the more chilling by the realization that the diatribe was not an isolated attack: my friends didn't come up with the idea themselves – that kind of independent thought would have, in and of itself, been too modern.

For whatever reason, modern Orthdoxy – whatever that means – is no longer in vogue. There was a time not too long ago when the idea of a modernized Orthodox movement was something Jews could proudly – and publicly – strive for. But we seem to have lost the will to seek out the next act in our tradition. We're apparently satisfied with what we've got.

Borethodoxy. That's what I've been calling it lately.

That's why a new minyan in the city, for now generically (or, perhaps prophetically) nicknamed the "Toronto Minyan," is so refreshing. This fledgling shul, which has so far organized three Saturday morning services, dubs itself Orthodox egalitarian, incorporating, as the name suggests, participation from both men and women into the traditional Orthodox prayer service. And it's all done with encouragement from several Orthodox rabbis around the world (you can find a number of essays and detailed research on the topic on the Internet).

Men and women are granted equal opportunity to read from the Torah and be called up for an aliyah, to lead the congregation in the prayers of *Psukei D'zimrah*, as well as those before the scroll is taken from the Ark and when it is returned to it, and to recite a d'var Torah during the post-service kiddush.

More important than the almost-equal-opportunity agenda (there are still some things women can't do, such as lead the congregation for Shacharit and Mussaf) is the air of newness that has struck the participants – that fresh new minyan scent. Everybody is there because they want to be, a phenomenon that's foreign to any other service I've ever attended, and everyone seems to be having fun as well. Most, I think, realize that an "ortho-egal" alternative opens traditional Orthodoxy to a new generation that recognizes the value worldly ideas such as tolerance, equality and equal opportunity can contribute to Orthodox Judaism.

Others in our city have also taken up the cause to break new ground. Torah in Motion continues to run lectures, symposia and study programs that seek to understand how Judaism fits into everything else around it (and vice versa). And this past October, a Toronto-born graduate student at Boston University launched a new blog called "Divrei Torah Not For the Shabbos Table" (see shabbostable.blogspot.com) that questions traditional interpretations of the weekly Torah portion.

The Toronto Minyan is a step in the right direction, and a necessary one in a city that runs for cover under a mind-numbing security blanket of tradition each time someone has the guts to whisper the word "modern."

Yoni Goldstein lives in Toronto.

Jewish Life

Renewing old-time volunteerism

By ROBYN TOUSSON

Guest Voice

When I first began working at Ve'ahavta: the Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee as the manager of volunteer programs a year and a half ago, my boss, Avrum Rosensweig, asked me how I was going to bring Judaism into the volunteer department. When I looked at him blankly, he sent me on an educational journey. He gave me names and phone numbers of community leaders, rabbis and others, and told me to ask as many questions as possible and seek different perspectives. I went on my way.

One of the things I learned was that in ancient Hebrew, there is no word to translate the English word "volunteer." Now, how can this be? Were the great sages that we so often speak of, Abraham, Miriam and Moses, our Jewish ancestors, not active citizens who fought for the betterment of humankind? Surely they must be the forefathers and foremothers of volunteerism. So why was there no biblical reference to volunteerism?

I met with a couple of people and was disappointed that no one could directly answer the question, "What does Judaism say about volunteerism?" I expected a myriad of references to Torah and Talmud, ancient lessons and anecdotes passed down from the generations before us. I knew so many Jews who made volunteerism a priority in their lives. So I kept wondering why no one could provide a direct answer to the question.

And then one day, I spoke to Rabbi Benjamin Hecht, the Toronto-based founder of Nishma, a Torah study and educational outreach institute (www.nishma.org). He explained that there was no such thing as volunteerism in the days of Torah. The Torah does not mention volunteerism. The reason for this, he said, was that volunteerism was everywhere. It was the foundation of life and was organically interwoven into the fabric of Jewish life. Ah ha! I thought.

Organic volunteerism is the kind that need not recruit, interview and train. It requires no evaluation or recognition, no hierarchy or institution. It need not be squeezed into an already over-scheduled life Nor is it the kind that functions to create purpose and meaning in a large and sometimes lonely world.

It is the kind of volunteerism that wakes up each morning and showers the ground with sprinkles of light as it moves through the day. It sends ripples into the waters and shoots rays to the heavens. It passes each person while caressing his or her back with a gentle hand. This is old-time volunteerism, ancient and sweet, common and easy, ingrained and internalized.

It is my hope that we will return to volunteerism like this and include it in everything that we do – work, play, relationships and community. I encourage you to think about what this would mean for us and what we would be required to do to change our lives and reacquaint ourselves with biblical "volunteerism," as well as how we could teach our kids this way of life.

And I encourage you to think about how today, and every day after today, we are going to slowly adapt our attitudes toward giving so that giving is more common, more instinctive and less calculating. More fluid and less scheduled, more organic and less institutionalized. Over the past couple of years, I've seen the change happening in my generation and others as well. It's exciting, and something to start feeding every chance we get.

robyn@veahavta.org

Gefilte Fish on the web – Part 1

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

It may not have the sweet aroma of freshly baked challah. Or the medicinal qualities of a bowl of piping hot chicken soup. But love it or not, gefilte fish has made quite a mark on Jewish culinary life. Today, gefilte fish on the web.

Miriam Silver sums up the gefilte fish dilemma perfectly in an article in the Santa Rosa *Press Democrat*. Although fish is symbolic of fertility and prosperity and has magical qualities in Jewish mysticism, "the ground-up, stuffed, over-cooked and cold gefilte fish has taken on a less glamorous sheen. It was a product, perhaps, of the shtetl culture – peasant Jews in the old country who probably used whatever fish was left over, ground it up and boiled it in a stock of old fish heads and bones. It was labour-intensive and did not always seem worth it. Fast forward to contemporary U.S.A. with its fast-food convenience culture and those oval, gray fish balls, mass-manufactured, tanked in a jar, swimming in jelly, along with a few old cooked carrots." But people are rediscovering those old recipes and inventing new ones. **[http://tinyurl.com/7gtsd]**

But why gefilte fish and why the Jews? In an excellent article in Jewish Heritage online magazine, Claudia Rosen examines the talmudic sources that brought fish to the Sabbath table and the cultural ones that made salt herring so popular on the other days of the week. "Gefilte fish evolved as a Sabbath dish because stuffing gives it glamour and because certain versions eliminate the need to remove bones [which could be considered a forbidden activity on the Sabbath]." **[http://www.jhom.com/topics/fish/gefilte.html]**

Wikipedia, the free online dictionary, points out that the ground-up fish paste would be stuffed ("gefilte") into a whole fish. But "somewhat ironically," in much modern preparation, including commercial preparation, the whole fish-stuffing step is omitted. **[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ge filte_fish]**

Gefilte fish may not be the number 1 Jewish food to come to mind. But Matthew Goodman writes in a wonderful article in *Forward* that in the 1920s, French food writer Edouard de Pomiane observed of jellied carp, "This is the classic carp dish as it appears on all the Sabbath luncheon tables. If one had to sum up all of Jewish cooking in a single dish, this is the one that would epitomize it." Goodman says carp was so popular that it was offered in four variations in the encyclopedia of French haute cuisine, *Larousse Gastronomique*. **[http://tinyurl.com/8uoal]**

One of the most heated debates on Jewish food is over how to prepare gefilte fish: sweet or peppery. But according to Michael Steinlauf who teaches Jewish studies at Gratz College in Philadelphia, how you fancy your fish can tell a lot about your heritage. "The 'gefilte fish line' ran though eastern Poland. Jews living to the west – most of Poland, as well as Germany and the rest of Western Europe – ate the sweet gefilte fish. Those to the east – Lithuania, Latvia and Russia – ate the peppery treat." **[http://tinyurl.com/9x9vc]**

That gefilte fish line is nothing new to Allan Evans. I chanced upon an e-mail he sent to a kosher food message board looking for advice on finding take-out gefilte fish without sugar in New York City. "Having been raised on the subtle, tart Litvak style of preparing this dish, the sweetening of this delicacy is an abomination to the palate." **[http://tinyurl.com/7p8to]**

Evans would be advised to stay away from the next recipe. "My Mother-in-law's Sweet Style Gefilte Fish" calls for $^2/_3$ cup sugar, $^1/_2$ lb. of ground whitefish, $^1/_2$ lb. of ground pike, 1 lb. of ground dore, and yet another $^1/_3$ cup sugar for the broth. **[http://tinyurl.com/azry5]**

Sweet or peppery, it can be tough trying to live up to a family tradition. In *Adventures in Bubby Irma's Kitchen*, we get a recipe and a story: "Making gefilte fish is a challenge. My mother made it – my grandmother made it – and I had to make it… But, like every child, I needed my parents' approval. At that time we were living in Worcester, Mass., and my parents lived in Camden, N.J. I carefully wrapped a jar of the freshly made delicacy and sent it out Air Mail, Special Delivery. A few days later. I received a call from Mom and Dad telling me how great the fish was. I was thrilled. Years later, they finally told me the truth… it arrived spoiled but they didn't want to hurt my feelings. I made another batch while they were visiting and got their full approval." **[http://tinyurl.com/djm9u]**

Next week, more gefilte fish recipes – and how to give jarred gefilte fish a heimishe taste.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Andrea Most

Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Toronto, brings her unique perspective to this book review.

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UJA FEDERATION

UJA campaign closes with $58-million tally

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto celebrated the success of its 2006 campaign late last month, as approximately 200 supporters braved a winter storm to get to the York Event Theatre for the closing event.

The campaign is expected to raise a final total of $58 million, surpassing last year's tally by $3 million, the federation said.

Toronto's UJA campaign is the third largest in North America, behind only New York and Chicago.

Funds raised will be used for educational and social welfare programs in Toronto and Israel. Among the local agencies and facilities supported by UJA Federation are Jewish Family & Child Service (JF&CS), the downtown Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre and a Jewish education network that serves 17,000 students.

The campaign closing featured a keynote address by journalist David Frum, a former speechwriter for U.S. President George W. Bush and the brother of Linda Frum-Sokolowski, chair of this year's women's campaign and advocacy.

Before his address, which featured his insights on the Bush presidency and the ways Jews can advocate for themselves in world politics, Frum congratulated his sister and the entire leadership and volunteer base of federation for their efforts on the campaign.

The 2006 campaign chairs were Warren Kimel and Honey Sherman.

"Knowing that our campaign is altering the course of Jewish lives everywhere and contributing toward a world of good gives me a tremendous sense of fulfilment," Kimel said.

Kimel and Sherman both praised the rest of the campaign leadership team, including vice-chair Brad Fox and Frum-Sokolowski.

To conclude the evening, federation chair David Engel thanked Kimel and Sherman and introduced Ariella Rohringer and Fred Waks as the 2007 campaign chairs, with Judith Finer-Freedman as chair of the women's campaign and advocacy.

Associated principal has 32 years experience

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Sheldon Diamond, the new general studies principal at Associated Hebrew Schools' Danilack middle school, sees a commonality between the different streams of Judaism.

"Torah values permeate the basis of Judaism. We may conduct our services differently, but what motivates us is our connection to the Torah," says Diamond, a member of Temple Har Zion, a Reform congregation.

Sheldon Diamond

He also sees similarities between the public school system – he was a public school educator for 32 years, half of which he spent as an administrator – and the Hebrew day school system.

"Teachers are teachers, students are students, and parents are parents. There are different faces, but our common goal is to turn out well-adjusted children."

Where Hebrew and public schools differ is in the Judaic studies component. "That gives us a clear definition of our mission. [In public school], the mission is more diverse, because they deal with a more diverse population," Diamond says.

"Ours is more clear in direction. We impart Torah values, but as far as human behaviour is concerned, our mission is the same," he adds, noting that Associated maintains an "Orthodox leaning."

Diamond, 58, says he took his position at Associated this past August because "the opportunity came up and I was ready for a professional change in order to continue my growth as an educator."

He does miss being a teacher, he says, particularly when he watches other teachers. "I had fun in the classroom. Administration does not allow for much creativity. There is a certain joy in watching children learn.

"I do try to get involved with everyone, though. Being visible and accessible is critically important. I'm there to help the staff with curriculum development, behaviour issues, and overall concerns.

"I also assist with counselling, and in applying fair and appropriate discipline. The ramifications are wide and far-reaching. It's the way we all work together to be respectful of the learning environment."

Diamond, whose own two children are 21 and 15, says adolescence is a difficult time.

"These children are all under construction. They're in the transformation zone between children and adults. They have a lot of stuff going on that makes them unique, and they do things to test our patience," he says.

"You have to keep things in perspective. We need to support them, listen to them and understand them, but we shouldn't give entitlement without responsibility. They can't have it one way."

The pace of the current educational system is something Diamond has had to get used to.

"At the beginning of my [teaching] career, we used 10-year-old textbooks. Our resources were limited," he says.

"Things have changed dramatically. With the Internet, there is now a rapid exchange of information. Teachers have to be well-versed in computer technology.

"Students are able to watch world events unfolding, and this fuels their sense of social responsibility. Our students rallied to help out people in New Orleans [after Hurricane Katrina]. Part of Torah values is to help out within and beyond our own community."

CHANUKAH SING-ALONG: Netivot HaTorah Day School preschoolers, Hillel Ben Michael and Leah Holstein, light the chanukiyah at the school's annual preschool Chanukah sing-along. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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Greater Toronto Area

Shul-hopping pair helps promote Jewish unity

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Barbara Borenstein and Howard Jerome are planning an event that they say will be "BYOSS" – Bring your own shul story – but it's unlikely anyone will have more stories than they do.

The longtime friends – and, more recently, "shul buddies" – have attended Shabbat services at more than 30 Toronto-area synagogues in the past year, representing about a quarter of the city's congregations.

What began as Jerome's idea to visit and experience different synagogues soon turned into a full-fledged project.

Their first function will be a get-together they are planning for mid-January. Details were still being finalized at press time.

"My hope is to inspire people to do one of two things. If they're already affiliated, [I'd like them to] check out another synagogue," Jerome said. "And part two is the outreach to those who are unaffiliated, to check it out.

On a broader scale, they would like to foster greater Jewish unity in a diverse community.

Barbara Borenstein and Howard Jerome have been to Shabbat services at more than 30 Toronto shuls in the past year. [Frances Kraft photo]

They would like to match unaffiliated people with synagogues that they can try, as well as organize group synagogue visits if there is interest.

"We're looking to reignite people's passion for shul. It certainly happened for me," said Jerome, who was born Howard Jerome Gomberg in Brooklyn 66 years ago. "I left the faith for 40 years."

The stage, film and television actor has been based in Toronto since 1980. He become an atheist many years ago – after his bar mitzvah – and went on to explore Buddhism, Aboriginal spirituality, Hindu Yoga and Kabbalah.

After attending the Kabbalah Centre for a dozen years, he realized he "had no idea what [other Jews] were doing."

Borenstein, 49, who sells advertising for the *Jewish Yellow Pages*, was raised in an Israeli-Canadian Conservative Jewish home in Toronto.

During a five-year stint in Vancouver, she was affiliated with Or Shalom, a Jewish Renewal congregation. Since her return here in 1997, she has split her synagogue time between Beth Tzedec Congregation, which she attended as a child, and Aish HaTorah's Village Shul.

After about half a dozen of their synagogue visits, Borenstein and Jerome realized that others were interested in what they were doing.

"People started to ask, 'What are the prayers like?' 'Is it friendly?' 'What is the food [for kiddush] like?' 'How many women were there?'" Borenstein said.

They addressed those questions in an article that appeared in the *Jewish Yellow Pages* after they had visited 18 congregations.

The article painted a very positive picture of the synagogues they visited, and the duo are still enthused about their experiences.

"Tell her about the father and son," Jerome says to Borenstein during their joint interview with *The CJN*.

He was referring to Beth Torah Congregation's Cantor David Young and his son Jakie, the synagogue's "junior chazzan," who recorded his first CD at age 10.

"The way they harmonized with each other – it sent goose pimples up and down my arms," Borenstein said.

"There were so many beautiful moments," she added. "People who don't go [to services] don't get what they're missing."

Other memorable impressions included the "exotic and melodic" sounds of Sephardi prayers, Jerome said.

It's impossible to compare shuls, he said, adding that they can be as different from each other as "lox and watermelon."

Borenstein and Jerome said they were welcomed everywhere they went. However, she noted, "we do something that other people may not do. We talk to people."

And people respond in kind, she noted.

Once they do, the visitors explain that they are visiting for the first time and want to "experience" the synagogue. They also ask congregants why they go to shul, and what they love about their congregations.

She and Jerome have become "walking shul directories," he said.

Borenstein said her experience attending synagogue has made her value Shabbat as "a gift in a speedy, high-tech world."

For further information on the upcoming event, e-mail clubshul@rogers.com or call 416-271-8107.

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Struggling to understand Ahmadinejad's ravings

Yet another anti-Semitic outburst by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad – this time denying the Holocaust and suggesting Israel relocate to Europe or North America – prompted an outpouring of media reports and analysis last month. He had previously called for Israel to be "wiped off the map."

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

In "UN condemns Tehran on rights" (*Toronto Star*, Dec. 17), Olivia Ward noted that at a European Union summit in Brussels, Canada, along with Germany and other European countries, condemned Ahmadinejad's outrageous anti-Semitic statements. The summit "also voiced 'grave concerns' about Iran's nuclear program, which critics fear could lead to the production of an atomic bomb." At the same time, at the United Nations General Assembly, a Canadian-backed resolution censuring Tehran for its human rights violations was adopted by a vote of 75-50, with 43 abstentions.

In "The agenda behind the racist rant" (*Star*, Dec. 17), Mitch Potter interviewed analyst Meir Javedanfar, an Iranian Jew who recently immigrated to Israel.

Javedanfar cited three motives behind Ahmadenijad's rhetoric. The first is about "shoring up his very weak position inside Iran… These outbursts forced Iran's supreme religious leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei to back him," Javedanfar argued.

"Second, all these statements – particularly what he said about blaming Europe for the creation of Israel – is about finding a scapegoat for the fact that the [European-led] negotiations over Iran's nuclear aspirations appear to be headed for a breakdown…

"And third, Ahmadinejad is showing he likes to play to an audience… The first outburst was in a speech to the Third World, the second was at an Islamic conference in Saudi Arabia. And the third, where he called the Holocaust a myth, came as Iran was hosting a special guest – the leader of Hamas, Khaled Meshaal."

In a Nov. 3 article in the *New York Review of Books* titled "Soldiers of the Hidden Imam," Timothy Garton Ash (recently described as "the master craftsman" of analytical reportage by historian Norman Davies) wrote that for all its purported complexity, the Iranian regime "remains quite simple. At its core, the Islamic Republic is still an ideological dictatorship." And there are no signs of the regime weakening. Indeed, windfall profits from oil and gas exports only embolden its extremist program.

Javendanfar told the *Toronto Star* that any regime change will likely come from Iranian businessmen "who operate multi-billion-dollar conglomerates that thrive on dealing with the outside world," and do not want to risk losing business because of Iran's growing radicalism.

But Garton Ash paints a different picture: "Westernized business leaders are witheringly critical of the regime in private, but dependent on it for their business. Some have formed commercial partnerships with leading mullahs."

Garton Ash pins his hopes on Iran's younger generation: "The regime has spent 25 years trying to make these young Iranians deeply pro-Islamic, anti-American, anti-Western, and anti-Israeli. As a result, most of them are resentful of Islam (at least in its current, state-imposed form), rather pro-American, and have a curiosity about Israel."

While Javedanfar agreed that the "great majority of [Iranians] are tolerant, open-minded people" who do not "hate Israel with the same passion demonstrated by their president," he also "assesses as 'absolute zero' the possibility Iranians will rise up and overthrow the conservative ideologues who hold power."

Indeed, several other Israeli experts warn that Iran's restive young population poses no cohesive threat to the ruling mullahs in the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, nuclear weapons in the hands of these ideological extremists pose an imminent danger to Israel and the rest of the world. It's a looming problem that urgently requires an answer.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

New faces take over at CJC, Pacific region

By PETER CAULFIELD
Special to The CJN

VANCOUVER — The Pacific region of Canadian Jewish Congress has hired two new staff members to run the organization's activities in British Columbia, Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

The new hires, who will work out of CJC's Vancouver offices, are acting regional director Mira Oreck and education director Jeff Bradshaw.

They succeed Erwin Nest, who stepped down earlier this year after more than two decades as executive director of Congress' Pacific region, and Romy Ritter, the community relations director for the past five years who also stepped down recently.

CJC chief executive officer Bernie Farber said the Pacific region is large and complex.

"The Pacific region is huge geographically, with a lot going on," Farber said. "We need the best people in place to do the day-to-day work as well as the thinking going forward to accomplish our organization's strategic goals."

Oreck is responsible for the administration of the CJC office, as well as operations, policy issues and outreach to the Jewish and non-Jewish communities.

She said CJC's three-year regional "action agenda" will focus on hate and bias crime, hate propaganda, Holocaust education, human rights protection, multiculturalism and affordable housing.

"With the help of a dynamic new staff, we're turning a fresh page in the Pacific region office," Oreck said. "We look forward to working with fellow agencies and acting on their behalf."

Oreck said she is "happy and excited" to be part of CJC.

"I believe strongly in Canadian Jewish Congress and its work," she said. "I'm looking forward to giving voice to such important issues as social justice, housing and poverty and to building allies on important issues, including relationships outside the Jewish community."

Oreck, a native of Vancouver, has been on CJC's Pacific region board for a year-and-a-half.

A graduate of McGill University in sociology and women's studies and Simon Fraser University in sustainable community development, Oreck has been active in Canadian politics and in the environmental movement.

Education director Jeff Bradshaw will develop curriculum that addresses anti-Semitism and racism. In addition, he will be CJC's multiculturalism advocate and security contact.

Current projects Bradshaw is working on include an Aboriginal-Jewish dialogue, a Charter of Rights and Freedoms values project, an anti-racism program for high school students in the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island, and an anti-racism curriculum for Pearson College, a residential high school just outside Victoria.

"I'm passionate about CJC and my role as education director," Bradshaw said. "CJC is the most influential Jewish organization in Canada. I'm looking forward to helping to re-invigorate the Pacific region's stance on many issues."

A native of Toronto, Bradshaw studied theatre at Algonquin College in Ottawa and political science at Simon Fraser University.

Farber said there will be a greater emphasis at CJC on working closely with the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver.

"It's really nothing new," Farber said. "It's just a slight change in emphasis, because it's essential for Congress and federation to work well together."

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Quebec Jews will stick with the Liberals

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

Election 2006 Analysis

How most Canadian Jews will vote on Jan. 23 will be determined by any number of timely and important issues, including the sponsorship scandal, health care, child care, the economy, each party's support for Israel, and the environment.

The Toronto area has several ridings with significant Jewish populations that could go either Liberal or Conservative, and the outcome might actually be decided by the "Jewish vote." And results in certain key swing ridings could, in fact, determine which party forms the next government, which most pundits predict will again be a minority one.

But that's not the way it works for Jews in Quebec.

Save for a very small number who will vote Conservative, NDP or for a fringe party, the overwhelming majority of Quebec Jews – who live mostly in the western parts of the Island of Montreal – will vote Liberal, just like their neighbours.

That's because they will not base their vote, as Jews outside Quebec surely do, on policies, programs or the ignominy of past scandal. They will vote Liberal either because they support the party or because there is no other party, from their point of view, to vote for.

The Bloc Québécois? Not an option. The Tories? The party has maybe a tiny amount of Jewish support, but certainly not enough to make a difference in the solidly Liberal ridings where Jews live. The NDP? It may have a few Jewish supporters, but David Lewis is long dead, and so are most of the Jews who voted for him.

The Bloc threatens to come away with maybe 60 (or more) of Quebec's 75 seats, because of *pure laine* Quebecer anger over the sponsorship scandal combined with the sentiment that the Bloc best represents francophone Quebec's interests in Ottawa.

How do Quebec Jews feel? They may not be thrilled with the Liberals over the sponsorship scandal, but who else is there to vote for? The last time Quebec Jews voted for a Tory in any real numbers was when they voted for a fellow Jew, Gerry Weiner, the Progressive Conservative candidate in the West Island riding of Pierrefonds-Dollard. He ended up being elected twice and served as the federal multiculturalism minister.

That was back in 1988, when the Tories were still a force to be reckoned with in Quebec under then-prime minister Brian Mulroney. Mulroney's Tories fared very well in Quebec when they won back-to-back majorities in 1984 and 1988 with a now impossible-to-imagine 58 and 54 seats, respectively, in the province.

After the Meech Lake and Charlottetown constitutional debacles, however, it was all over for the Tories in Quebec – the last Tory MP in Quebec was elected in 1997 – and onward and upward for the Bloc (54 Bloc MPs were elected last year).

Even though he was from full-blooded anglophone Irish stock, Mulroney did extraordinarily well in Quebec because he was (at one time, anyway) charming and charismatic, and because he grew up in the province speaking perfect *joual* just like francophone Quebecers. He was also willing to address the issue of Quebec's constitutional place in Canada, and Quebecers have a fondness for voting for compatriots.

Current Conservative leader Stephen Harper, by contrast, is none of the above: he is neither a Quebecer nor a francophone, and he also lacks charm and a Mulroney-like inclination to address Quebec's constitutional grievances.

A widely held perception here is that if the Conservatives form the next government – even a minority one – under the leadership of a non-francophone, non-Quebecer who is not particularly sympathetic to Quebec's aspirations, it will only help nurture the sovereigntist cause.

Among Quebec's Jews, the Conservative party doesn't stand a chance, even if it runs a slew of Jewish candidates all over Montreal's west end. (It's not, save for proverbial Tory candidate Neil Drabkin, who is running in the largely Jewish riding of Mount Royal. Since 1993, he has run in every federal campaign, except for the last one in 2004.)

Even if the party did run a slate of Jewish candidates, besides potentially being seen as a transparently cynical move to woo Jewish votes, it wouldn't work, because Montreal Jews don't tend to "think" conservatively, unlike some Jews in other parts of Canada, such as Toronto.

Montreal Jews, apart for their anomalous support for Weiner, have never really, at least in modern times, backed a Jewish Tory candidate, perhaps because the Jewish sensibility on social issues has traditionally been closer to Liberal policy on that score.

The bottom line, then, is that the ridings where most of Montreal's Jews live – Mount Royal, Westmount–Ville-Marie, and Notre-Dame-de-Grace–Lachine – are more solidly Liberal than Alan Alda. The Jews there almost all vote Liberal, and that's all there is to it.

In Mount Royal, the riding once represented by former prime minister Pierre Trudeau, Justice Minister Irwin Cotler will once again win by one of the largest margins in the country. So Tory-averse is the riding, in fact, that a Conservative candidate, Drabkin, finished behind the Bloc there in 1993 (and the Bloc candidate trailed winner Sheila Finestone, a Liberal – what else – by more than 36,000 votes).

It will be much iffier for the Liberals in several other Montreal-area ridings, where they'll be fighting it out with the Bloc.

So there it is: when Jan. 23 rolls around, Quebec Jews will vote Liberal and the Bloc could win up to three-quarters of the province's seats.

No surprises there.

HELPING THE HOMELESS: Senior kindergarten students and volunteers at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School – including, from left, Chloe Strachan, Rowan Davidson and Tal Braverman, and parent Ali Berman – recently made cookies to be distributed to homeless people by Ve'ahavta, The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian & Relief Committee.

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Coast to Coast

New leaders in the West

JNF president has Canadian military background

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Graham Dixon, the new president of the Jewish National Fund (JNF) for Manitoba and Saskatchewan, has an impressive resume.

It includes service in the Canadian military, experience in the banking industry and positions at the highest levels of government.

Dixon was officially installed at the JNF's annual meeting held on Dec. 15 at Shaarey Zedek Synagogue.

Originally from Montreal, Dixon enlisted in the Canadian Armed Forces in his teens and saw action in the Korean War. After leaving the army, he spent 25 years working for the federal government, mainly in the Department of Manpower and Immigration. He ended his government career as senior policy adviser to the minister of Manpower and Immigration and Transport Canada.

Following his government service, he worked for 10 years as regional director (Manitoba and Saskatchewan) of the Canadian Bankers Association.

Dixon, who has lived in Winnipeg for the past 30 years, has been involved in virtually every economic initiative that has been undertaken in Manitoba. He played a role in the Core Area Initiative in the early 1980s, the Churchill Task Force in '95 and the Mid Continental International Trade Corridor Task Force ('99), as well as in the Pan Am Games.

He is an active member of the Association of Jewish War Veterans of Canada (General Moshe Dayan Post), the Foundation Vanier and the Eric and the Jack Wells Memorial Foundation, and is a board member of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. His previous volunteer positions include membership on the boards of the Shaarey Zedek and Rosh Pina synagogues, the Riverview Health Centre, the Youth Employment Service, the Winnipeg and Manitoba Chambers of Commerce and the Winnipeg Downtown Business Improvement Zone. He was also treasurer of the Federal Advisory Council for Judicial Appointments.

Dixon has worked closely with JNF shaliach for the Prairie provinces Rami Kleinmann.

"Rami understands that we can't just focus on the Jewish community for support," Dixon says.

"We have to reach out to the general public – and not just for financial support. Rami has gone far beyond the traditional responsibilities of a JNF shaliach."

Dixon noted that Kleinmann has been instrumental in forging agreements between the JNF and the governments of Israel and Alberta and Manitoba involving sharing technology related to water resources. He also cited a new JNF project with the national leadership of the Assembly of First Nations.

At the meeting, Kleinmann spoke of the importance of emphasizing Israel's positive accomplishments. "The State of Israel has accomplished incredible things," he said. "That's what we should be trying to get across.

"The JNF is looking for partnerships, not handouts. We are here to do business. We have over 100 years of expertise that can be helpful to Canada and First Nations People."

Dixon praised the efforts of his predecessors, Len Podheiser and Tom Gillman. Joe Rabinovitch, executive vice-president of JNF Canada, also praised Podheiser for his efforts as JNF president over the past three years.

Physician becomes president of Winnipeg Jewish Federation

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Ted Lyons, a physician, is the new president of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg.

One of his main goals over the next two years is to try to promote a greater understanding of the work of the federation in the community.

"Before I joined the federation board two years ago, I knew very little about the federation," Lyons says.

"Since then, I have learned what the federation's work means to the Jewish community locally, nationally and internationally. The more I learned, the more I wanted to be involved.

"I feel that people across the country aren't really aware of all the work that federation does. So much of it is behind the scenes. If people understand the workings of federation better, they would have a greater appreciation of the challenges our communities are facing."

Lyons, 62, is a professor and former head of the department of radiology, a professor of obstetrics and gynecology and associate professor of anatomy at the University of Manitoba and its Health Sciences Centre. He is also the son of a physician. His father, the late Ruvin Lyons, was a popular obstetrician who was involved in leadership roles in the Jewish community.

"I was exposed to community involvement at an early age," Ted Lyons says. "My father was my role model."

Ruvin Lyons served as president of the Shaarey Zedek Synagogue – Winnipeg's largest congregation – in 1969-70. His son, Ted, served in the same capacity in from 1999 to 2001, after serving on the board for several years.

Ted Lyons was recruited to join the federation board in 2000 by Neil Duboff. Duboff is Lyon's immediate predecessor as federation president, and was also a member of Shaarey Zedek's board. Lyons joined the federation's executive committee in 2001.

Lyons says that as federation president he intends to follow up on Duboff's efforts to strengthen ties with the federation's beneficiary agencies. He also wants to improve communication between the federation board and the synagogues.

Commenting on the community's challenges, Lyons cited the issues of poverty and an aging population, as well as the need for more foster homes and the need to encourage more people to volunteer their time on behalf of the community.

Winnipeg's Jewish community has grown by about 1,500 in the past five years after decades of decline and the annual Combined Jewish Appeal campaign continues to grow each year.

This year's CJA target was $4.65 million – $150,000 more than the record amount of $4.5 million raised last year – but the '05-06 goal had already been reached and surpassed by the end of December. By that time, the 2005-06 campaign had raised $4.768 million, with four months still to go.

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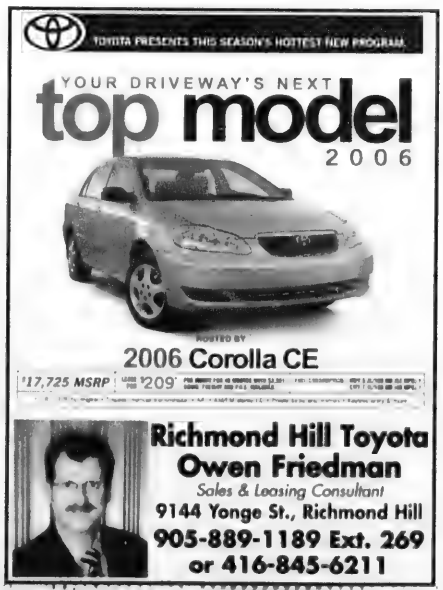

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YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

ייִדיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פון: אַלעק סילווער

וואָס דערוואַרטן מיר פון 2006?

פון אלעק סילווער

אויב איר האָט נאָך נישט באַמערקט, קען איך איך אַנזאָגן די „גוטע בשורה", אַז דאָס נייע יאָר 2006 איז שוין דאָ מיט אונדז. „ברוך הבא, דער גאַסט איז דא". קיין „סורפריז" איז עס זיכער נישט פאַר אייך. שוין מיט וואָכן צוריק האָט מען געהילכט אין דער מעדיא, אַז דאָס נייע יאָר קומט אָן. עס פלעגט אַרומגיין אַן אלטער ווּיץ. דאָס קינד פרעגט: „טאַטע, וווּהין גייט דאָס אלטע יאָר?". דער ענטפער: „אַיך וויס נישט, מיין קינד, ווו עס גייט, נאָר זאָל עס גיין צו אלדי רוחותו"...

מיר האָבן די זעלבע געפילן וועגן דעם אלטן יאָר. אין גלויבּ בנאמנות, אַז עס איז נישטאָ עמעצער, וואָס זאָל באַדויערן דאָס אוועקגיין פון יאָר 2005. גרויסע טיילן פון דער מענטשהייט האָבן זיך קוים געקענט דערוואַרטן צו זאָגן „גוד בייַ" צו דעם אלטן, שוידער־לעכן יאָר, וואָס האָט אָנגענאַכט גרויסע צרות איבער דער וועלט. נישטאָ כּמעט קיין וועלט־טייל, וואָס האָט נישט געליטן גרויסע פאַרלוסטן אין מענטשלעכע קרבנות און אין פערזענלעכן אייגנטום.

עס איז פשוט שווער אַרויסצוהייבן די הויפּטפונקטן אינעם שוידער פון פאַרגאַנגענעם יאָר. קודם כּל האָט עס געהאַט דעם „זכות" איבערצונעמען פּונעם יאָר 2004 צוויי „נאַכשלעפּנדיקע קרענק": די „צונאַמי" נאַטור־קאַטאַסטראָפע און די מלחמה אין איראַק. דאָס אַליין וואָלט שוין געווען גענוג פאַר דער מענטשהייט. אָבער ניין. דאָס יאָר האָט געוואָלט צוגעבן אירע אייגענע צרות און באַוויזן, וואָס זי קען אויפטאָן.

איז קודם־כּל האָבן מיר געהאַט אַ גרויסע צאָל נאַטור־קאַטאַסטראָפעס — הוראַגאַנען, רעגנס אוּן פאַר־פליצונגען אין אַפריקע, כינע, די פאַראייניקטע שטאַטן, קאַנאַדע און נאָך אַנדערע לענדער. דאָס האָט פאַראור־זאַכט אַ גרויסע צאָל מענטשלעכע קרבנות אוּן אַנגע־מאַכט שאַדנס אויף ביליאָנען דאָלאַרן. שטאַרקע היצן, טריקענישן אוּן פייערן אין פאַרשיידענע טיילן פון דער וועלט, ווי אויך די שטאַרקע ערד־ציטערניש אין פאַ־קיסטאַן/אינדיע האָט אַ סך נעהעכערט די צאָל פון די קרבנות אוּן פערזענלעכן שאָדן.

צו דעם צו האָבן רעליגיעזע פאַנאַטיקער צוגענומען אַ גרויסע צאָל לעבנס מיט זייערע שרעקּ־אָקטן אין ענגלאַנד, שפּאַניע, ישראל, מצרים, ירדן, סאודי־אַראַביע אוּן אין אַנדערע לענדער, שוין אָפּגערעדט פון איראַק, וווּ זעלבסטמערדער־אויפרייסן קומען פאַר כּמעט יעדן טאָג אין וועלכע סע קומען אום צענדליקער אמעריקאַנער זעלנער אוּן הונדערטער זיוווילע מענטשן, וואָס האָבן נאָר נישט קיין שייכות מיט דער מלחמה.

פרעג איך ווידער די זעלבע פראַגע: וואָס דער־וואַרטן מיר פון יאָר 2006? קיין ענטפער האָב איך נישט. איך גלויב אויך, אַז קיינער קען אויף דער פראַגע נישט געבן קיין צופרידנשטעלנדיקן ענטפער. כלייבט נאָר איבער פאַר דער מענטשהייט צו האָפן אוּן וואַרטן — אפשר, אפשר וועט דאָס יאָר 2006 זיין אַן אויסנאַם אוּן ברענגען פאַר דער וועלט אַ ביסל גוטע נייעס.

איז האָס מיר אלע אַ גוט, פרייליך אוּן שלומדיק יאָר!

Charges against Netanyahu protester dropped

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL – Remaining charges against Jaggi Singh in connection with the 2002 violent protest against the appearance of former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu at Concordia University have been dismissed.

The charges included assault, illegal assembly and breaches of conditions of release. The Crown has 30 days to appeal.

Montreal Municipal Court judge Pierre Fontaine ruled in favour of Singh's motion of abuse of process by the Crown in which Singh alleged that Concordia failed to disclose more than 30 videos taken by surveillance cameras at the university on the day of the protest, Sept. 9, 2002.

Netanyahu was prevented from speaking that day by a violent protest outside the downtown building where he was scheduled to appear.

Singh, who represented himself, said the videos show inconsistencies with the testimony against him by Concordia security guards, including then head of security, Jean Brisebois. These include an allegation that Singh pushed a security guard.

"With surveillance cameras everywhere, the unedited videos show clearly that I committed no criminal acts, as well as showing a portrait of the Netanyahu protest much more favourable to the demonstrators," Singh said.

In April and May, 2004, Singh was acquitted of charges of conspiracy, obstruction and other breaches of conditions due to lack of evidence. The Crown's motion to appeal was rejected at that time.

Singh's was the only criminal trial that has taken place in connection with the Netanyahu protest.

"It's a total victory," Singh claimed. "It's also a complete embarrassment for Concordia and the Crown."

Concordia has declined to comment directly, with its spokesperson Chris Mota saying only that the charges were laid by the Crown and not the university.

Singh, 34, was charged in January 2003, shortly after being deported from Israel, where he was advocating for Palestinians through the International Solidarity Movement. Singh then spoke at Concordia in support of students who had been sanctioned for their involvement in the Netanyahu protest by an internal tribunal.

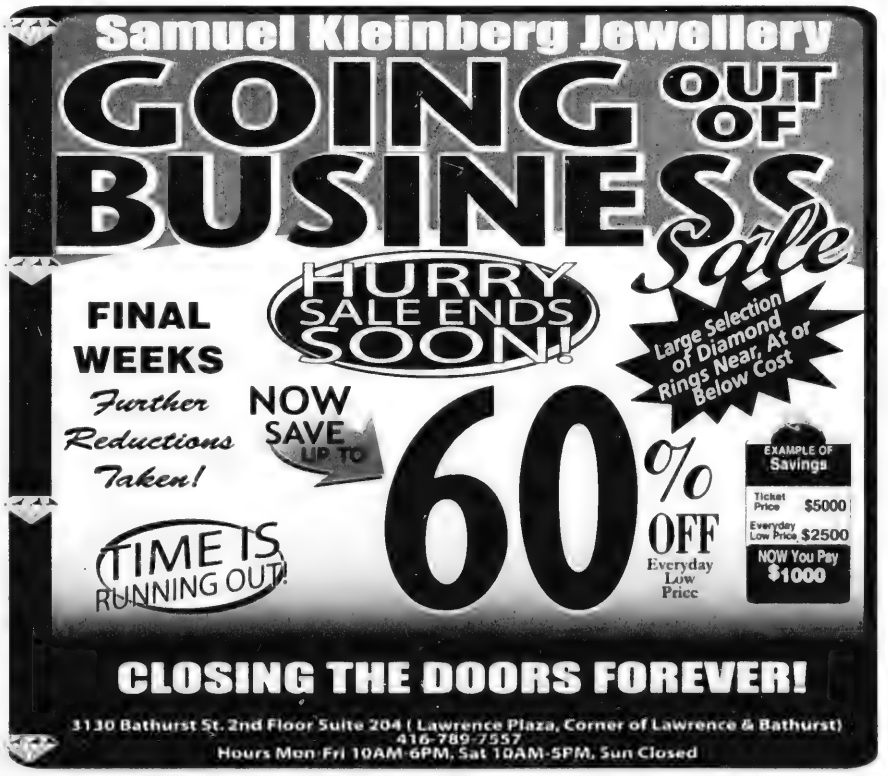
The university administration banned Singh from the campus for five years.

Singh has never been a Concordia student. He said he has done, and continues to do, research on a project connected with the university.

Singh said he helped write the so-called "arrest warrant" against Netanyahu that detailed the former prime minister's alleged war crimes and was distributed by students who wanted to block his speaking engagement on campus.

He also wrote an article that was published in the *Globe and Mail* a few days after the protest that defended the opposition to Netanyahu and provided his account of what happened to spark the violence.

Singh has been a highly visible left-wing activist for the past decade, particularly in the anti-globalization movement. He first came to wide public attention during the 1997 Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation conference in Vancouver, when the RCMP arrested him on the campus of the University of British Columbia. Charges were later dropped.



Israel boycott likely to have little impact, CIC says

Continued from page 1

Also present was Ronald Cameron, president of the Fédération des Enseignantes et Enseignants du Collegial du Québec. Cameron led a delegation of 20 CEGEP teachers who, in October 2004, attended a conference in Ramallah opposing the security fence.

Two of the endorsing organizations, Entraide missionaire and SUCO, are well-established, international co-operation groups.

Most of the other groups are associated with the Arab or Muslim communities or left-wing causes. The Jewish Alliance Against the Occupation and PAJU (Palestinians and Jews United) have also signed on.

The FFQ was founded in 1965 by the late senator Thérèse Casgrain, a pioneer in women's rights in Canada, who helped secure the vote for women in Quebec in 1940. Sheila Finestone, later a member of Parliament and senator, was the FFQ's first anglophone president from 1977 to 1980.

Today, the FFQ lists 152 women's groups from across the province as associate organizations.

The boycott is initially targeting Israeli wines sold at Société des Alcools du Québec outlets – it has identified 19 of them – as well as Caterpillar, which makes heavy machinery and other products such as boots, caps, toys and pocket-knives. The organizations allege that Caterpillar has been providing the Israeli army with bulldozers for many years.

The campaign also urges divestment in Israel or in companies trading with it, and sanctions, such as ending the free-trade agreement between Canada and Israel.

The boycott organizers are distributing a flyer that cites an appeal last July to the international community from more than 170 Palestinian "civil society organizations" to initiate a boycott against Israel similar to that intended to pressure apartheid South Africa. The flyer quotes Desmond Tutu as saying in 2002: "I've been very deeply distressed in my visit to the Holy Land; it reminded me so much of what happened to us black people in South Africa."

The coalition is inviting individuals, governments, corporations and other non-governmental organizations to join the protest. It is urging all unions get rid of any investments in their pension funds that "contribute – even indirectly – to the prolongation of the Israeli occupation."

Permanent members of the coalition include the province's major labour federations: the Centrale des Syndicats du Québec (CSQ), the Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux, and the Montreal regional council of the Fédération des Travailleurs et Travailleuses du Québec.

In 2002, Jewish community leaders denounced in the strongest terms the CSQ when its president, Monique Richard, along with the coalition, called for a boycott of Israeli products and compared the state to apartheid South Africa because of its treatment of the Palestinians. At the time, the CSQ had 145,000 members, the majority of them working in the education sector and the public service.

Leaders of FEDERATION CJA, the Canada-Israel Committee, Canadian Jewish Congress and the Communauté Séphardade du Québec recently held a joint press conference where they blasted the move as "a call for abject intolerance, blatant revisionism and terrible injustice."

Israel Consul General Marc Attali deplored the boycott call, but also doubts it will have much impact.

"Boycotts and divestments are a shameful attempt to demonize and delegitimize Israel and are insulting to an intelligent person. They have been a total failure elsewhere.

"Israel has a great deal to be proud of in its defence of democratic values and human rights, including respect for minorities, in spite of being engaged in a war against terrorism."

Saber-Freedman added: "The unions have a lot on their plate right now. I don't think this will be high on their list of priorities."

CHANUKAH LIGHTS: The embassy of Israel, in conjunction with the Jewish community of Ottawa, last week held a Chanukah party and candle lighting ceremony at the Machzikei Hadas synagogue. Various ambassadors, including the Apostolic Nuncio of the Vatican, former deputy prime minister Herb Grey, rabbis, diplomats and the general public attended the party. Seen here is Alan Baker, ambassador of Israel and Rabbi Reuven Bulka lighting the menorah.

The Canadian Jewish news

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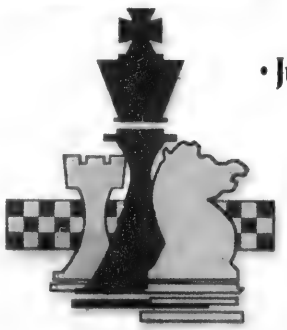

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Coast to Coast

HOLIDAY SPIRIT: Torah Tots preschoolers entertained shoppers at Sobeys in Thornhill last month before Chanukah to get them into the holiday spirit. With the kids are their teachers and the store's managers.

Correction

In the article "Conservative rabbi's comment sparks outrage" (*CJN*, Dec. 22), the Shefa Network was incorrectly described as a group of left-leaning Conservative rabbis. In fact, the activist group includes rabbis, educators and lay leaders. *The CJN* regrets the error.

The Canadian Jewish news

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Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

Mazel tov to our parents Shirley & Avihu Bar-el who are celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on Dec. 25. Love, Leora and Dan.

Joelle & Albert Perez, Susan & Chuck Goldman are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Myriam Perez & Pierce Goldman.

Feliz Cumpleanos Ethan! Besos, Abuelita y Abuelito Tio Alex & Tia Caryn and Abuelitas Marta and Lili.

Mazel tov on your 80th birthday Blanche Schwartz. With all our love, your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. xoxoxo

Avery is five! Zevi is three! Happy birthday to the Hoffer boys. We love you! Love, Mommy, Daddy and big sister Eden.

Mazel tov to Ezzie Stavsky on his first birthday.

Gilda & Brian Lefton celebrated their 30th wedding anniversary Dec. 27. Happy anniversary, Mom and Dad, with many more to come! Love, Hartley and Lindsay.

Happy birthday Leider. Love, your Mami, Dad, Meagan and Jessie.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos (25 words or less) and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Send all your photos to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4

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By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, Jan. 9, is the deadline for the Jan. 19 issue and Monday, Jan. 16, is the deadline for Jan. 26. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Jan. 5

MUSEUM OF POLISH JEWS

The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation presents **Ewa Junczyk Zoimecka**, director of development at the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, Warsaw, who will present a multimedia narrative about various Jewish settings that reflect the displays in the museum, which is to open in 2008. 7:30 p.m. at the University of Toronto, Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. $5. For information, visit www.pjhftoronto.ca.

Sunday, Jan. 8

HONEST REPORTING

Dov Smith, executive director of Honest Reporting Canada, will talk about "Honest Reporting in Canada" at the Habonim Breakfast Club. 10 a.m., 5 Glen Park. $6.

A HEALING SERVICE

The Toronto Healing Project offers a healing service with **Rabbi Reuven Tradburks** and **Judy Shier Weisberg**. 3-4 p.m. at Lipa Green, 4600 Bathurst St. Wheelchair access. 416-944-3359.

BOOKTALK

Booktalk, a free Sunday afternoon book discussion group that meets at the Barbara Frum Library, will discuss *Everything is Illuminated* by **Jonathan Safran Foer**. 2 p.m. All welcome. RSVP to **Carol Frilegh** 416-922-0538 or c.frilegh@sympatico.ca.

Tuesday, Jan. 10

SPIRITUALITY CAN HELP

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health presents "The Role of Spirituality in the Treatment of Mental Health and/or Addiction Problems," a forum that will explore the role spirituality and religion can play for those recovering from addiction and mental health problems. 6:30-8:30 p.m. 33 Russell St., Room 2029. 416-535-8501 or www.camh.net.

STRESS MANAGEMENT

Beth David Sisterhood presents "Stress Management" with **Maura Cooperberg** of Jewish Family and Child Services. 7:30 p.m. Non-members $5. 416-633-5500.

Other News

SUPPORT GROUP

Baycrest Centre offers "Caring For A Loved One," an education and support group for children and relatives of people with dementia. No charge. To register for new sessions in 2006, call **Nira**, 416-785-2500, ext. 3587.

HEBREW CLASSES

Keren Hatarbut Institute offers Hebrew language classes for adults, teenagers and preteens at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Beginners will speak, write and read Hebrew in 14 sessions. Classes are taught on Wednesdays and Thursdays, beginning the week of Jan. 4. Reasonable tuition. 788 Marlee Ave. For registration, call **Joseph Klinger**, 416-787-0197.

The Canadian Zionist Federation offers Hebrew Language Studies with **Gila Leaman** beginning Jan. 8, at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Classes are offered on Sunday and during the week, during the day and in the evening. To register, call 416-633-3988 or e-mail czf@jazo.org.il.

HOME OF THE BRAVE

Teatron Theatre presents the play *Home of the Brave* by **Arthur Laurents**, a drama dealing with anti-Semitism in the U.S. army during World War II. The play tells the story of a group of soldiers who volunteer for a dangerous mission. Prejudice, fear and friendships are exposed and tested in the tense situation. Previews, Tuesday, Jan. 10, 2 and 8 p.m. Opening night, Wednesday, Jan. 11, 8 p.m. Performances,

Continued on page 23

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What's New

Continued from page 22

Thursday, Jan. 12, Saturday, Jan. 14, and Sunday, Jan. 15, at 8 p.m. Matinees, Wednesday, Jan. 11, and Sunday, Jan. 15, at 2 p.m. For tickets call 416-855-6651 or visit www.teatrontheatre.com.

***THE SACRIFICE* BY WISEMAN**

Beth Emeth Synagogue presents a lecture by **Russell Brown**, professor of Canadian literature at the University of Toronto, on *The Sacrifice*, a novel by **Adele Wiseman**. Thursday, Jan. 12, 8 p.m. 416-633-3838 or www.beby.org.

BENSOUSSAN CONCERT

Beth Emeth Synagogue sponsors a concert by **Aaron Bensoussan** and the Dafina Orchestra, Sunday, Jan. 15, 7:30 p.m. at the Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. W. $10. For tickets, call 416-633-3838.

SHANI TARAGIN

Shani Taragin gives a community lecture on Tuesday, Jan. 17, at 8 p.m. and leads a morning of learning Wednesday, Jan. 18, 9 a.m.-noon. For information, call Mekorot at 416-877-2050.

WANDERING JEWS

Mekorot offers a 6-week course with **Judy Snowbell Diamond** on "Wandering Jews: How Far Have We Come?" Using biblical texts and commentaries, the generation of Israelites that wandered through the desert will be examined, uncovering a multi-dimensional picture that may also challenge a contemporary relationship to God and Israel. Wednesday evenings, Jan. 18-Feb. 22 at the Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W., 8-9:30 p.m. Men and women welcome. Fee. Information and registration at 416-877-2050 or www.mekorot.ca.

CONCERT: SONGS OF ISRAEL

Beth David Congregation presents "Songs Of Israel," a concert featuring **Marshall Loomer**, **Ben Silverberg**, **Tibor Kovari**, **Mickey Lewin**, **Naomi Peleg Brandt** and the Ultimate Sound Band. Thursday, Jan. 19, at 8 p.m. $20 in advance or at the door. Call 416-633-5500.

ART EXHIBIT

The Brookbanks Library exhibits the paintings of **Adelle Steinberg** during the month of January in the auditorium. 210 Brookbanks Dr. Call 416-395-5480 for hours.

VENDORS WANTED

The Canadian Zionist Federation's annual "Israel Day" will take place on Sunday, June 4. Vendors interested in participating should call **Barbara Peters** at 416-633-3988 or e-mail czf@jazo.org.il.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service, 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration, call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215 or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

"When You're About to Separate: What To Tell The Kids," a workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. Tuesday, Jan. 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at The Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

"Fathering After Divorce," a 4-week group to help single fathers understand the crucial role they play in their children's lives and maintain a connection with their children. Thursdays, beginning Jan. 19, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Building, 4600 Bathurst St.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Tzedec Congregation Senior Haverim Program presents a talk and slides by **Dolly Biel** on "My Return to China: The Land of My Birth." Monday, Jan. 9, 1:30 p.m. $2. 416-781-3511.

Earl Bales Seniors in the Club House in the Park. Sunday Dance, Jan. 15. Casino Rama, Wednesday, Jan. 18. Beginners Hebrew, Wednesdays 12-1:30 p.m. $25/month. Bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Call 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. Jan. 5, bingo, Jan. 12, movie. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Computer Events: Word Processing begins Monday, Jan. 9; How to Buy a Computer Wednesday, Jan. 11, 9-11 a.m.; E-Bay, Wednesday, Jan. 25, 9-11 a.m. Also other computer courses. Register at ext. 128.

Torah discussion group Mondays starting Jan. 9, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Register now.

"Grandparenthood in the 21st Century" with **Dr. Ben Schlesinger**, Tuesday, Jan. 10, 10-11:30 a.m.

"Free Diabetes Education and Counselling." 9 a.m.-12 p.m. on Jan. 10 and 17.

Yoga in a Chair, Fridays, starting Jan. 11, 10-11 a.m.

Register now for classes in Learning To Use the Computer, Crafts, Get Fit and Torah Discussions. Classes begin Jan. 9.

Israeli Club Etrog for Hebrew speaking seniors meets every Tuesday. "Bialik's Birthday Memorial Event,"with songs, readings in Hebrew, Jan. 10, 3 p.m. Call ext. 110.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Fitness programs begin Monday, Jan. 9, and run through April 2006. For information, call ext. 4636.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Fitness and recreation gift cards now available at ext. 291.

Join the BJCC before Jan.15 and receive 25 per cent off plus 2 free personal training sessions on your new adult membership. Call ext. 291. Some conditions apply.

Lunch 'n' Learn will not meet Jan. 6.

Current Events with **Peter Diament** resumes Thursday, Jan. 12, 12:45-2:15 p.m.

Red Cross Water Safety assistant instructor and instructor courses run Jan. 8-Feb. 26. For registration, contact gungar@bjcc.ca.

The Koffler School of Music is now accepting registration for classes beginning in January: Babies Music, age newborn to 3; Jammin Tots, age 3-5; Suzuki violin beginning at age 3, private lessons piano, violin, guitar (children and adults). For registration, call ext. 228.

Call ext. 235 to register for: Mah Jong classes Mondays, beginning Jan. 9, 7:30-9:30 p.m. and Wednesdays, beginning Jan. 11, 1-3 p.m.; Bridge classes with **Shawn Mahood** Tuesdays, beginning Jan.10, beginner, 12:30-2:30 p.m. intermediate, 2:30-5 p.m.; Latin Dance, Tuesdays, beginning Jan. 10. Yoga, Thursdays beginning Jan. 12.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.milesnadaljcc.ca.

Good Age Club weekly programming for 55-plus includes speakers on health, lifestyle, investment ideas and current events, games, films and trips.

About People

EMUNAH WOMEN TORONTO

Emunah Women of Toronto recently installed new officers for 2005-2007. The new executive includes **Joyce Rifkind**, president; **Alina Mayer** and **Esty Yeres**, vice presidents; **Sara Rachlin**, treasurer; **Marlene Segal**, secretary; **Edie Kalb**, **Laurie Teperman** and **Aryella Weisz**, executive advisory cabinet; **Elaine Genesove**, national liaison; and **Shawan Magence**, immediate past president. For information about Emunah Women and their work, call 416-636-0036.

Volunteers Wanted

BAYCREST CENTRE

Volunteers are always needed in all areas of the Baycrest Centre. The Terraces of Baycrest need volunteers to be hosts in the dining room assisting clients to their table and making their meal a celebration, to help clients do their shopping in the convenience store and to be a beauty shop assistant. Volunteers are also needed in the Jewish Home for the Aged, Apotex Centre, to assist in lighting the Shabbat candles on Friday evenings, help clients participate in weekly pre-Shabbat services on Friday afternoons and to escort clients and participate in a weekly lecture on Wednesday afternoons. For information on these and other available positions, call **Annette Lefkovitz**, 416-785-2500 ext. 2572

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

A male volunteer is needed to visit a homebound World War II veteran in the Bathurst and Wilson area. No physical care involved. Transportation costs reimbursed. Call **Paula Mintzberg**, 416-225-2112, ext. 118.

KOSHER MEALS ON WHEELS

A visually impaired client who lives at Front and Bathurst streets needs frozen Kosher Meals on Wheels trays. If you are available to pick up the meals twice a month in the morning to make this delivery call Circle of Care at 416-635-2860.

HOT SELLERS: The Grade 5 class at the Beth Tzedec Congregational School is selling handmade bracelets, necklaces and bookmarks to support the Out of the Cold program, and has raised more than $200.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 16

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Jonathan Enchin	Dec 17/05	525 Lawrence Ave W
Sylvia Levitt	Dec 17/05	3560 Bathurst St
Bruce Smith	Dec 18/05	70 Rosehill Ave
David Cornfield	Dec 18/05	56 Corwin Cres
Philip Simmons	Dec 18/05	2 Clairtrell Rd
Mary Cohen	Dec 19/05	11 Almington St
Irving Salsberg	Dec 20/05	1 Northwestern Ave
Rick Collis	Dec 20/05	39 Ardmore Cres
Cecil Chernick	Dec 21/05	130 Neptune Dr
Fay Silverman	Dec 23/05	3560 Bathurst St
Isaak Barou	Dec 24/05	6250 Bathurst St
Klara Verzsenyi	Dec 24/05	75 Poplar Plains Cres

HEBREW DASIC

Bella Miller	Dec 24/05	40 Harding Blvd

On behalf of the late

SANDRA BLOOMBERG-NUDELMAN ז"ל

We would like to extend our thanks and wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to family and friends for your acts of kindness, expressions of sympathy, shiva meals and visits, cards of condolence and generous donations made in Sandie's memory.

Your support and affection are a great source of comfort and will never be forgotten. Sandie will forever be in our hearts and we will miss her every day.

Please accept this as our personal thank you.

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Anti-Semitism, anti-Zionism rampant, campus activists say

By ABIGAIL CUKIER
Special to The CJN

HAMILTON — Incidents of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism on Ontario university campuses are not isolated, but are part of a growing disease, said the director of campus affairs for the right-wing Zionist student movement Betar-Tagar.

Students from the organization spoke at Adas Israel Synagogue in Hamilton last month and shared some of their experiences on campus over the past few years.

Seniors, young families and students were among those attending the event, as were Ancaster-Dundas-Flamborough-Westdale Liberal MP Russ Powers and Burlington Tory MPP Cam Jackson.

Jackson told the audience that anti-Semitism is an "important issue that affects the fabric of our nation," adding that "any hate crime against any Canadian citizen is a crime against all Canadians."

Speakers from the student club Zionists at McMaster shared their frustration over anti-Israel literature on campus. The group was formed three years ago in response to anti-Zionist activity on campus by the group Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights.

As well, Betar-Tagar's director of campus affairs, Jonathan Jaffit, showed photos from Israel Apartheid Week at the University of Toronto earlier this year.

Signs displayed on campus at the time included, "Globalize the Intifada," "JNF out of Canada" and "Zionism=Racism."

Flyers displayed and distributed included the logo of the Fatah-affiliated Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade militia, which has been named by the Canadian government as a terrorist organization.

Independent documentary filmmaker Igal Hecht presented a documentary about anti-Israel vitriol at York University. The film, *Protest*, which aired on Vision TV in 2003, showed confrontations between Arab and Jewish students that went from verbal to physical.

In the film, one student warns that Jewish students should be cautious on York's campus, while another doesn't recommend the campus to Jewish students.

Uri Nachim, Betar-Tagar's co-president at York, remembers how in his first year, discussions between Arab and Jewish groups centred on how Israel and Palestine could peacefully coexist. Now, he said, the debate is about whether Israel should exist at all.

Dina Glatter, a York student, recalled an event organized to honour the Israel Defence Forces that was stormed by protesters, and signs saying, "IDF=Gestapo" remained in a central campus location for a week before being removed.

"It was a truly painful experience for me to see the things I stand for and love attacked with such venomous hate," Glatter told the audience.

"But let me tell you this: At times, I have felt marginalized and intimidated, but one thing I have never felt is ashamed of who I am and what I stand for."

Audience members Ida Shuman and Barbara Abraham said they were astonished at what they heard. They said they planned to donate to Betar-Tagar to help its cause.

"We're surprised the boards of the universities allow this to go on," said Shuman. "It's hatred. There should be a way to stop it."

Philip Wood, McMaster's associate vice-president of student affairs and dean of students, said the university does not permit signs that promote hate or discrimination, and clubs that violate these rules can be put on probation by the McMaster Students Union or disbanded altogether.

"We at McMaster University feel that universities generally should be the last bastions for free speech and conduct ourselves accordingly," he said.

"We do have policies in place that groups need to follow regarding posters and conducting events. Typically these are followed and events proceed without problem."

Representatives from U of T and York could not be reached for comment.

Students build a really big top

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL – What has four sides, spins and stands over 22 feet high?

A group of Jewish university students in Montreal are confident it is the world's biggest dreidel, and they have applied to Guinness World Records to have that fact established.

More than 20 students built the giant dreidel out of wood and particle board in the lobby of Congregation Beth Ora by for the West Island Hillel's Chanukah party.

With its base, the free-standing structure measured 25 feet, 9½ inches, said Hillel Montreal's Yoni Petel, but the dreidel itself was 22 feet, 2½ inches. The four Hebrew letters – shin, hey, gimel and nun – were each about six feet high and made of paper, which was taped on.

The dreidel did indeed spin on its base, with a good push from a tall person. "I'm 6-foot-2," said Petel, "and I could barely reach the face."

Rabbi Avi Rosenblatt, who authenticated its kashrut, and accountant Sandy Jesion, a vice-chair of the FEDERATION CJA West Island management committee, served as the witnesses necessary for consideration by Guinness.

Petel said the students were casting about for ideas on something different to do for Chanukah. "We had thought of making the world's biggest latke, but it would have been a fire hazard and we weren't really sure if we knew how to do it. A dreidel was the obvious second choice, and we checked with Guinness and found no dreidel entries."

Rabbi Avi Rosenblatt, left, and Sandy Jesion compare their miniature dreidels to one that may be the largest ever built.

The next question was where to construct it. They ruled out the outdoors because they were afraid of wind toppling their creation. The group looked on the West Island, but no synagogues or Jewish institutions had high enough ceilings to accommodate the top they envisioned. Beth Ora in St. Laurent was the closest alternative because its lobby soars almost three stories. Care had to be taken to avoid the chandelier. The dreidel took about nine hours to build, and involved working from a scaffold. It took about 10 students to lift it onto the base. Then the party began. "You could see about three-quarters of it outside through the window, making the synagogue look like a dollhouse," Petel said.

The costs of the dreidel were covered by an Innovation grant from National Jewish Campus Life.

Alas, the monster could only be kept up for two days. The students are keeping the parts and may try to reassemble the dreidel next year. "But we would be happy to donate it to anybody interested," Petel added.

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Fund supports research into early childhood cancer

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Like most new parents, Tami Moscoe and Eric Petersiel were thrilled when their first child, Lilah, was born, on April 14, 2004. Their joy turned to shock when on her first day of life she was diagnosed with neuroblastoma, a cancer of the nervous system.

Now, they have put their "nervous energy" as Moscoe put it, into Lilah's Fund, which supports research into this disease of early childhood.

A tumour was found almost accidentally, she said. An ultrasound during the pregnancy showed that Lilah had only one kidney. An abdominal scan to check on the kidney after birth found a golf-ball- sized tumour on one of her adrenal glands.

Lilah Moscoe

Surgery at the Hospital for Sick Children (now SickKids) removed the tumour and the adrenal gland to which it was attached. Lilah was two weeks old.

"The most important thing was how fast the diagnosis was made," Moscoe said. "If it isn't diagnosed before the first birthday, the prognosis is very poor."

It appeared that everything had gone perfectly. However, to everyone's surprise, three months later a routine CT scan found tumour clumps growing on her liver.

This time, the treatment was much more severe. Lilah had two rounds of chemotherapy – "to get rid of whatever they couldn't see on the CT scan," Moscoe said – followed by surgery, and then two more rounds of chemotherapy.

The baby was allowed to go home between bouts of chemotherapy and the surgery, but the family was constantly on edge trying to prevent any kind of infection, which would slow down the treatment. The family also had to return to SickKids with Lilah every couple of days to make sure everything was all right.

Lilah is now 19 months old, a cheerful, happy child with a lovely disposition, Moscoe said, who has been thriving in day care since August. She now goes back to the hospital regularly for follow-up.

During Lilah's treatment, the family began Lilah's Fund, working with the James Fund for Neuroblastoma Research. James Birrell was an eight-year-old boy from Peterborough, who died in 2001 after a five-year battle with the disease.

SickKids provides administration and physical support for the fund, which makes monies raised go further.

Moscoe and Petersiel decided to start the fund modestly, approaching friends and relatives directly, and aiming to raise $18,000. "We were blown away by how generous the personal donations were," said Moscoe.

This past June, on Fathers' Day, they organized Sunday in the Park with Lilah, an outdoor event at the Toronto French School. More than 100 families, plus the families of volunteers helping out, enjoyed raffles, silent auctions, inflatable castles, a walk, food, a barbecue, and appearances by Olympic athletes and singer Tressa.

So far, Lilah's Fund has raised nearly $80,000. It has sponsored two research projects, one to test new drugs ("they have to use adult drugs on the children – there are none designed specifically for children," Moscoe said) and another, in collaboration with Japanese researchers, on biomarkers.

Biomarkers are substances found in blood, body fluids or tissues that can indicate the presence of some kinds of cancer, including neuroblastoma.

Moscoe and Petersiel are planning to make Sunday in the Park with Lilah an annual event. They also hope to attract corporate supporters and sponsors.

For more information about Lilah's Fund, call Moscoe at 416-360-4734 or visit the website, www.lilahsfund.com.

NEW REENA HOME: Reena clients Harold Breslove, right, and Allen Wanglinsky, centre, helped Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich of Beth Sholom Synagogue affix a mezuzah to Reena's new home on Elm Ridge Drive, near Marlee and Eglinton avenues, at a dedication ceremony last month. The unique residence has 14 single bedrooms grouped around several semi-private kitchenettes, as well as plenty of bathrooms, an elevator, a common living room, a common dining room and a number of small lounges.

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Children can learn to control anger: psychologist

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Children are small, but as any parent knows, their anger is a powerful force.

Yet they're capable of learning strategies – many adapted from adult psychology – to bring it under control, said Gerard Klein, a clinical psychologist and consultant on children's mental health.

"Once they conquer it, children feel like a different type of person," he said at a recent Yetta Nashman Jewish Family Institute workshop for parents at the Village Shul.

Attention deficit or anxiety disorders, high-functioning autism, stress, or family situations like divorce are factors that influence children's anger, Klein said.

His approach to children's anger stems from a cognitive-behavioural model in which children take responsibility for their own anger. "I tell kids, no matter what's happening, there are things you can do to control your anger."

Klein suggested parents help children control their anger by logging the sequence of their anger in a simple ABC chart: A is the "activating event" that allows the child to describe initial triggers; B is his or her behaviour, positive or negative; and C is the consequences – both good and bad – of that behaviour.

We want kids to start learning what their pattern is, Klein said.

"There's often one person who gets them going, but it's not helpful for parents or teachers to point this out – there is a crucial element of self-discovery. There are many creative ways that even younger children can log their own anger – from drawings of thermometers to represent heat to the creative use of colour."

Children, and even some adults, may not be aware they're getting angry until it's too late, Klein said.

Children can look for physical cues that they're angry, such as hands held in fists, grinding teeth, flushed cheeks or body shaking. Parents can help them out by sharing what their own body cues are, he added.

After children start becoming aware of their anger and begin understanding that it's causing problems, Klein recommends using a variety of anger-reducing strategies. Many of them are similar to techniques used by adults.

Anger reducers include simple visualization and breathing exercises, which are helpful for almost all children. Young kids can be taught to take deep breaths by asking them to imagine blowing out candles. From ages eight and up, Klein recommends practising at least one period a day of 20 deep breaths. "You can't be angry and relaxed at the same time," he said.

Other anger-reducing strategies include physical activity – shooting hoops, counting backwards from 20 (not 10), using a "reminder" word or image, like "iceberg," to cool down or visualizing a stop sign. Not every strategy will work for every child. Kids should choose ones they like and can relate to, Klein said.

He emphasized parental influence in dealing with children's anger, noting that parents can reinforce the use of appropriate strategies. "Point it out and praise positive behaviour," he said. Tell a children that you really like the way they handled themselves, describe the strategy the child used, and ask what triggered their anger, he added.

Parents are also models, Klein said. "If there are angry parents, there will be angry kids." Parents who want their children to control anger should model anger-reducing strategies wherever possible.

And if a parent does react in an angry way, he or she should talk about it afterward. Even the littlest children have big ears and even from three floors away, "they'll hear what you're saying," Klein said.

Memoirist grew up Jewish in Toronto's Little Italy

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

A comment that Saul Cantor's daughter, Rochelle, made more than five years ago inspired him to write his memoirs.

She said to him, in 2000, "I know some of the things about your life, but there are a lot of things I don't know," he writes in his recently published book, *From Then to Now: Growing up Jewish in Toronto's Little Italy*.

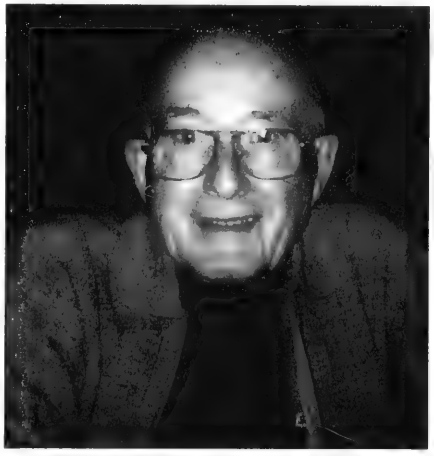
In the book, Cantor, 85, who calls himself "an ordinary man," urges other "ordinary people" to write their memoirs for their children, grandchildren and others to come. Cantor has a son, David, and two grandchildren.

From Then to Now is made up of vignettes in which Cantor, 85, describes his childhood and other phases of his life – his teen years, his work in the Royal Air Force (RAF) during World War II and his two marriages. He also writes about his children, business, and his active life filled with creative hobbies. The book includes photographs.

Cantor's grandparents, Jankel and Faiga Sandperl, were born in the mid-1800s in Poland. He dedicates his book to his parents – Nathan Contorowitz, who came to Canada from Kielce, Poland, and his mother, Gittel Pheffer, who came from Stashov, Poland. They met and married in Toronto in 1915.

"My father taught me by example – truth, courage, diligence and loyalty. He encouraged me in the adventures of life and I shall be forever grateful for that," Cantor says.

"My mother also taught me by example – love, compassion, charity and kindness. Her devotion to her husband and children was a lesson that I learned from her."



Saul Cantor

Cantor writes about the family's first home on Baldwin Street, then another one at 192 Bellwoods Ave., where he and his family lived among Italian immigrants.

"I had many Italian friends when I lived on Bellwoods Avenue and I still keep in touch with them," he says.

Cantor attended Grace Street Public School and Harbord Collegiate and Central Technical School.

In his memoir, he tells of his summers at Fenlon Falls, Camp B'nai Brith at Willow Beach, and Smith's Bay House at Port Carling. He reminisces about Bellwoods Park, the YMHA on Brunswick Avenue, the library on St. George Street (two blocks east of the corner of Spadina Avenue and College Street) and his buddies and their antics.

"I didn't have a bar mitzvah when I was 13 years old because of the Depression. I went to the Farband Shula and the Euclid Talmud Torah. But I did have a bar mitzvah at the Adath Sholom Synagogue in 1979 with seven other men when I was in my mid 50s," Cantor says.

"I guess you can say it is better late than never."

In 1940, Cantor and two of his friends applied to the air force. He was rejected because as a child he had tuberculosis. A civilian during the war, he worked for the RAF at Gander, Nfld., as a mechanic in the Ferry Command.

"That's where the large airplanes were checked before being flown to Scotland for active duty," he says.

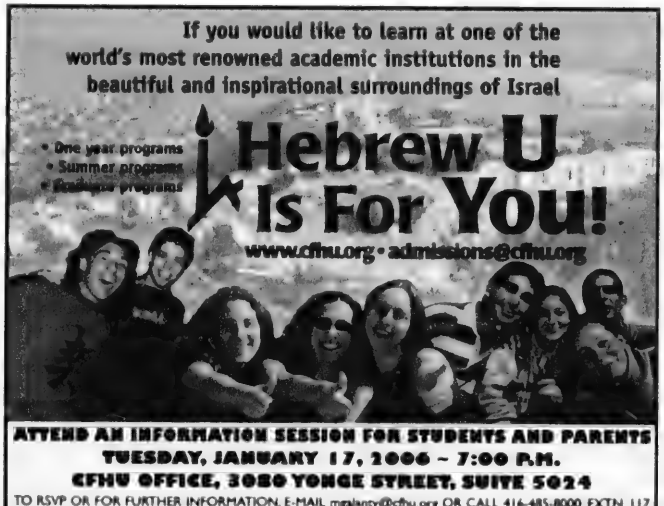
"My two friends were killed in active duty."

Cantor writes about his business career after World War II, including working at the Junction Sports Centre on Dundas Street West.

Cantor retired 20 years ago and says he tries his best to keep as active as he can. "I think it is important to exercise my body and my brain every day. My wife, Goldie, and I have a lot of interests in common, antiquing, outdoor activities, travelling and dancing.

"It is also very important to be forgiving and not to carry a grudge. I think that you have to love yourself first because if you don't learn to love yourself, you can't love others."

For a copy of *From Then to Now*, call Saul Cantor, 905-303-8003.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Terror from Gaza down since pullout, Mofaz says

By GIDEON ALON and AMOS HAREL
Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

ASHKELON — The number of casualties in terror attacks that originated from Gaza has dropped significantly since Israel left the territory, and while 61 suicide bombings emerged from Gaza in 2002, 2005 saw only five such attacks, Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz said last week.

Speaking on a visit to the southern city of Ashkelon, Mofaz also said that Al Qaeda has been trying to gain a foothold in Jordan and Egypt and continuously works to establish terror cells inside Israel, but that these attempts have all failed so far.

Mofaz visited Ashkelon at the invitation of Mayor Roni Mahtzari after Gaza terror groups fired Qassam rockets at the city.

Mofaz said Israel would do its utmost to prevent Qassam fire from Gaza and that all those involved in rocket launches are prime targets for the Israel Defence Forces.

In related developments, Chief of Staff Dan Halutz said last week that he does not think the IDF will act soon against Iran's nuclear program.

"I do not believe an IDF operation against the Iranians will be necessary soon," Halutz told Army Radio.

Halutz said he believes Iran will be able to produce a nuclear bomb within the next decade. But he differentiated between the "point of no return" when Iran acquires the independent technological capability to make the bomb and when it can complete the process.

Mossad chief Meir Dagan told the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee last week that Iran could cross the point of no return in a matter of months.

Halutz also said that all political options to torpedo the Iranian nuclear program should be exhausted before any other action is considered. He said those efforts have successfully delayed Tehran's plans by two years.

Halutz also said that because Iran doesn't yet have a nuclear bomb, it doesn't constitute an existential threat to Israel. "When there is an existential threat, a country must take every action to ensure its existence," he said.

Dagan told the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee that Iran wants to produce more than one nuclear bomb. He warned that within a number of months, Iran will attain technological independence, and that the subsequent development of a nuclear bomb will only be a matter of time. But he refused to predict when Iran would be able to produce a bomb.

Spielberg film elicits strong doubts in Israel

Continued from page 1

Spielberg shows Avner's doubts growing over time and under operational duress. *Munich* posits that the hero was the leader of a diverse group of agents assigned to track down a rogue's gallery of wanted men from the Black September faction of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

For dramatic effect, the assassins are isolated in the field, left to their own devices by an Israeli high command loath to risk exposure.

But such a set-up flies in the face of logic, as well as logistics, according to Israelis in the know.

"There was never a single list of targets drawn up, and certainly never a single hit-team assigned to handle them," a retired Mossad deputy chief said on condition of anonymity.

"It was a matter of putting out the word to our people who were posted in various countries to look out for top Black September members. When these were located, then we sent out the right agents to take care of business, on a more ad-hoc basis."

Munich rightly notes that Golda Meir, Israel's prime minister at the time of the Olympics attack, authorized the Mossad to go on the offensive – this was an executive decision.

But the film has elicited strong doubts in Israel by showing Meir personally recruiting Avner for the mission.

"C'mon, like any intelligence agency we had the right people trained and ready to go. The idea of a prime minister meeting with a junior field agent is unthinkable – it's bad for secrecy, for a start, not to mention completely unnecessary," said one veteran of Mossad operations at the time.

When asked about the Mossad's criticism, Dennis Ross, the former U.S. Middle East envoy, characterized them as fair.

"This is a movie," said Ross, who served as a consultant to Spielberg on the film. "There's no claim that it's a documentary."

Then there is the peculiarly international composition of Spielberg's hit team, with Avner apparently being the only Israeli-born agent.

While the Mossad is known to seek out agents with foreign citizenships and mastery of foreign languages, veterans say it is rare for someone without an established Israeli pedigree to be recruited. Always on the lookout for potential moles or double agents, the Mossad is unlikely to take on someone whose personal history is not intricately tied to the Jewish state.

Remarkably, the agents in *Munich* are also all male. This flies in the face of a notorious, and fully documented, Mossad operation at the time: the 1973 killing in Norway of a Moroccan waiter who was mistaken for the Black September chief. Two women were among the Israeli agents tried for murder in that case.

"In espionage, like in police work, there is nothing better than having a woman accomplice on hand," said Shimron. "If you are on a stakeout – say, waiting in a car – and have a lady with you, you are far less likely to be questioned."

According to *Munich*, the hit team had its expenses paid out of a Swiss bank account, but still had to keep receipts – something Mossad veterans say is simply bad trade.

"The whole point of being a spy is having a cover, and having a cover usually means you have a legitimate-sounding and normal source of income," said one. "So why shlep all the way to Switzerland? As for keeping receipts, why provide the authorities with a paper trail if you are caught?"

But Ross said Spielberg had a different goal in mind.

"In the end, I think he wanted to make a movie that was a compelling story to begin with. No. 2, I think he wanted to at least highlight some of the dilemmas that you face when responding to terror."

According to most authoritative accounts, Israel's hunt for Black September continued over two decades, with the final death toll reaching close to 20. But Spielberg's version leads the audience to believe that just 11 terrorists were on the hit list.

"There are 11 Jews killed in Munich, 11 Palestinians that we killed – in other words, 'tit for tat' and 'an eye for an eye,'" Michael Bar-Zohar, who wrote an authorized history of the reprisals, told Israel Radio. "This balancing act is simply outrageous, because anyone who sees our fight with those who want to destroy us as balanced does not know what he is talking about."

The director admits inventing a scene entirely at one point in the plot. It shows a PLO man lecturing Avner on the justice of the Palestinian quest for a homeland.

Without that exchange, Spielberg told *Time* magazine, "I would have been making a Charles Bronson movie – good guys versus bad guys and Jews killing Arabs without any context. And I was never going to make that picture."

With files from JTA's Chanan Tigay in New York

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Israeli fashions shown on campus runways across Canada

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

JERUSALEM — For as long as Lena Avronin can remember, she has been designing clothes.

"Fashion is my passion and has been since I was a child," says the 25-year-old who recently graduated from the fashion design BA program at Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem.

"A culture's desire to dress a certain way is an expression of its ceaseless desire to recreate itself," she says. "In Israel, where the world of fashion has virtually exploded over the past few years, this is especially true."

This recent "explosion" of Israeli fashion creativity accounts for the success of Fashion for Passion, a program initiated by the Toronto-based National Jewish Campus Life (NJCL), which is funded by the United Israel Appeal (UIA). NJCL provides resources to Hillel and other Jewish campus centres across Canada. Last March, for its inaugural year, Fashion for Passion brought the creations of six Israeli designers to runways in Vancouver, Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto.

Audiences ranged in size from 300 to 800 and people paid $18 each – with proceeds going to the One Family Fund for victims of terror – to see the latest lines by Doreen Frankfurt, Ronen Chen, Sasson Kedem, Segal Dekel, Mirit Weinstock, Zoe and Yael Orgad, all of whom have boutiques in Israel, and most of whom have their labels in the United States or Europe.

A sample of what's to come down the catwalk.

"The idea for the event came out of the desire to show Israel beyond the conflict," says NJCL's Ryla Braemer. "When you read about Israel, you read about terror and politics. You don't read about the country's fashion. But Israel's fashion industry is very cutting edge."

In addition, says Braemer, fashion is a field that interests most students, both male and female. "We thought it would be a good way for Jewish students across the country to reach out to their fellow students and local communities and show them a side of Israel that most people don't get to see, or don't think about."

They are working toward making this year's event – which will raise money for a thus-far unnamed Israeli charity – bigger than last year's, Braemer says. It will take place again in March, on more campuses and involve more designers.

Frankfurt says it is "important to show the world that Israel is not just some 'Wild West' checkpoint for Jews fulfilling the Jewish dream of living in the Holy Land". She is the only Israeli designer who still has a manufacturing plant in Tel Aviv, and has since 1982.

"There is wonderful real life and real creativity here and that is very important. A country that does not create is a country that does not exist."

Weinstock, a Tel Aviv-based designer, agrees that it's important to show the world a different side of Israel. She is among at least five new Israeli artists who will be participating in this year's Fashion for Passion.

"Israel has a strong fashion culture. There is a lot going on here," says Weinstock, whose women's boutique, Reine, is located on Dizengoff Street, Tel Aviv's most prestigious fashion strip.

Not all of this year's Fashion for Passion designers have shops on Dizengoff. And this year's designers are a much more mixed bag than last year's. Designers at different stages of their career and from various backgrounds will be introduced. They include Avronin, a recent graduate; Kami Cadan and Ronit Sherf, who have a joint label; Robata; and Tel Aviv-based Zahava Sobel, who designs especially for religious women.

"This year, we have different faces and names," says Sarah Wilner, Fashion for Passion's Israel-based recruiter, who made aliyah from Montreal five months ago.

"In addition to showcasing the work of established designers, we wanted to give a chance to upcoming ones. Especially since the show is geared toward students abroad, why not involve Israeli students too? We want as many talented designers in Israel as possible to have the opportunity to show their clothes and expose their creations to Canadian audiences."

Weinstock says she is trying to "open to an international market, so it is important for her to show her work to new audiences. Her label is carried by Rosebud in New York City, and she will be participating in a fashion show in Denmark in May. But Fashion for Passion is giving her a first opportunity to penetrate the Canadian market. She will be sending 10 outfits – representing her autumn, winter, spring and summer lines – to the shows in Canada.

Avronin says she is delighted that her collection "is travelling to participate in such large cities. I hope it will be the first step to help me realize my dream of entering the world of professional design. It could be the beginning of a new life. I think Canadian audiences will be pleasantly surprised to see that in Israel, there is also good taste and interest in fashion."

According to Frankfurt, the Israeli lifestyle has given birth to a new fashion trend, which has caught on in different places around the world. "The Israeli lifestyle is caught somewhere between the weather and relaxation of an island in Greece and urban life," she says, offering the example of Israeli businesspeople who work in prestigious, high-tech firms, but at the same time choose to eat their lunch in cafés, rather than in fancy restaurants.

"It's relaxed but stylish, and it's the unique Israeli look," she notes, adding that the look is so distinct, she would be capable of picking out an Israeli designer crossing the street in Covent Garden in London.

Weinstock says that in the past few years, "Israel has produced a lot of young designers who are not afraid to open stores or to produce creative, new catalogues." She attributes part of the industry's creative boom to the presence, in Israel, of internationally reputed schools such as Shenkar School of Engineering and Design in Tel Aviv and the Bezalel Academy in Jerusalem.

"There are a lot of very creative people in Tel Aviv," says Weinstock

Sobel is one such creative designer participating in this year's Fashion for Passion. "It unites two parts of the world together, through art – and art is the most effective way to bring people together," she says.

Frankfurt concurs. "Design is the best way to spread feelings of community," she says.

Wilner observes that Fashion for Passion "really is the perfect awareness project – both for Israeli designers and Canadian audiences."

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אל המשיב:

דע כי המבקשת הגישה נגדך בקשה להחרת נישואין בבה"נ 9956/04 בבית המשפט המחוזי בירושלים, אשר מהותה כמפורט בכתב הבקשה עד נספחיו. אם יש בדעתך להגיש כתב הגנה ע"ך להגישם לבית משפט, תוך 30 ימים מיום פרסום הודעה זו. אם לא תעשה כן, תהא למבקשת הזכות לבקש מבימ"ש, בסעמד צד אחד, לקבל נגדך פסק דין שלא בפניך. כתב הבקשה מצוי במזכירות ביהמ"ש העליון ואו במשרד ב"כ המבקשת. בכתובת הנקובה דלעיל

שמר כהן, עו"ד ..... ב"כ המבקשת

Science hostel opens in Jerusalem

By SIMON GRIVER
(IPS)

JERUSALEM — At first glance there is nothing exceptional about Beit Bretter – an attractive building of Jerusalem stone located on the Hebrew University's Edmund Safra Givat Ram Campus.

But Beit Bretter, which opened its doors in July 2005, is a unique hostel that offers students from disadvantaged communities in Israel a once-in-a-lifetime educational experience – the opportunity to participate in concentrated science camps and at the same time learn about the role of Jerusalem as Israel's political, cultural and historic capital.

Made possible by the late Ernest Bretter, a Dutch Holocaust survivor who lived in the United States, the Jerusalem Foundation built the hostel, at a cost of $4.4 million (US), together with the Hebrew University and Jerusalem municipality.

"Beit Bretter's location makes it unique," said Yitzhak Parnas, emeritus professor of neuroscience at the Hebrew University who initiated Beit Bretter when he served as chairman of the Hebrew University's Authority for the Community and Youth.

"It is adjacent to the Belmonte Science Laboratories Center, thereby providing high school students with state-of-the art university laboratories and academic teaching, and is also in the heart of Jerusalem's government complex, within walking distance of the Knesset and Supreme Court," said Parnas.

"The lessons given to the students about the history of Jerusalem and Israeli government institutions are of the same high academic level as the science curriculum. They come here as students not as tourists."

The internationally acclaimed Belmonte Center offers leading-edge scientific instruction in biology, chemistry, physics, computer science, biotech, ecology, microelectronics and electro-optics to some 50 high schools in the Jerusalem region – Jewish, Muslim and Christian.

"Although more than 20,000 students in the Jerusalem region benefit from the Belmonte Laboratories each year, we felt frustrated that students elsewhere in Israel did not have the opportunity to come here," said Shabtai Dover, director of the Hebrew University's Authority for the Community and Youth.

"Building a hostel like Beit Bretter now means that 5,000 more students can use Belmonte each year."

Since the start of the academic year, Beit Bretter, with its 18 bedrooms and 72 beds, dining room, youth clubroom and esthetically pleasing décor, has hosted high school youth from Ra'anana, Kiryat Ono near Tel Aviv, the Bedouin town of Tuba Zagariya, and more recently from Kiryat Yam near Haifa for weeklong stays.

"We spent this morning in the biology laboratories learning about the damage done by smoking," said Vered Isakov, 15, from Kiryat Yam. "We were shown the lungs of a normal, healthy pig and then the lungs of a pig which were completely black from secondary smoking.

"Yesterday we were in the Old City," she added, "and this afternoon we went around the Israel Museum. I have been to Jerusalem before, but this is the first time I've been able to fully appreciate the city and understand its importance for Jews and Israelis."

Milena Mironyuk, a Grade 10 teacher from Kiryat Yam who accompanied the students, immigrated to Israel from Ukraine in 1990. "Of the 36 teenagers in my class only one has parents who were born in Israel," she said. "Almost all their parents were born

Continued on page 29

Science hostel opens in Jerusalem

Continued from page 28

in the former Soviet Union, so coming here to Jerusalem and learning about Jewish history and the importance of our democratic institutions has been especially important."

Avi Karpel, 15, from Kiryat Yam, was born three months after his parents immigrated to Israel from the Ukraine. "This morning I was in the physics lab learning about waves and optics. It was fascinating. I want to work in high-tech when I've finished the army and university."

Beit Bretter and the Belmonte Center form part of a "Youth Science Complex" at Givat Ram, which also includes the Joseph Meyerhoff Youth Center for Advanced Scientific Studies – for curious elementary schoolchildren seeking extra-curricular enrichment activities – and the Bloomfield Science Museum.

"The beauty of our Science and Jerusalem program is that it creates an excellent balance for the students," said Parnas. "However fascinating the experiments performed in the Belmonte Center may be, you cannot expect teenagers to be stuck in laboratories for 12 hours at a time. So they spend half the program in laboratories and the other half outside in Jerusalem. It works very well."

Ruth Cheshin, president of the Jerusalem Foundation, said "Beit Bretter is rapidly becoming one of the most desirable destinations for Israeli high schools seeking stimulating new challenges for their students."

Youngsters socialize between classes at the Beit Bretter science hostel on the Hebrew University campus. [IPS photo]

Immigration to Israel up

Immigration to Israel from North America and France rose in 2005, according to the Jewish Agency for Israel. Some 3,052 people moved to Israel from North America, an increase from 2,640 in 2004, and 2,980 came from France, a rise from 2,415 the year before. Overall, an estimated 23,000 immigrants will arrive before Dec. 31, a slight increase from 2004. Immigration from the former Soviet Union dropped by 10 per cent, although the 9,124 people who came still made up 40 per cent of all new immigrants. In addition, 29,712 young Jews took part in short-term programs to Israel, while 5,583 took part in longer-term educational programs. Both of these numbers were up from 2004.

First woman university head

A woman will become president of an Israeli university for what is believed to be the first time. Dr. Rivka Carmi, a pediatrician and geneticist, was named president of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Carmi replaces Avishai Braverman, who left his post to enter politics as a candidate for the Labor Party in the next Knesset elections.

Iraqi Jews to visit hometown

A group of Iraqi-born Jews in Israel are planning a trip to their hometown. A dozen people will make the trip to Mosul this spring, the *Jerusalem Post* reported. A Kurdish guide will help coordinate the trip. An estimated 120,000 Jews left Iraq in the 1950s, with most going to Israel.

Population nears 7 million

Israel's population is nearing seven million. Seventy-six per cent of Israel's 6,986,300 people are Jewish, according to Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics. Twenty per cent are Arab and four per cent are non-Arab Christians or residents with no official religious status.

Bomber kills soldier

A Palestinian suicide bomber blew himself up at a West Bank checkpoint last week, killing an Israeli army officer. The Islamic Jihad terrorist was apparently en route to Israel when the taxi he was taking was stopped at a surprise military roadblock. Asked by troops to leave the vehicle, the bomber detonated his load, killing himself and an Israeli soldier, Lt. Ori Binamo, 21. Three other soldiers were wounded, and a Palestinian in the taxi, who security sources said might also have been from Islamic Jihad, was killed. The Palestinian Authority issued a statement condemning the bombing as "against the national interests of the Palestinian people."

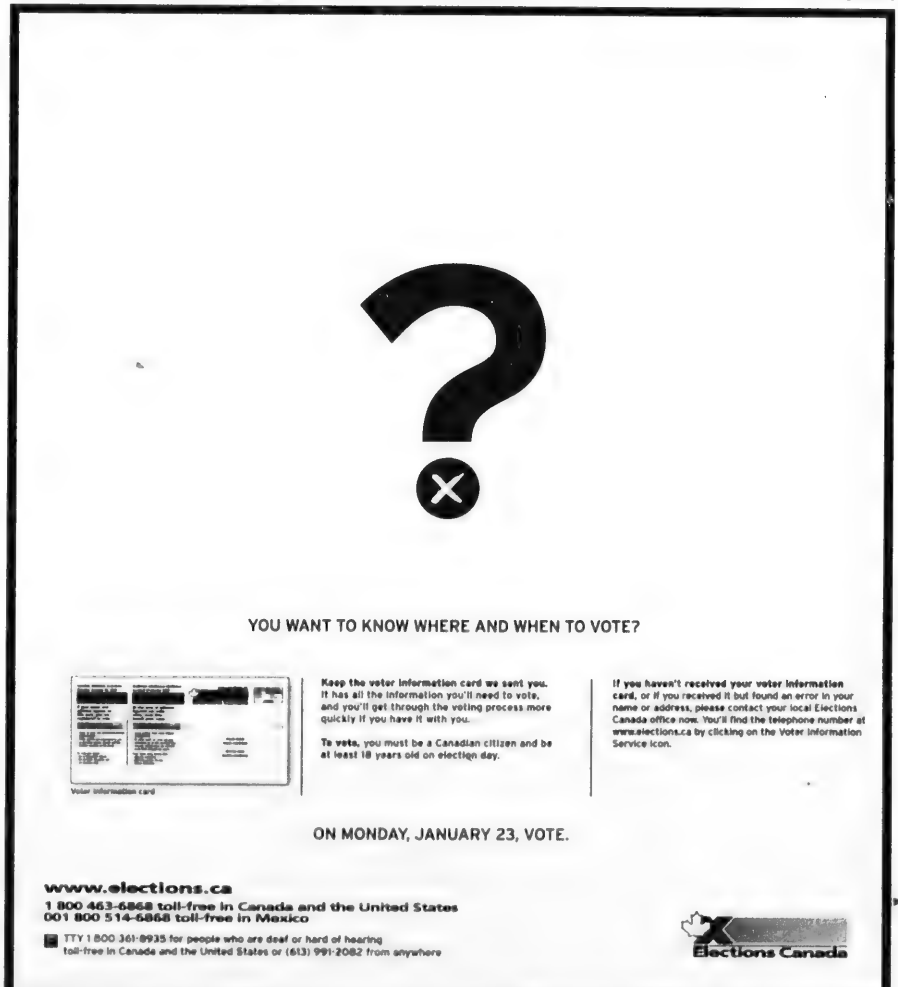
No-go zone in Gaza

Israel declared off-limits an area of the Gaza Strip that Palestinians have used to fire rockets into Israel. The ordinance went into effect at 6 p.m. last Wednesday, after the Israeli Air Force dropped thousands of leaflets over Gaza warning residents not to approach land abutting the northern boundary where Jewish settlements had been located. "Anyone who will not heed this warning is placing his or her life in immediate danger," read the leaflets, which included a map of the new buffer zone. Israel vowed to step up counter-measures after Palestinian rockets with extended range were fired from Gaza at the Israeli coastal city of Ashkelon and two army bases. Five IDF soldiers were wounded in the attack on their base.

Sharon to undergo cardiac procedure

Ariel Sharon is scheduled to have a minor heart operation. Doctors for the 77-year-old Israeli prime minister, going public with his medical record, said that Sharon's mild stroke last month was caused by a blood clot traced to a hole in his heart. A common birth defect, the tiny hole will be sealed with a cardiac catheterization in the next two or three weeks, they said.

With files from JTA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Postcard from Jerusalem in wintertime

By DONALD CARR

The *Jerusalem Post* headline, read on Air Canada from Toronto to Tel Aviv, said the rabbis have been praying for rain in Israel. There is a drought across the country and the winter rain is needed.

"Don't worry," I feel like telling my Israeli friends. "The Carrs are on their way!"

Sure enough, like clockwork, on the second day after our arrival, the drought ended. The temperature plummeted and the rain descended in sheets. From then on, there was drizzle, followed by more sheets of rain, intermittent weak sun, wind-blown clouds, cold and dampness.

Ah, idyllic winter vacations in Israel!

Yes, Eilat is 23 degrees as I write. And, although Jerusalem is 11 degrees and raining, if you are staying in a hotel, you are warm and comfortable.

But, try living in an average 45-year-old Jerusalem apartment building, like ours, and you will wonder, "Where are the warmer climes?"

The walls of our building, with its seven individual apartment units, are made of stone that's perfect for keeping the cold and dampness inside.

The building has an antiquated, oil-fired hot-water heating system. We have one radiator in each of our rooms and one in the hallway, for a total of six, counting the bathroom. We have replaced three of them, and now have a trio of brand new, baked white-enamel radiators instead of the former cast iron monsters, which developed leaks and spread rusty water across our ceramic tile floors.

All that is lacking for 22 out of 24 hours is hot water!

By custom, the "keeper of the furnace-room key" (the one apartment owner who constitutes the *va'ad bayit* – the equivalent of a condominium board of directors – as the only permanent occupant of the building who is not afflicted with Alzheimer's or has suffered a stroke) has set the automatic furnace timer to go on at 5:30 p.m. and shut off at 7:30 p.m.

In those two hours, the temperature is so high that it's dangerous to touch a radiator with bare hands, although it's ideal for draping wet laundry, which, with no clothes dryer, would otherwise be hanging, permanently soaked, on the clothesline outside.

Four years ago – the last time we were here at this time of the year – I obtained unlawful access to the furnace room and was able to tiptoe into the basement and re-set the timer.

Day one saw the furnace start an hour earlier and stop one hour later, with no untoward reaction from the apartments! On day two, the furnace went on at 3:30 p.m. and stopped at 9:30 p.m. Still no complaints!

Day three was D-Day. I lowered the thermostat on the furnace (the only temperature control in the building) and set the furnace to work constantly, so that each apartment was probably at about 16 or 17 degrees.

At last, the bone-chilling dampness was checked and a modicum of comfort prevailed – but only for a short while.

About a day later, the building's residents, accustomed to being huddled around their chilblain-producing heaters, started to complain that the building was unusually hot. They were "boiling" and the electric sheets on their beds (substitutes here for electric blankets) made it impossible to sleep!

No amount of logic would persuade them that they were saving very expensive electricity by turning off their heaters, that they were actually saving on costly oil (because the furnace no longer had to heat the radiators to a level where an egg could be fried on them) and that they had a much healthier home environment, resulting in fewer attacks of colds, flu and pneumonia, which they all lived with every winter.

The heating schedule had to be returned to the useless regimen that existed before the temporary aliens arrived.

However, this year there is no hope of achieving even a few days of stolen relative comfort.

We are back to having electric heaters blazing away whenever we are at home. That makes it possible for us to eat in the living-room, instead of on our enclosed balcony, which normally serves as our dining room during those sensible months from about April to October, but is now freezing.

Try taking your bare feet out of bed at 7 a.m. (or earlier, if you are obliged to) and putting them onto an ice-cold tile floor. Let's face it, it was really a summer cottage that we bought in Jerusalem 24 years ago. And only the bat mitzvah of our oldest Israeli granddaughter has brought us here in December!

* * *

It's lunchtime in a beautiful restaurant in the Talpiot district of Jerusalem. There are no tourists expected here and the menu is all in Hebrew (our Achilles heel, despite numerous attempts to learn). The waitress's English is not good enough to translate the lunch menu, so, since the breakfast menu appears to be relatively straightforward, we order fresh orange juice, omelette, fresh rolls, chopped tomato and cucumber salad, pastry and hot tea.

This is a photo of the snow that fell on Mount Hermon during the week of "cold and dampness" that the author experienced in Jerusalem. It was a cold week in Israel. [Israel Sun photo]

The restaurant is cavernous and cold. We are all wearing coats. We ask (partially with meaningful gesticulations) if the restaurant has heating. The waitress makes it clear that it does. We indicate that we cannot feel it. She points to the circular outlets in the ceiling.

"Heaters," she says.

"But they're not working!" I exclaim.

"You're right. What kind of cheese do you want in your omelette?"

We eat lunch in our coats. No use getting upset about it any more.

* * *

My rented car gets a parking ticket, notwithstanding the fact I have purchased the proper parking receipt and displayed it in the window. The fine is 250 shekels (about $60). How can I get it cancelled?

I go to the parking authority office at City Hall. The police officer on duty speaks English. I explain the situation to him.

"You have a rented car?" he asks.

"Yes."

"You live in Canada," he asks, examining my passport.

"Yes."

"When are you leaving the country?"

"Next week."

Without batting an eyelash, he tells me not to pay the ticket.

Don't tell the car rental company, he advises. In four or five months the city will notify the car rental company and demand payment, he says. The car rental company will write back, advising that the driver of the car was a foreigner and has left the country. The ticket will be cancelled.

The car rental company will charge my Visa $20 for the correspondence.

"That's better than paying 250 shekels," he says with a smile, then turns to the next unfortunate driver.

I leave the building shaking my head.

* * *

One still gets a sense of great security as one moves around Jerusalem, shopping, eating in restaurants, visiting unique places of interest, and parking in underground lots.

Alert security guards look you in the eye. You pass through electronic detectors. Security wands are passed over your body, like at airports. If you are driving into a parking lot or shopping centre, they examine your trunk and glove compartment.

Yes, every so often there is a horrible "incident" somewhere in the country, and, doubtless, there are terrorist attempts are thwarted daily, without publicity.

Yet, life goes on. Citizens – still listening to the hourly news on the radio in buses, cars, restaurants or at home – and this year, thank goodness, many tourists, go about their pursuits. With the number of recent shootings in Toronto, one doesn't think twice about the possible dangers in this beautiful land, where everyone still yearns for peace and the right to live their lives unmolested by the surrounding millions.

* * *

It's Christmastime and it's appropriate to face facts about the holy birthplace of Jesus.

For too long, the media have repeated Palestinian Arab propaganda about Israel's alleged oppression of Christian Bethlehem.

Christian Bethlehem?

True, at one time, more than 90 per cent of the population of that city was Christian. But today, less than a quarter of Bethlehem is Christian – and the numbers are dropping rapidly. Sadly, Christians feel neither safe nor at home in a Palestinian environment that echoes Islamist tendencies so stridently. They are concerned about their future.

Just what is that future?

Judging from the recent past, the concerns of Bethlehem's Christians have substance.

Just before Christmas, hundreds of armed Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade gunmen laid siege to Manger Square, demanding from the municipality positions in the Palestinian Authority's "security forces."

It was only a little more than three years ago that members of the same group forcibly occupied the Church of the Nativity for several weeks.

They also "invaded" Christian Beit Jala, a town immediately across the valley from Jerusalem's Gilo district. There, with Christians obliged to flee or forced to be virtual human shields, they let loose a barrage of gunfire from Christian homes onto unprotected Jewish apartments in Gilo, lasting on and off, day and night – for weeks.

Why does one hear virtually nothing from other Christian communities about all this? Is their silence born of the fear that they will make things worse for their co-religionists who still live in Palestinian-controlled territory? Or, do they find little in common with them?

It is very hard for Jews, who feel responsible for each other, wherever they may be, to understand this.

Toronto lawyer Donald Carr is president of The CJN.

Artist discovers his talent for painting later in life

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

It's never too late to discover that you have a hidden talent.

Six years ago, retired civil engineer Arkady Burman, now 75, discovered he had a talent and passion for painting.

He was watching a television show in which an artist was demonstrating some painting techniques and selling oil paints and brushes.

"I phoned and ordered the whole package, which came with instructions. I thought I would try it for $30 or $40. I didn't know I had any artistic ability, although I had to draft at work."

He says he did not remember ever painting before.

"I made the first strokes with a trembling hand. I painted a few landscapes, and then I grew more ambitious.

"My friends advised me to paint from real life, so I installed a mirror on the table and made my first self-portrait."

As a surprise gift for his daughter, he painted his first portrait of her from a photograph.

He went on to paint more portraits, landscapes, figures, paintings on Jewish themes and other pictures.

His first exhibition was in the auditorium of his apartment building in 2002, and then his work was shown at the Brookbanks Public Library, where he received rave reviews. He has since had two more successful exhibitions.

He is now exhibiting his paintings in the library at Mel Lastman Square until Feb. 1, 2006.

Burman, who was born in Kiev, became as a civil engineer there, but in the evenings and in his spare time, he appeared in concerts and recitals, serious drama productions and several movies.

"I love music and acting and I thought my destiny was to be an actor."

During the war, he and other Jews were evacuated to the Ural Mountains when the Germans came to Kiev. Recently, his cousin in Israel sent him two paintings that Burman had created when he was 10 years old in Russia. One was of some Russian tanks and the other was his cousin's mother sitting in her kitchen.

"I don't remember painting them," he says.

He came to Canada in 1980 and worked as a consulting structural engineer. "It was during the 1980 and 1990 recessions, and I didn't have time to think much about performing or looking for other interests."

Still, he continued to perform at parties and gatherings, where he did readings and sang, mostly for friends.

He retired at the age of 65 in 1995 and says he then had time to pursue some of his hobbies. A few years later, he watched the television program that changed his life.

He has never taken formal painting lessons. "Every painting I do is something new for me," he says. "It is like beginning from darkness – then something comes from inside me."

When asked about his future as a painter he comments, "Galleries sell names, not paintings. My purpose is to express myself and to enjoy what I am doing. I am very happy that I have found this talent – it is a miracle that I became an artist."

Many visitors to his exhibitions have written enthusiastic thank-you notes, including some from established artists. Some examples: "beautiful, spiritual, living portraits"; "your landscapes leave you with the feeling of peaceful serenity and connection to nature"; "Arkady Burman has been blessed by God with the gift of art"; "the work I have seen today has made me believe that it is never too late to express yourself;" "The colour and beauty in his paintings is brilliant and enjoyable to view."

Arkady Burman's website is www.artburman.com. For more information about his exhibition at Mel Lastman Square, call 416-227-0412.

One of Burman's paintings

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Concert series showcases Canadian composer Steven Gellman

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

In a cozy, intimate recital hall on Sunday afternoons, 100 or so people gather in Toronto to take in the sounds of dynamic chamber music.

Unlike grand concerts featuring only the classics, these performances highlight the works of Canadian composers in a warm environment.

"The concept of focusing on one Canadian composer throughout the season [and] integrating his or her different chamber works within the familiar repertoire is a unique format," says Dorothy Sandler-Glick, 68, artistic director of the Syrinx Sunday Salons.

Steven Gellman

"The idea is to present new works that people really don't know."

Performed at Heliconian Hall in the Yorkville area, the salons are inviting affairs, with close contact between the audience and musicians.

"There is a warmth to it which is why I like the Heliconian," says Sandler-Glick.

"We give a reception afterward and the people stay round and talk to the performers and composers. It's really a lovely feeling."

Each season, five recitals showcase the works of a Canadian composer, along with incorporating more popular chamber pieces.

Ottawa composer Steven Gellman is the salon's current Canadian feature artist.

"I find his music… to be very mystical," Sandler-Glick says.

"There are some beautiful melodies and interesting rhythms. I find most of his work strikes me because he has this melancholy mysticism."

The next show offers a piano soloist, and other salons will include a piano quartet, a flute and guitar duo and then a string quartet.

Sandler-Glick, the widow of famed Canadian composer Srul Irving Glick and a revered pianist herself, said the genesis of the salons goes back to her parents, who used to host similar musical shows in their home.

"Then about five years ago, a friend of mine, Christopher Clark, said, 'I have a bit of money and I think it would be great to start some musicales,'" Sandler-Glick recalls.

Sandler-Glick's daughter, Paula, introduced the concept of focusing on a Canadian composer.

Clark and Sandler-Glick's brother, Arthur Sandler, were the original sponsors, but later on, Sandler-Glick and company linked up with Syrinx Concerts Toronto.

In previous years, the salons have featured music composed by Sandler-Glick's late husband and Oskar Morawetz.

"The people who learned Oskar Morawetz's music for this recital used them in other concerts and I was very happy to hear that," Sandler-Glick says.

She has similar hopes for Gellman's work.

"We want to attract everybody, but certainly, we want young people to hear this music…so they'll be encouraged or inspired to use Steven Gellman's works in concert," she says.

The artistic director says it's been a challenge getting the salons to grow, but the hall is filling up more and more with each show.

"This is a great and enjoyable adventure for me," she says.

"I feel really lucky to have this opportunity."

As for the future, Sandler-Glick has a grand vision.

"I sort of have a dream, one of these years, to present a year of string quartets, interposed with different composers. But my big dream… is to be able to produce concerts in other countries in order to introduce Canadian music performed by promising young Canadian musicians."

For tickets, contact Dorothy Sandler-Glick at 416-654-0877 or Julie at 416-699-4949. The next show is on Feb. 5.

'A nice *heimishe* Christmas card for the Royals'

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Tom Sandler's photographs have appeared in newspapers and magazines throughout the world, but he says he never believed that one of his photographs would be on "a nice heimishe Christmas card for the Royals."

Fifteen years ago, Sandler volunteered to photograph the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, which honours outstanding young people. That photo session brought him recognition from royalty.

"Over the years, I have developed a rapport with members of the Royal Family and their Canadian representatives," he says.

Last June, Sandler photographed the Earl and Countess of Wessex – Prince Edward, the youngest son of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip, and his wife, Sophie – while they were in Canada on an official visit.

A photograph Sandler took at Queen's Park at an aboriginal ceremony hosted by Ontario's lieutenant-governor, James Bartleman, was selected by the earl and the countess for their Christmas card.

"They sent me a signed card from the palace. I was thrilled. They are delightful people to work with – very hard working and extremely charitable. I've established a wonderful relationship and friendship with them," Sandler says

He adds that he also took the photo for the lieutenant-governor's Christmas card. "I was honoured that the Bartlemans also picked my photo."

Sandler works closely with his wife, Aline, who is also a photographer. "We were the official photographers for other members of the Royal Family, including Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip when they were here for the 50th anniversary of her coronation," he says.

He adds that photographing the Royals is "pretty intense because of the protocol and security that surrounds them. It is not as intense to photograph the younger generation."

Sandler says he finds it exciting to work with the Royals – and he enjoys the perks. "One of the best perks is being able to ride in the royal motorcade."

The Sandlers have photographed many other famous people, including Nelson Mandela, Margaret Thatcher, Audrey Hepburn and the Rolling Stones.

Tom Sandler displays a signed Christmas card with the photograph he took of Prince Edward and his wife, Sophie.

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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By BILL GLADSTONE

Valerie Harper

TOURING PRODUCTION OF *GOLDA'S BALCONY*, STARRING VALERIE HARPER, COMING IN MAY

Golda's Balcony, the acclaimed one-woman play by **William Gibson**, is coming to Toronto this spring with former television star **Valerie Harper** ("Rhoda") in the role of Golda Meir.

According to reviews, the play succeeds in capturing the personality of the woman whom Shimon Peres – who was both her political ally and her rival said possessed "the power to tear down barriers, to open hearts and to penetrate deeply" into human souls with her words.

Among other subjects, *Golda's Balcony* highlights the theme of Israel's once-secret nuclear weapons program. The title refers both to the balcony in Tel Aviv from which Golda viewed the country's growth, and her observation deck at the once-secret nuclear plant at Dimona in the Negev desert.

In a 2002 interview, playwright Gibson (whose most famous work is *The Story of Helen Keller*) related that *Golda's Balcony* grew out of his 1978 play *Golda*. Freighted with a big cast and expensive special effects, the earlier work failed to rouse audiences, he acknowledged.

The significantly revised play utilizes a single performer portraying the charismatic prime minister who led Israel from 1969 to 1974; it has been touring North America to excellent reviews. By most accounts, it manages to capture Golda's special qualities, including the memorable oratorical talent that Peres described in the *New York Times* in 2003.

"When Golda opened her mouth to speak, a metamorphosis took place," he wrote. "Her small physical stature would recede, giving way to an imposing and powerful persona, which generated a climate of confidence and faith, creating a world where excitement replaced fear.

"Without wasting words and doing away with written notes, she would make her political stand clear in a few simple words declaring, 'We do not wish to rule over a million Arabs who do not want us to'; or sarcastically pronouncing, 'The Arabs have become so rich, they can buy anything – even anti-Semitism'; or again, when she remarked that 'we shall never forgive the Arabs for forcing us to educate our children to fight them back.'"

Golda's Balcony spotlights the 80-year-old Golda, reminiscing upon the best of times and the worst of times in Israel's dramatic history. The play also probes what Gibson saw as Golda's loss of idealism through her long service to the Jewish people. "Although just one woman, and one 90-minute act, the overall effect is of a stage peopled by a full cast and varied by multiple scene changes," one reviewer observed.

At the Elgin Theatre, 189 Yonge St., May 23 to 28. Tickets $40 to $125. Ticketmaster, 416-872-5555 or www.ticketmaster.ca

• • •

Hotel Rwanda Hero: Paul Rusesabagina, the hotel manager whose actions inspired the film *Hotel Rwanda*, speaks on the lessons of genocide at four Canadian universities this week. His tour is sponsored by National Jewish Campus Life, a community initiative to facilitate campus discussions on human rights and social activism.

For two months in 1994, as Rwanda descended into murderous chaos, Rusesabagina stood up to militant threats and saved more than 1,200 Tutsi from almost certain death. He speaks at Founders Assembly Hall, York University, on Jan. 10, at 3 p.m. and the following day at Concordia University, Montreal.

• • •

Museum Preview: Scheduled to open in Warsaw in 2008, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews is the largest museum project currently underway in Europe. Its cost is expected to exceed $25 million (US), covered by the Polish government and many private donors. (Museum website, www.jewishmuseum.org.pl)

Simcha Simchovitch

Ewa Junczyk Ziomecka, the museum's director of development, presents a multimedia narrative about the project in Toronto, courtesy of the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation. Admission $5. University of Toronto Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. at Huron. Thursday, Jan. 5, 7:30 p.m.

• • •

Literary News: Toronto Yiddish writer-poet **Simcha Simchovitch** translated and edited an account by his aunt, **Gitel Hopfeld**, about how she and her two children survived the European devastation. *At the Mercy of Strangers: Survival in Nazi Occupied Poland* describes various moving acts of bravery that saved lives. Written originally in Polish, the book is now available in English for $17.50 from the S. Simchovitch Book Fund, 17 Tillplain Rd., Toronto M3H 5R1.

Also available is a new Polish edition of Simchovitch's novel *Stepchild on the Vistula* (originally published in Yiddish as *A Shtifkind By Der Vaysl* in 1992). It was published by the Polish publisher WIEZ and launched at Warsaw's Jewish Book Fair last September. To purchase a copy, send a cheque for $20 to the above address.

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Acting Lessons: Seneca College's Continuing Education at York University Campus offers evening acting classes taught by skilled professionals. Orientation, Thursday, Jan. 12, 7 p.m. 416-491-5050, ext. 4112.

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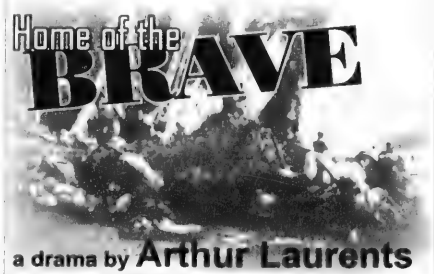

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CJN Profile

Father and daughter celebrate release of their books

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

When Devyani Saltzman was a little girl growing up on the sets of her father's television productions, including *Danger Bay* and *My Secret Identity*, she knew she didn't want to follow in his footsteps.

"I never wanted to have anything to do with [filmmaking and television]. I wanted to be a biologist. I did my degree in sociology, anthropology and biology at Oxford University, and my best subject was genetics. But I always wanted to write," said Saltzman, the 25-year-old only child of producer and filmmaker Paul Saltzman and director Deepa Mehta.

"My interest was in a totally different medium and it always has been. I never particularly wanted to be a filmmaker," she added.

Without hesitation, she said that writing is her biggest passion.

"I think it is the only way I feel a sense of pure engagement with the world through words. It's how I understand the world around me and I love the art of it. When I write, I feel connected," she said.

Her first book, *Shooting Water*, is a non-fiction account of the struggle to produce her mother's film *Water* while attempting to rebuild their relationship which was strained by her parents' divorce.

"When I was 11, my parents divorced and I chose to live with my dad and he had full custody. As an only child, I only saw my mother occasionally and on visits, so our relationship was strained by divorce. *Water* and going to work on the film with her and spending a certain amount of time with her was really our second chance," said Devyani, who is half-Jewish and half-Indian.

"*Shooting Water* is not a book about the making of the film in a technical sense. It's about the politics of South Asia, it's about cinema, it's about the odyssey to create this one film, but it's also about divorce and parent-child relations, and those are universal."

She was 19 when her mother invited her to work on the film as the third assistant camera-person, and although writing a book about her experiences on *Water* was the last thing on her mind at the time, the events that followed turned Devyani from a girl who loved to write into a published author.

Four years after the production had been shut down, *Water*, the third instalment of the *Elements Trilogy* after *Fire* and *Earth*, which examines the lives of widows in India in the late 1930s, started production again in a secret location in Sri Lanka.

It wasn't until Devyani consulted her journal entries that it occurred to her that she might be able to turn them into a book.

"The idea that this was an amazing piece of non-fiction was there, but only in the last year, year and a half did it came to the foreground," she said.

Although Devyani is at a point in her life when most 25-year-olds are still trying to decide what they want to do when they grow up, she has already dipped her hand into photojournalism, freelancing, cinema, non-fiction writing and has ambitions to write a travel book and a novel.

As much as Devyani wants to distance herself from her parents' accomplishments and establish herself as a writer and photographer in her own right, it is hard to deny that she was influenced by her father, who has always encouraged her to follow her own dreams, just as he always has.

Paul Saltzman grew up in Toronto, and was offered a job by the National Film Board of Canada in 1967 to be a researcher and a co-host of a youth public affairs television show after he returned from Mississippi where he was "doing civil rights work."

"I came back and someone offered me a job in television and I thought it sounded like fun and it was. That's kind of how my life has gone in a sense of serendipity," said Paul, who didn't begin making his own films until 1972.

Although Paul, the son of Percy Saltzman, the first weatherman on Canadian television, is best known for directing and producing films and television, he describes himself as a storyteller who is inspired by human courage.

"In a way I am a storyteller in part, which wasn't pre-planned. I found people in my life who gave me courage, and I started making documentary films about them. I didn't really realize what I was doing until I started winning awards and someone said, 'Why do you do the films you do?'

"And I remember I had to think about it, and I said, 'Well I make films about people who give me courage and I want to pass that along to others.' What has been a large part of my motivation is my own creative pleasure, but also passing along to others that which may be of benefit," Paul said.

Paul Saltzman and his daughter Devyani

His latest project, a photography book called *The Beatles in India*, which features pictures he took of the Beatles in 1967 when they stayed at Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's ashram in Rishikesh, India, wouldn't exist if not for Devyani, Paul said.

Paul was 23 when he went to India to do some soul-searching, but accidentally stumbled on the ashram where the Beatles went to meditate and produce some of their best music.

Paul stayed with them for a week, all the while taking pictures of John, Paul, George and Ringo, with their permission.

The pictures were stashed away for 30 years until Devyani remembered a childhood bedtime story about her father's encounter with the Beatles and urged her father to dig them up.

"I projected them in the family room and I remember what you said at the very end," Paul said to his daughter.

"You said, 'You know, Dad, they're really great, you should do something with them.' And that planted the seed."

Six years ago, he released the same photos in a book titled *The Beatles in Rishikesh*, which, he said, was poorly printed by the publishing company.

"I always wanted to do it right, and it grew into doing it in a collectors' form," Paul said of the new book.

While both Paul and Devyani have released books within the same year, Devyani said they are working in completely different media – one is non-fiction, the other a collection of photographs.

"I think it would be hard if you were coming out with a photography book and I was coming out with a photography book," Devyani told her father.

"I just think it's nice to have that space in terms of being different and expressing ourselves in different ways."

"I'm quite happy that we're both in the arts, yet in different arts," she added.

In a career that has spanned three decades, Paul has immersed himself in television, movies, photography and writing.

He owns his own production company called Sunrise Films Limited and doesn't show any signs of slowing down.

"I imagine I will do more writing, I imagine I will take more pictures, I imagine I will make more films, and I imagine I will continue to enjoy my daughter for a great many years."

For more information about *Shooting Water*, visit www.devyanisaltzman.com.

For more information about *The Beatles in India*, visit www.TheBeatlesInIndia.com.

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Music and Jewish identity in postwar America

By NORMAN RAVVIN

***Chronicles, Volume One*, by Bob Dylan, Simon and Schuster**

***The Mayor of MacDougal Street: A Memoir*, by Dave Van Ronk with Elijah Wald, Da Capo**

The recent memoirs by Bob Dylan and Dave Van Ronk are surprisingly rich sources for recovering a sense of Jewish American life in the postwar years. Neither book addresses this subject directly. Van Ronk was not Jewish, and Dylan is famously evasive in the area of religious identity, yet both memoirs reveal, alongside their account of a life in music, how popular culture presented avenues of identification in America under Dwight D. Eisenhower, John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson.

Norman Ravvin

Van Ronk was little known outside the circles of folk aficionados, until Dylan's memoir *Chronicles* made the grand assertion that in "Greenwich Village, Van Ronk was king of the street, he reigned supreme." He died in 2002 before the work on his own memoir of the 1960s Greenwich Village scene was finished.

Completed by music writer Elijah Wald, *The Mayor of MacDougal Street* is a more traditional autobiography than Dylan's book, with its portrait of Van Ronk's early years in Queens, his musical apprenticeship and his role as a leader among young musicians and a link with earlier blues figures. Like Dylan, Van Ronk resists the vanguard role that others have claimed for him. He is an ever wary observer, dedicated to describing the way a young man learns his licks, to giving forgotten bluesmen their due and to offering a description of the transformation of the MacDougal Street scene where musicians from all over the country swapped old-time ballads, into a magnet for tourists and record agents.

Van Ronk's own background was Brooklyn Irish, but he displays an anthropologist's eye for the Jewish character of downtown New York culture. He was a dedicated socialist, and at times an anarchist. His organizing – whether for the Folksingers Guild or the Young People's Socialist League – was done amongst Jews.

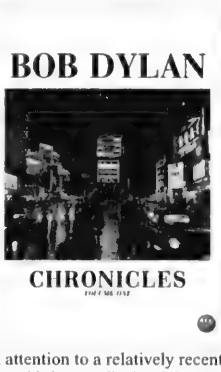
Applying a sharp ethnographic eye, Van Ronk explains that "a lot of both the middle-class left-wingers and the workers back in the 1930s were first- or second-generation immigrants, and the folk revival served as a way for them to establish American roots. This was especially true for the Jews. The folk revivalists were at least 50 per cent Jewish, and they adopted the music as part of a process of assimilation to the Anglo-American tradition."

Van Ronk seems to miss a nice irony here. As the folk music scene allowed the children of immigrants to Americanize, it was also a project of recovery – a replacement of European folk culture with the blues-inflected expression of the black American south.

Still, Van Ronk's thesis goes a good distance toward describing both the uncanniness and the logic of a Jewish kid from Minnesota appearing on the scene as the natural inheritor of Woody Guthrie. Dylan quickly became the Greenwich Village scene's paramount figure – its renegade genius who rose above the crowd of youth who used the folk revival as a way "to establish American roots."

In Van Ronk's portrait, we find what may be the first reliable explanation of how Dylan came to sound like Dylan. Singing loudly, singing like a grizzled bluesman and singing, as Van Ronk puts it, like a "neo-ethnic," was what the hard core of young male folksingers did. It was de rigueur, too, to dress like "the scruffiest-looking fugitive from a cornfield."

One of Dylan and Van Ronk's early models, Ramblin' Jack Elliott, grew up Jewish as Elliott Andnopoz in Ocean Parkway, and was so well disguised as a "good-coin goyish cowboy" that when Dylan learned of Elliott's background, "he fell off his chair, he was rolling around on the floor, and it took him a couple of minutes to pull himself together and get up again… A lot of us had suspected that Bobby was Jewish, and after that we had no doubts."



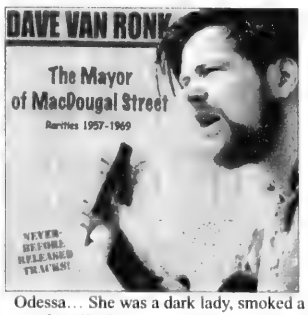
The best approach is to read *The Mayor of MacDougal Street* first, followed by Dylan's stranger and, in ways, richer book. *Chronicles* frustrated some readers, although its reception has been largely positive. Reviewers repeated similar complaints: the lack of a linear narrative; the detailed attention to a relatively recent recording, *Oh Mercy*, with little said about earlier breakthrough recordings; the disinterest in discussing Christian evangelism and its relationship to Dylan's roots.

When read with care, however, *Chronicles* offers terrific flashes of personal revelation that reviewers neglected to focus on.

Dylan develops his memories along two separate narrative lines. Duluth, Minn., where he was born, and Hibbing, where he grew up, are repeatedly linked with the 14th-century arrival of Vikings, connecting the landscape with American prehistory and autochthony, as if the upper midwest is the cradle of everything that followed these events.

As well, this part of the Midwest is linked with the home of the blues, since it and Memphis stand at "opposite ends of the Mississippi River." Highway 61, he tells us, "the main thoroughfare of the country blues, begins about where I came from… Duluth to be exact."

By way of these motifs, Dylan constructs a myth of himself,



and places himself on the American landscape as a quester after its most traditional music. But he does not hide the particularity of his own roots. His father was Duluth-born and raised. But Dylan writes, too, of a grandmother who had "come to America from Odessa… She was a dark lady, smoked a pipe… Her family was from Kagizman, a town in Turkey near the Armenian border, and the family name had been Kirghiz. My grandfather's parents had also come from that same area, where they had been mostly shoemakers and leatherworkers."

His father's polio kept him from army service during World War II, but Dylan recalls uncles – he names six but says there were more – who had "gone and come back alive… to the Philippines, Anzio, Sicily, North Africa, France and Belgium. They brought back mementos and keepsakes – a straw Japanese cigarette case, German bread bag… They returned to civilian life as if nothing ever happened, never said a word about what they did or what they saw."

It is this material – a memory of Kagizmani shoemakers and the silence of men who had come back from the war in Europe – that compelled Dylan toward what he calls a "parallel universe" with "archaic principles and values; one where actions and virtues were old style." Call it American folk music.

Norman Ravvin's fiction includes the novel, Lola by Night, *and the story collection* Sex, Skyscrapers and Standard Yiddish. *He is Chair of Concordia University's Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.*

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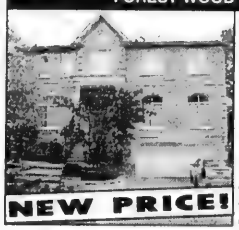

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Morgan Pressel granted full LPGA membership

CJN News Services

The LPGA has granted teen golf phenom Morgan Pressel full membership for the entire 2006 season. She will begin her first full pro season in February.

Pressel, 17, was informed of the decision in a phone call while she was on her way to high school classes in south Florida.

The Boca Raton, Fla., native said the news was "a dream come true."

Although she had tied for sixth at the LPGA qualifying tournament, earning her the right to play on the women's tour, LPGA rules barred her from playing as a LPGA member until she turns 18 in May.

Pressel could have played six times before then under sponsor's exemptions, but any money and points she would have earned would not have gone toward rookie of the year honours, the money list or eligibility for the LPGA playoffs.

Morgan Pressel [Photo courtesy LPGA]

Pressel said she planned to finish her last year of high school. Despite being absent from the classroom for more than 10 weeks in 2005, she maintained a 3.9 grade-point average, the *Miami Herald* reported.

Pressel played in seven LPGA events in 2005, never finishing lower than 25th and making the top five twice. She nearly won the U.S. Women's Open at Cherry Hills Country Club last June. She finished second only after Birdie Kim sunk a nearly impossible bunker shot at the 72nd hole.

Pressel won the U.S. Women's Amateur two months later and became the first player to sweep the five biggest events on the American Junior Golf Association circuit.

Pressel's uncle is Aaron Krickstein, the youngest player (16) to win on the ATP Tour. At 17, he became the youngest player to be ranked in the top 10.

Pressel was a star golfer at an early age. When she was nine she broke 80, at age 11 it was 70. When she was 12, she qualified for the U.S. Women's Open – the youngest player ever to do so.

Pressel received a second bit of good news recently. The Callaway Golf Company, which manufactures and sells golf clubs, balls and accessories, signed her to a multi-year contract to play with and endorse Callaway equipment.

Last November, she signed with IMG, the world's largest international sport management and marketing group.

Yeshiva U hoops legend a 'straight up' guy

NEW YORK — Bernard "Red" Sarachek, longtime coach of the Yeshiva University (YU) basketball team and a member of both the New York City Hall of Fame and the New York City Basketball Hall of Fame, died late last year in Deerfield Beach, Fla., after a lengthy illness. He was 93.

Obituary

For the past 15 years, Sarachek had lent his name to the most prestigious basketball tournament for Jewish high schools from across North America.

YU will host the Red Sarachek Invitational Basketball Tournament at its Manhattan campus from March 30 to April 3. The tournament will include 18 teams, among them Yeshivat Or Chaim (Toronto), the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto and Hebrew Academy of Montreal. In the past, Bialik High School of Montreal has also attended.

Renowned internationally as a coach of both coaches and players, Sarachek counted among his disciples some of the best-known coaches in the United States, including Lou Carnesecca, Jack Donohue and Red Holzman.

"He has taught more high school and college coaches in [the New York area] than anybody," said former St. John's University coach Carnesecca. "Red is the guru."

A tireless roundball strategist and innovator, Sarachek was featured in a photo in the *New York Times* in 1956 while on the subway with three YU players as they studied a notebook-sized blackboard on which Sarachek had sketched plays. That photo accompanied a story by Gay Talese headlined, "Yeshiva quintet holds skull sessions in subway."

Sarachek coached the YU team from 1942 to 1943 and from 1945 to 1969.

One of Sarachek's players was Hamilton-born Stan Raphael, today a lawyer in Toronto.

Raphael attended YU from 1966 to 1968 but played for Sarachek only in his first year.

The memories of that experience are still vivid.

"I remember him as a tough American coach. He smoked a cigar during practice, and he'd throw a lit cigar at us if he was mad," Raphael said.

Sarachek stressed discipline and preparation, Raphael continued.

Raphael's previous experience playing high school basketball in Hamilton barely prepared him for the college game.

"He had a whole series of set plays. He was so organized," Raphael said.

"He was a real tough guy. He really knew basketball. It was like being in the army."

Bernard "Red" Sarachek [Photo courtesy Yeshiva University]

Sarachek, who "was tough on everybody," seemed to delight in picking on Raphael – for being Canadian.

Sarachek, Raphael recalled, used to tell him, "'I don't know why you're on the team. Canadians play hockey, not basketball.'"

Despite that gruffness, Sarachek helped Raphael find a part-time job to help him get through college. Raphael sold running shoes provided by Sarachek from his store.

Raphael would travel to high schools in Harlem to sell the shoes for $5 each. He'd earn a 50 cent commission from each sale. It was enough for pocket money, Raphael recalled.

Sarachek's ties to professional basketball go back to when the sport was in its infancy in the 1940s. At the time, Sarachek simultaneously coached the Scranton Miners of the American Basketball League and a team representing Herkimer, N.Y., in the New York State League. He led both teams to championships while at the same time coaching the YU team.

With Scranton in the late 1940s, the Bronx-born Sarachek broke the league's segregation rules by playing Dolly King, William "Pop" Gates and Eddie Younger at the same time. Pop Gates went on to a stellar pro career that led to international fame with the Harlem Globetrotters and eventual enshrinement in the NBA Hall of Fame.

Current YU coach Jon Halpert, in his 34th season as coach, played for Sarachek from 1962 to 1966. Halpert said the key thing to know about Sarachek was that he believed in the truth.

"If you made a bad play, you heard about it," Halpert said. "He did what he thought was right and he said what he thought was right. That was Red. That's how he approached all things. He had as many Italian friends as Jewish friends. As many Irish friends as Jewish friends. As many black friends as Jewish friends. As long as you were truthful and straight up, he liked you. There was no spin with Red."

With files from Paul Lungen

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A reminder of why

By MICHAEL GORDON

It was a remarkable headline, early in November – "Unanimous UN declaration of int'l Holocaust Day." I was in Israel with my fourth UJA medical mission, and we exalted in this further blow against Holocaust deniers.

We entered the new Yad Vashem. Its powerful and moving exhibits, along with the UN declaration, established that those whose lives were lost would always be remembered. I looked at the pictures and interviews of the elderly survivors and recalled the many Holocaust survivor patients I looked after during my years of practice at Baycrest Centre for Geriatric Care.

The Senior Side of Life

I remember the first patient I saw for whom the implications of the Holocaust hit me in a way I had never experienced. My grandparents were Lithuanian pogrom survivors from the early 20th century, and therefore escaped the Holocaust. I recall, as a youngster, visiting a farm in the Catskills with my maternal grandmother who was an excellent singer. The hosts from her ancestral community celebrated the reunion with much eating and singing, and I vividly recall uncomprehendingly seeing numbers tattooed on the arms of all her friends.

The patient was telling me his medical history. When asked about his family history, he stopped and looked at me. "I do not know anything about my family's medical history. They all perished in the Holocaust, all 163 of them."

I turned from my notes and looked into this man's moistened eyes. "All of them died," I said, and he corrected me – "Were murdered."

I finished my examination, realizing that whatever discussions I might usually have with family members about care and planning for the future could not take place with this patient – he was alone. And yet, he had managed to continue with his life for 30 years since arriving from Poland as a camp survivor.

I have seen the results of the Holocaust in my patients, ranging from enormous strength and tenacity for life to being forever haunted and plagued by the experiences and memories.

As his Alzheimer's dementia progressed, one of my patients would awaken every night panicked with severe agitation and tell his wife, "They should have taken me." She believed this referred to the morning roll call in Auschwitz when two friends standing on either side of him were brutally removed for execution but he was spared, for no understandable reason.

In contrast, one of my patients who, as a young adult, survived alone for three years in the forests of Czechoslovakia, hiding and sleeping in caves, avoiding imminent capture and execution by the Nazis, was referred for possible cardiac bypass surgery. I read the letter from the cardiac surgeon estimating a surgical mortality risk of 30 per cent, which appeared too high to go ahead, and he asked, "Does that mean a 70 per cent chance of surviving?" I nodded yes.

"That sounds pretty good to me when, for three years, I had a 95 per cent chance of dying every day and managed to survive."

He was referred back to the surgeon and convinced her to operate, after explaining that the risk was personally acceptable to him. He had the operation, and two weeks after surgery, he was home in Baycrest Terrace.

The declaration that International Holocaust Memorial Day will be Jan. 27 and the experience at the new Yad Vashem reminded me of all the people I have seen over the years for whom the Holocaust played a clinically critical role. This profound life experience had to be recognized in order for proper understanding and medical treatment to be provided.

Dr. Michael Gordon, vice-president of medical services at Baycrest, is co-author with Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents, *Dundurn Press, www.parenting yourparents.ca.*

BUTTERSCOTCH TOPPED SHORTBREAD

1 1/2 c butter, softened
3/4 c icing sugar
1/4 tsp salt
2 c flour
2 c butterscotch-flavoured chips
1 can regular Eagle Brand condensed milk
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
1/3 c apricot jam
sliced almonds, toasted (optional)

1. Beat butter, sugar and salt until fluffy. Add flour; mix well. With floured hands, press evenly into 13"x9" parchment paper-lined baking pan. In preheated 350° oven bake 20-25 min. or until lightly browned. Cool.
2. Fudge: Melt chips and condensed milk over low heat, stirring constantly. Remove from heat; stir in vanilla.
3. Spread jam over cooled shortbread. Spread fudge evenly over jam layer. Garnish with almonds (optional). Press down firmly. Chill 3 hrs. or until firm. Cut into bars or triangles. Store covered at room temperature.

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Epi on Education

Between dream and reality

I have a very vivid memory of my first arrival in Israel in 1965.

I came on a ZIM passenger liner that travelled from Marseilles to Haifa, which is much more romantic than my current arrivals by plane after sleepless nights. The night before my first arrival, however, was also sleepless, because a dream – soon to be realized – was keeping me up.

Seymour Epstein

That dream was composed of a surrealistic mixture of images of Israel from two sources: my day school education and my mother, *aleha hashalom*. The mythical Israel in my head and heart was made up of kibbutzim with bonfires and singing, ancient midrashim about the holiness of Jerusalem, snippets of Bialik's poetry, and songs my mother knew from the Ukraine that spoke of working and starving in Palestine.

Soon after I disembarked, I encountered a somewhat different reality. There were constant connections with the "dream Israel," some reinforcing, others negating. They included a Jerusalem divided and not always sacred, as well as having my tfillin stolen (by a Jewish thief, I assume); working on a kibbutz that was indeed better than the dream in many ways; and studying literature, language and history with such intensity that my new literacy overtook my old identity. What was black and white suddenly became a complex rainbow of ideas, thoughts and feelings.

I now appreciate with hindsight that what was really happening was that *Yerushalayim shel Maalah* was in dialectic with *Yerushalayim shel Mata* – that is, the heavenly Israel of my dreams was coming to grips with the earthly Israel of reality. One was not replacing the other, but rather each was in a struggle that neither would win nor lose. I needed to see the rules for royalty in Israel as portrayed in both the Bible and Maimonides juxtaposed with the political parties of the time and the Israeli version of democracy in order to appreciate how the dream and the reality need each other.

The healthy tension created by that Zionist dialectic was taught to me during my wondrous year in Israel in 1965-66. We need to find a way to renew the awareness of that tension and teach it to the next generation of Jews.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Finding wisdom at a bakery

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

The bakery or the butcher. The fruit and vegetable kiosk, or the flower store. Which, generally, is the most enthralling? A lot of us would likely say the bakery. Why? The Torah says, "Not by bread alone will man live, but rather by all that comes from God" [Deuteronomy 8:3]. Maybe the allure of bread is that it's Godly.

URBAN WRITER

My niece, Dodi-Lee Hecht, worked at a local bakery off and on for the last four years while getting her degree in mathematics. I once read a compelling article in the *New York Times* about an elevator operator in Manhattan who had written three manuscripts. Dodi is like that. She is imaginative and inspired, both inside and outside the bakery.

"That's why I loved the job," she said. "It was exactly what I needed to offset what I got in an academic environment. – the part of life that happens in between the career."

Dodi said that at the bakery, she learned about both bread and human interaction. About bread, she says: "It is so simple – just flour, water and yeast – but unique. It has it's own brachah, and you can't snack on it, because you have to wash for it."

But, Dodi adds, "if bread were so simple, no bakery would be in business."

She has a point. Bread is special. The *Zohar* (the book of Jewish mysticism) talks about bread in great detail, defining at length the two types of bread eaten by the Children of Israel during the Exodus: the matzah, the bread from Malchut, the kingdom within, and then "the bread from heaven," the manna.

Dodi also learned about people and about our community during her time at the bakery. She worked behind the counter (a job that's dramatically different than that of the bakers, who have their own silent camaraderie), and she was nervous in the beginning that she would find out that people weren't considerate. "But it was nice to see the unexpected courtesies, and you get to see everyone almost equalized. Everyone needs bread," she said.

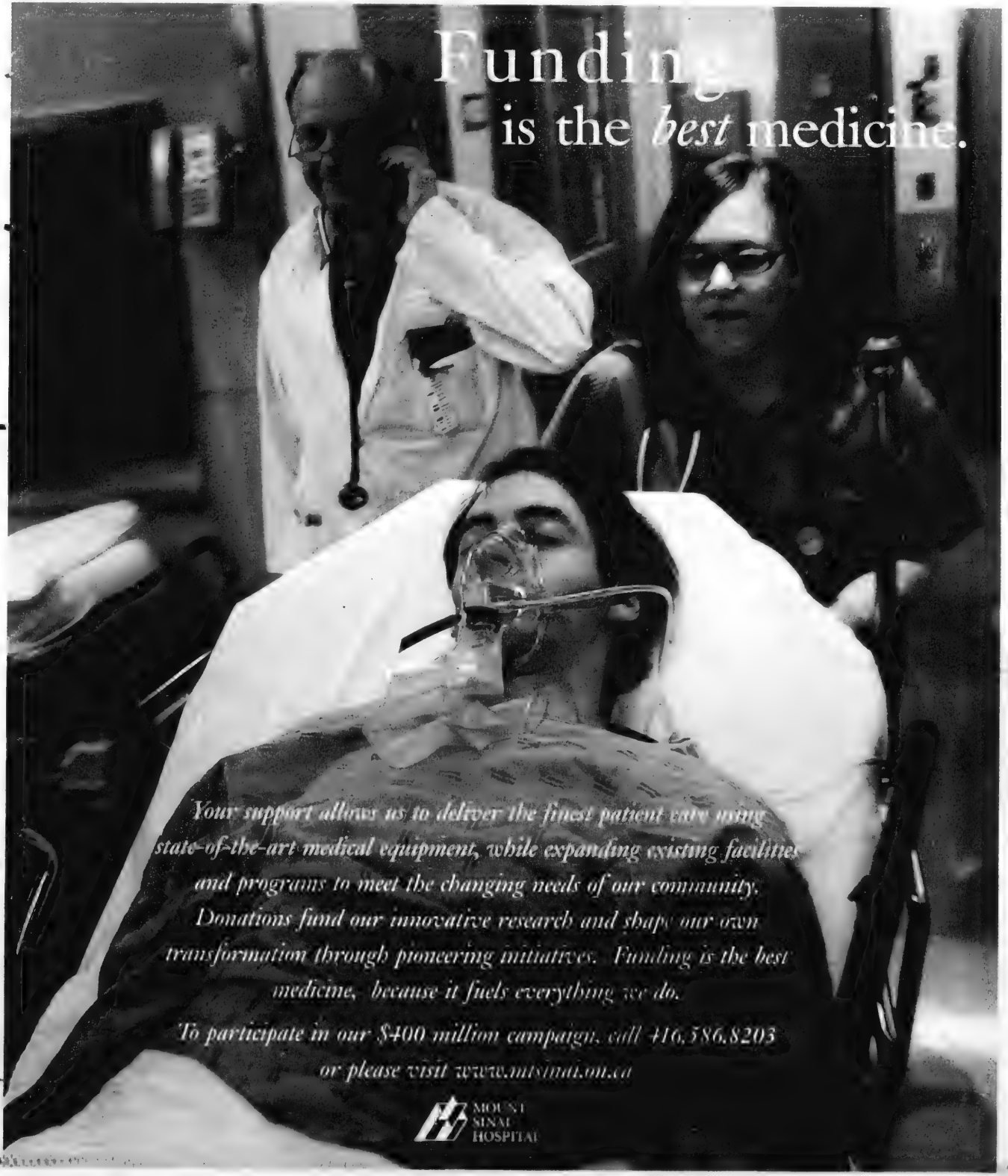
I told Dodi that one day, I'd like to be an invisible customer, able to see the behind-the-scenes stuff required to make sure the bakery runs well. Dodi said I'd learn that the owners of the place she worked, are "very warm without being gushy; no nonsense; inspire loyalty in all their staff and made a real effort to get to know me, when I was 19 and my uncertain future had me philosophizing myself into despair."

I'd see that this bakery couple love the Jewish People, the community and Israel, and that owning a bakery is like being a host, since you welcome people into your store as you would welcome them into your home. I would also discover that the counter managers – a woman from the Philippines and a man from Ethiopia – are up at 4 a.m. on Fridays working hard to get ready for the pre-Shabbat crowds. They understand the holiness of Shabbat.

I got a glimpse of a new world through Dodi's experiences. I realized Jewish bakeries have two personalities: one on Thursday afternoon and Fridays, and another on other weekdays. Dodi taught me that a patron's food list can tell you whether they're celebrating or in mourning, and that the line between the counter people and patrons sometimes gets blurred because of a potent relationship that develops around white bread, rye, whole wheat, multi-grain, pumpernickel, challah and sour dough bread.

Dodi says working in a bakery and selling bread is like learning a dance. You need to know its rhythm and the uniqueness of the product, and understand that at the end of the day, we truly do not live by bread alone.

Avrum@veahavta.org. Sudan?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This Week

National

Toronto students join Hillel-wide mission to help Hurricane Katrina victims. *Page 3*

Non-Jew creates several websites on Polish Jewish history. *Page 15*

Obituary

Irving Layton: A Jewish maverick in stuffy Canada. *Page 22*

Arts & Travel

GG-Award-nominated novel tells of a young girl's quest for love. *Page 39*

Sports & Leisure

Cyclist leads tour of rural Africa. *Page 46*

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www.cjnews.com
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40030494
Publication Mail Registration #09894

Israeli politics go on without Sharon

Massive stroke fells PM

By DAN BARON
JTA

Israel is resigning itself to politics without Ariel Sharon. Shock gripped the Jewish state last week when Sharon was hospitalized with a massive stroke, turning to fears for the worst when he underwent repeated surgery under deep sedation.

But while doctors said early this week that they would try to bring the prime minister out of his induced coma, the prognosis that he would survive – but be forced to retire – took shape. Sharon's chief surgeon, Jose Cohen, put the chances of Sharon living at "very high."

"He is a very strong man, and he is getting the best care," the *Jerusalem Post* quoted Cohen as saying. "He will not continue to be prime minister, but maybe he will be able to understand and to speak."

As the prime minister lay in a post-operative coma, his temporary replacement, acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, chaired the weekly cabinet meeting.

"We hope that the prime minister will recover, gain strength, and with God's help, will return to run the government of Israel and lead the State of Israel," Olmert said.

While noting that doctors' reports from Jerusalem's Hadassah-Hebrew University Medical Center at Ein Kerem had given a "glimmer of hope" regarding Sharon's chances of recuperating, Olmert said matters of state were robust as ever.

"We will continue to fulfil Arik's will, and to run things as he wished," he said, using Sharon's nickname.

"Israeli democracy is strong, and all of the systems are working in a stable, serious and responsible manner. This is just as it should be, and how it shall continue."

With general elections looming on March 28, Olmert has his hands full.

Continued page 34

Analysis

See related stories on pages 4, 9, 11

Passers-by observe a get-well message for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. It urges Sharon to "get well soon" and the political party he recently founded, Kadimah, to "be strong." *[Israel Sun photo]*

Prayers for return to health

Editorial

The photo alongside this editorial says most of what needs to be said about Ariel Sharon at this hour, as he still fights for his life at Hadassah Ein Kerem Hospital in Jerusalem.

Turning the dream, finally, of a Jewish homeland for the Jewish people into a secure reality has been the pre-eminent devotion of Ariel Sharon's life.

The Israeli prime minister is standing amid the flowers on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem, at the recent opening of a museum in honour of the man for whom the mountain was given its modern name. Sharon is a sabra, a bearer, one generation later, of the profound, existential burden that Theodor Herzl placed upon his people more than a century ago.

Now that Sharon lies stricken in a hospital bed, his future uncertain, our prayers and hopes speed toward him that he may return to health and home.

The clay of Sharon's forceful personality was shaped with a double-edged stylus: the farm and the military. These have been the two significant and overwhelmingly formative influences in his life.

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Diverse Palestinian reaction to political situation — see page 33

The News in Brief

CANADA

New Judges Named

TORONTO — Two Jewish lawyers were among three new judges sworn in last week by the Ontario Court of Justice. Criminal lawyer Melvyn Green and Crown lawyer Miriam Bloomefeld joined Queen's University law professor Gary Trotter on the court.

JNF to Fete Premier

WINNIPEG — The Jewish National Fund for Manitoba and Saskatchewan has named Manitoba's NDP premier, Gary Doer, as its 2006 Negev Dinner honoree. "Premier Doer is a strong supporter of Israel," incoming regional president Graham Dixon told JNF's annual meeting last month. Doer, premier since 1999, visited Israel in 2002 and spoke at the 2005 Negev Dinner.

WORLD

PM Punished: Pastor

NORFOLK, Va. — Rev. Pat Robertson said Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's latest stroke was God's punishment for dividing the Land of Israel. Speaking last Thursday on the *700 Club*, Robertson said Sharon, who at the time was in an induced coma, and former Israeli prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, assassinated in 1995, angered God by dividing Israel. "[Sharon] was dividing God's land," Robertson said. "And I would say, 'Woe unto any prime minister of Israel who takes a similar course to appease the EU, the United Nations or the United States of America.' God says, 'This land belongs to me. You better leave it alone.'"

Chavez Slurs Jews

CARACAS — The Simon Wiesenthal Center has written to Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez demanding an apology for anti-Semitic comments he made last month. "The world offers riches to all. However, minorities such as the descendants of those who crucified Christ" have become "the owners of the riches of the world," the populist leader said Dec. 24 in a televised Christmas speech from a rehabilitation centre in the Venezuelan countryside.

Boycott Backed

OSLO — Norway's finance minister is backing her party's boycott of Israel. Kristin Halvorsen – who leads the Socialist Left Party, the minority partner in a new three-party governing coalition – caused outrage after telling a newspaper last week she backs the boycott and had stopped buying Israeli products herself. Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Stoere, of the Labor Party, called a government-backed boycott of Israel "unthinkable." Last month, a municipality in central Norway launched a boycott of Israeli goods.

Palm Beach Almost As Jewish As Israel

WEST PALM BEACH — Palm Beach County, Fla., has a higher concentration of Jews than any other metropolitan area in the world outside Israel, a new study says.

The county's Jewish population is an estimated 255,000, meaning at least one in five of its 1.2 million residents is Jewish, according to the study.

The report by University of Miami researcher Ira Sheskin was released last week by the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County, which covers the northern half of the county, and the Jewish Federation of South Palm Beach County, which serves Boca Raton and Delray Beach.

The study said Boynton Beach has emerged as "ground zero" of a Jewish population explosion. Since 1999, the suburb of 52,000 has seen its Jewish population jump by 63 per cent, while nearby Lake Worth has seen a 12 per cent increase, and Jewish households in the county's northern suburbs such as Palm Beach Gardens, North Palm Beach and Jupiter have grown by 45 per cent.

Method to Madness?

TEHRAN — Iran's president said his comments denying the Holocaust are part of a strategy to win over young Muslims. "Some in Iran and abroad thought we were making these speeches without a specific plan and policy, but we have been pursuing a deliberate strategy in this regard," Mahmoud Ahmadinejad told some young Islamic activists last week, the Iran Focus website said. The widely condemned comments have helped wake up Muslim youth, Ahmadinejad claims. He also said last week that Iran will push ahead with its nuclear research, and he wished death for Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon as he lay ill in Israel.

Lobbyist Pleads Guilty

WASHINGTON — A prominent U.S. Jewish lobbyist pleaded guilty last week to two criminal charges related to his 2000 purchase of a fleet of gambling boats in Florida. The plea suggests that Jack Abramoff, until last year Washington's pre-eminent Republican lobbyist, is ready to testify against a host of lawmakers, mostly Republican, on campaign finance improprieties. He's still under investigation in other cases, and he's alleged to have misused clients' money to fund some Jewish charities.

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation: 38,949 copies
Total paid circulation: 38,099 copies
CCNA verified circulation Sept. 7, 2005

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$63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST.
U.S.A.: $100 U.S. funds, 1 yr.
All other countries $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr.
Postmaster: Please return 2981 and changes of address to Toronto office
Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09094
*Under current ownership

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.
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The Canadian Jewish news
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Toronto students help out victims of Katrina

Rebuilding houses in damaged areas

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

It's been nearly five months since Hurricane Katrina tore through the Gulf Coast, destroying homes, devastating cities and breaking up families, but Jewish students in Toronto haven't forgotten about its victims.

Twenty Torontonians, including two staff from Hillel of Greater Toronto, Tzedek Hillel director Devora Schwartz and Israel affairs programs co-ordinator Leemor Valin, joined about 150 students from schools across North America to participate in a Hillel-wide mission to help rebuild the devastated areas in Gulfport, Miss.

Michelle Lackie, director of Weinberg Tzedek Hillel, an international public service effort sponsored by Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, joined forces with the Minneapolis-based Nechama: Jewish Response to Disaster, and the United Jewish Communities to organize a trip that would give students the opportunity to lend a helping hand. Participants, some of whom left for the area on Jan. 1, will assist by rebuilding houses that were damaged by Hurricane Katrina, in partnership with the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Mississippi.

"The church has identified 50 or so houses that need to have the roof sealed and the windows fixed so families can move back in," Lackie said.

"We're helping people who can't afford to do this on their own. They're living in tents on their property or living in shelters."

Jewish students from the University of Toronto and York University, as well as a few Torontonians who go to school at the University of Western Ontario, University of Guelph and Seneca College, are part of the first group of about 60 students currently in Mississippi. They will be there until Jan. 8.

A second group of students will take over the day they leave and continue to work on damaged homes until Jan. 15.

Schwartz said the response to the program was so amazing, that some students have to wait until the next trip to participate because there were not enough spots to accommodate the demand.

She said that when she first returned to work last September, many students expressed a desire to help and were looking for ways to assist the needy.

Attempts were being made to raise money and awareness, she said, but "many students had an interest in doing and seeing for themselves."

Lackie agreed that those who signed on were eager to jump in and help from the start.

"Everyone is really excited. They just want to get there and help," she said, two days before the first group left.

Each student paid $125 US, excluding transportation, to be a part of the team and will spend a week at the church, sleeping in sleeping bags on the floor.

"Tikkun olam [repairing the world] is a powerful Jewish belief that extends to helping not only Jews, but people all over the entire world," Schwartz said.

"We're doing this because tzedek is a strong Jewish value and it is important that we help other people when the opportunity to do so is there," Lackie added.

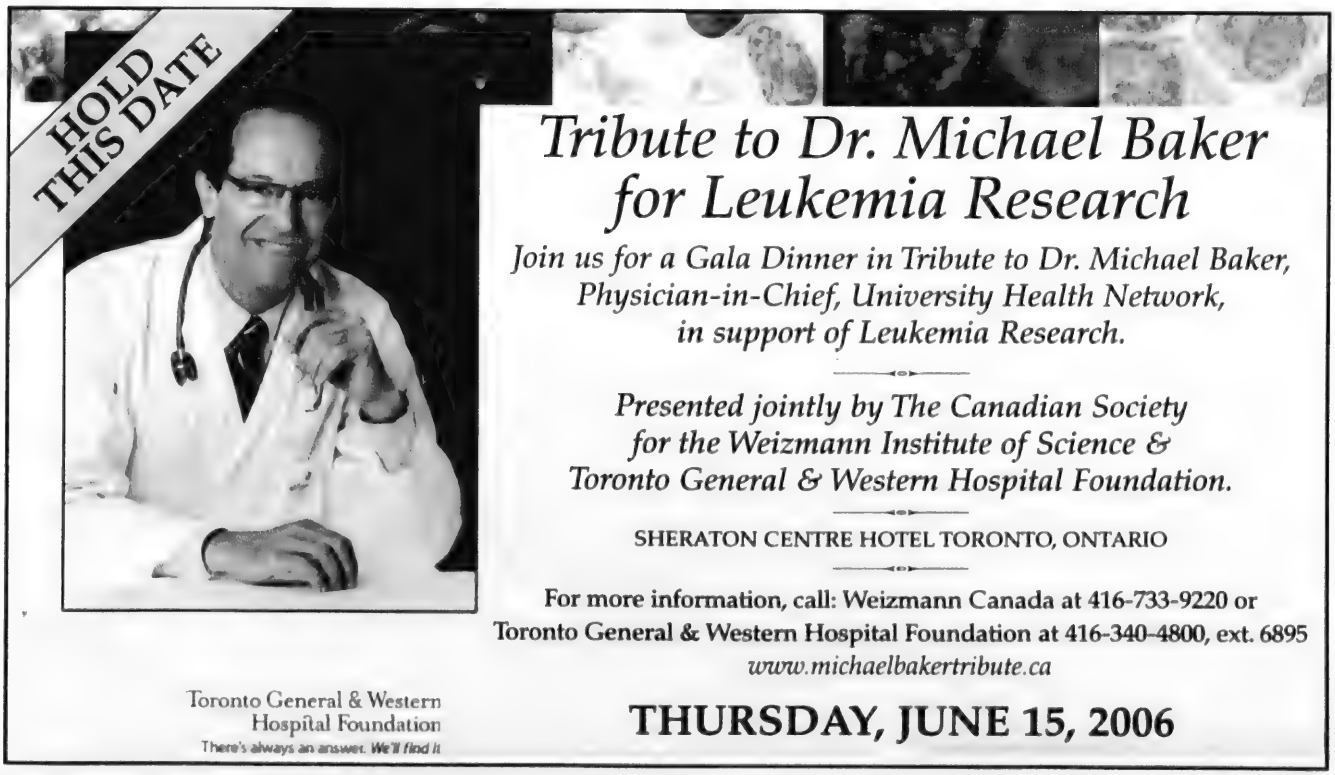
While a number of students will be going to the affected areas to help, Paul Hertz and Brandon Desyatnik of Eta Pi, the York chapter of the Jewish fraternity Alpha Epsilon Pi, will be doing their part at home to raise money for the victims of the hurricane.

On Jan. 22, Eta Pi will host a steak-a-thon in an attempt to raise money.

"It works in the same way that a walk-a-thon would," said Hertz, the chapter's president. "People are supposed to raise money through pledges, and the goal is to eat a very large steak.

"At first this started out as a joke, but we realized that if a lot of people got involved, we could raise a lot of money."

Continued on page 5



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To understand Sharon better

From the editor's desk

There were many horrible moments late last week when it seemed we would be writing an obituary for the man rather than for his political career. But as of this writing, thank God, it appears the Israeli prime minister will survive the massive cranial hemorrhaging that he suffered last Wednesday night and the three subsequent surgeries.

Should the prime minister arise from his dire medical condition, no one yet knows the extent of impairment he will face.

All we know is that whatever the physical condition facing Ariel Sharon upon his much hoped-for eventual release from hospital, he will confront its challenges with the same steely singularity of purpose that has been his lifelong, trademark approach to overcoming all difficulty and travail.

Some years ago, when the accompanying photo of Sharon carrying the lamb upon his shoulders was first published, satirists and political cartoonists delighted. The image was a rich vein into which they repeatedly dipped their mischievous pens. But there is a great deal more in the image than simply the ore of satire.

It captures a sense of the man as protector of a flock. He finds the lost lamb, indeed rejoices in finding it, retrieves it and brings it to safety.

It is Sharon's self-image – protector of his people – that has been one of the key motivational factors of his life from his earliest days.

I once heard Sharon speak of the battle for Latrun in which he fought as a commanding officer in the Alexandroni Brigade of the fledgling army of the nascent state of Israel.

Latrun was of vital strategic importance. On the westernmost edges of the foothills of Judea, where the Ayalon Valley lies wide and open, it overlooked the approaches to Jerusalem.

Jordanian forces were entrenched in the fortress police station built by the British during the mandate that dominated the valley. The Arab forces controlled the roads and had blocked all supplies from reaching Jerusalem. The city and its Jews faced starvation.

The 20-year-old Arik Sharon and countless other soldiers, among whom were refugees who had only recently arrived from the internment camps from Cyprus, were ordered to capture the fortress police station, open the road to Jerusalem and break the siege upon the Jewish capital.

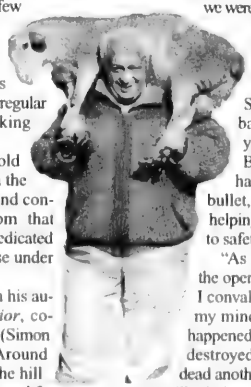
The battle was long, hard and bloody, but futile. Sharon was wounded in the fighting. And worse, as the fighting proceeded badly, he and his few men were left to their own devices on the battlefield, having to face the regular Jordanian fighting forces in front of them and the irregular local Arab fighters stalking them from the rear.

That experience, he told us, being "left behind on the field," seared his heart and consciousness forever. From that moment on, he said, he dedicated his life to protecting those under his care.

He wrote about this in his autobiography titled *Warrior*, co-written by David Chanoff (Simon and Schuster, 1989). "Around noon the Jordanians on the hill intensified their fire, the usual forerunner of another assault. Raising myself up to see what was happening, I felt something thud into my belly, knocking me back. I heard my mouth say, '*Imah*' (mother), and the instant it was out I glanced around to see if anybody had heard. Already blood was seeping through my shirt and from my shorts, where another wound in my thigh had appeared as if by magic. I lay down, still lucid, but feeling my strength ebbing away.

"While I lay there, two of the 'older' men in the platoon crawled up to me, both of them British army veterans in their early 20s. Their eyes looked vacant. 'Arik,' one of them asked, 'how are you going to get us out of this?' I stared at them for a moment, then said sharply, 'Look, I've gotten you out of a lot of tight places before. I'll get you out of this too. Just get back and do what I told you…'

"We were alone on the field. The other units had been ordered back. That was what the artillery fire had been for, to cover the retreat. We had not seen them as they pulled out in back of us, and they had not known we were still here, and still alive."



Crawling on hands and knees from one rocky terrace to another, his wounds oozing blood, Sharon survived the battle for Latrun. A 16-year-old soldier, Yakov Bogin, whose lower jaw had been shattered by a bullet, saved Sharon's life by helping to drag and carry him to safety.

"As I waited for my turn in the operating room and then as I convalesced, I could not tear my mind away from what had happened. My platoon had been destroyed. Out of 35, 15 were dead another 11 wounded. Others were still missing. I knew the news would hit Kfar Malal, Kfar Saba and Magdiel like a plague."

As these words are being written, Ariel Sharon is fighting for his life again. But this time, he has not been left behind. The efforts to save him have been heroic, as befitting the man who left no lamb lost.

– *MBD*

SeeJN

PRAYERS FOR SHARON: Chief Sephardi Rabbi Shlomo Amar leads prayers for the health of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Inset, a man blows a shofar outside the Hadassah Hospital where Sharon is being treated. [Isranet photos]

Student group makes Darfur an election issue

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A student group with roots in the Jewish community has launched an election advocacy campaign to make good on the post-Holocaust dictum, "Never again."

STAND Canada's "a vote for Darfur" campaign is aimed at making the ongoing genocide in Sudan an election issue, said STAND spokesperson Jonathan Laski.

Election 2006

At the midpoint of the 2005-06 campaign, the question of Darfur has barely registered among the candidates and major parties vying for office. The campaign has focused on domestic issues and some foreign policy matters, "but Darfur sets a tone for the Canadian moral character," Laski, one of STAND's national directors, said.

Darfur is a region in western Sudan that has been in conflict for almost three years. In that span, roving "janjaweed" militias, supported by the government in Khartoum, have killed as many as 400,000 black residents of Darfur and made millions more refugees. Canada has expended some political and diplomatic capital to support an African Union (AU) intervention force, but the 7,000-strong military unit has not been able to protect the refugees. Efforts to provide logistical support have been blocked by the Arab government in Khartoum.

STAND, an acronym for Students Taking Action Now: Darfur, has launched a two-part campaign to create support for a stronger Canadian effort. At the centre of the campaign is STAND's website, www.standcanada.org. In the first part of its campaign, visitors to the site will be asked to complete a short survey on their knowledge of the situation in Darfur. They will be asked to input their postal codes and the data will be compiled in a way to show candidates that voters in their ridings are interested in Darfur.

As part of stage two, candidates and party headquarters have been sent a short survey soliciting their knowledge and views on Darfur as well as their interest in joining a proposed parliamentary committee, if elected. Laski hopes that after the Jan. 23 election, 30 to 40 members of Parliment who feel strongly on Darfur will create an all-party parliamentary caucus and press the federal government to take a leadership role behind an international effort to address the crisis.

Survey results will be posted online so "voters can judge candidates on Darfur," Laski said.

Laski hopes voters will consider a candidate's position on Darfur when casting their ballots.

"It's literally about doing the right thing," he said.

Laski, who attended a Jewish day school, said he learned from a young age that "the Holocaust is not supposed to happen again." He believes "the Jewish community has an extra responsibility because we were the victims of the Holocaust. But Canadians in general, with our record of peacekeeping and peace-making, have a history of stepping in and saving lives."

So far, Canada's diplomatic efforts have focused on raising the issue in international forums. It has sent a handful of support troops to the region as well as armoured personnel carriers (they are stuck in Senegal), and it pledged $380 million (since 2000) for Darfur refugees and the AU military force. It also appointed an advisory team that includes Senator Roméo Dallaire, former head of United Nation forces in Rwanda, and the prime minister has named Senator Mobina Jaffer as his special envoy for peace in Sudan.

However, the international political will to intervene in Darfur appears to be weak. In fact, the AU, whose troops are supposed to provided security for the Darfur refugees, is scheduled to hold a summit meeting in Khartoum later this month. The move is seen as undercutting any condemnation of the Khartoum regime's genocidal policies. What's more, *The New Republic*, an American current affairs magazine, reported chairmanship of the AU traditionally goes to the most recent summit host. That means Sudanese President Omar el-Bashir will likely head the organization that is supposed to end the genocide backed by his government.

The New Republic also reported that the Arab League will hold its summit in Khartoum in March, further giving Sudan's regime diplomatic cover. In the United Nations, Algeria, Russia and China have blocked efforts to impose sanctions on Sudan.

Laski said if support for the AU force does not lead to an end to the genocide, "Canada and others should look at other levers of force in a multilateral format."

STAND Canada, which has a mailing list of 2,800 people, mostly students, was formed one year ago following a conference of National Jewish Campus Life. It is active on nine campuses across Canada and today only a little more than half of its active members are Jewish, Laski said.

Canadian Jewish Congress and Canadians Against Slavery and Torture in Sudan (CASTS) are two other organizations with roots in the Jewish community that have been lobbying the Canadian government on the issue of Darfur.

Some fraternity brothers affected by storm

Continued from page 3

To take part in the challenge, where participants will eat a 72-ounce steak donated by a restaurant in Richmond Hill, each participant has to raise a minimum of $75.

Hertz hopes that at least 20 people will attempt the feat, clogging their arteries in the name of tikkun olam.

Hertz said he and Desyatnik were inspired to raise money for the needy in New Orleans because some of their fraternity brothers in the area were affected by the storm.

"We felt we had a personal connection to it and we wanted to help."

Proceeds from this event will go to the Alpha Epsilon Pi Foundation in Indianapolis, Indiana, and from there, the international body will decide which organization the money will go to.

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French businesses operate call centres in Israel

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Ron Machol has two words for potential olim who are worried about making a living in Israel – corporate aliyah.

As development director of Leavi, a non-profit organization that helps immigrants integrate and find employment in Israel, Machol encourages people to move their business with them.

Leavi was started about three years ago by Yossef Zarka, who moved his pharmaceutical company to Israel 10 years ago.

"I lost a cousin in the Passover 2002 bombing of a seder at the Park Hotel in Netanya, and this event made me realize that I had to make a change in my life, and do something that would help my people," said Zarka in a Leavi brochure.

Zarka knew there were thousands like him in France who, due to rising anti-Semitism in the country, wanted to live in Israel but were concerned about the 11 per cent unemployment rate.

Along with a team, he audited various types of businesses and realized that many could be outsourced easily. "These were businesses in which people could telecommute or operate a call centre," said Machol, in Toronto recently to promote the organization and attend the North American launch in New York City.

"In the past three years, he has helped about 40 people move their businesses from France to Israel. When clients call the business in Israel, they call a local France number and speak to a French person, so clients don't know there has been any change.

"These 40 businesses employ about 400 French olim, so not only have the owners made aliyah, they have created new jobs for others."

With the anti-Semitism in France, he says, "it would be a shame for people who want to live in Israel to remain in France because they're concerned about [their ability to make] a living. We want them to be confident they're going to make it."

When olim have moved to Israel with their businesses, says Machol, Leavi is there to help with housing and employment issues.

"We have lawyers and accountants who can answer any tax questions that arise because of the move, and we'll help create a business and marketing plan. We can also manage relocation logistical details, explore financing options and recruit employees.

"We're immigrant friendly, and we foster the environment to help them succeed. Failed businesses can lead to failed aliyah, and we want people to avoid that."

Ron Machol

North American businesses can be as successful in Israel as the French businesses, he says. "They'll create jobs for English-speaking olim."

For more information, visit www.leavi.com or e-mail info@leavi.com.

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Much already done

Continued from page 1

Sharon was born in 1928 on Kfar Malal, a moshav northeast of Tel Aviv, in the Sharon coastal plain. Ploughing long days alongside his stubborn father, he learned to be indefatigable, never to bow his head at the long road ahead, never to surrender to the apparent insurmountability of the problems at hand.

As a commander of troops, he learned, as do all superb leaders, to be pragmatic and innovative, that the theory of battle must always bend to the conditions of battle on the field. Fixed, ideological, templated responses, he understood from fighting in war, can bring disaster when the reality does not suit the template. And thus, after seeing two entire generations of Palestinians since 1948 raised by their leaders only upon visions of displacing the Jews and destroying the Jewish state, Sharon came to change his mind about the way to resolve the conflict with the Palestinians: unilateral disengagement. He announced his plan in December 2003.

"We wish to speedily advance implementation of the road map toward quiet and a genuine peace… However, if, in a few months, the Palestinians still continue to disregard their part in implementing the road map, then Israel will initiate the unilateral security step of disengagement from the Palestinians.

"The purpose of the disengagement plan is to reduce terror as much as possible and grant Israeli citizens the maximum level of security. The process of disengagement will lead to an improvement in the quality of life and will help strengthen the Israeli economy… and relieve the pressure on the IDF and security forces in fulfilling the difficult tasks they are faced with. The disengagement plan is meant to grant maximum security and minimize friction between Israelis and Palestinians.

"We are interested in conducting direct negotiations, but do not intend to hold Israeli society hostage in the hands of the Palestinians… we will not wait for them indefinitely."

And he had the courage to begin implementing unilateral disengagement starting from Gaza last summer. Some Israelis vilified him for doing so. The vast majority approved. And that majority still does so today.

In reflecting upon Israel's future some 15 years ago, Sharon wrote: "We are, after all, a people with almost 4,000 years of history linking one generation to the next, a people who despite everything have been able to overcome whatever was inflicted on us… So when I consider how hard it looks now, I think back to when I was a child, working with my father on that arid slope of land, walking behind him to plant the seeds in the earth he had turned with his hoe. When I felt too exhausted to go on, he would stop for a moment to look backwards to see how much we had already done. And that would always give me heart for what remained."

The work of securing Israel's future, if not yet actually finding a true peace, is not finished. Given the intractability and irrationality of the hatred from some of our foes, Israel and the Jewish people at times feel exhausted. But, as Ariel Sharon would point out for us if he could today, we must not succumb to that exhaustion. Rather, we must all take heart from the seeds that have already been planted, and in no small measure by Ariel Sharon himself.

May God grant him speedy and full recovery.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• The Saidye and Samuel Bronfman Family Foundation donated $100,000 to McGill University to establish the Saul Hayes Graduate Fellowship in Civil Liberties and Human Rights. Hayes had been involved with Canadian Jewish Congress since 1934, serving as executive director from 1942 to 1959 and executive vice-president until he retired in 1974. He continued to be part of Canadian Jewish life until his death in 1980.

Dry Bones
ARIEL SHARON'S DEPARTURE FROM ISRAEL'S POLITICAL SCENE MEANS THAT
THE ZIONIST STATE CAN NO LONGER RELY ON THE GENERATION OF THE FOUNDING GRANDFATHERS.
SO NOW WE'VE GOT TO RELY ON OURSELVES FOR LEADERSHIP?!
YUP.
WE SHOULD HAVE CLONED THEM WHEN WE HAD THE CHANCE.

Editorial Advisory Board: **Isaac Apter, Michael Brown, Sandra Brown, Donald Carr, Daniel Held, Zac Kaye, Igor Korenzvit, Keith Landy, Andrea Most, Lou Ronson, Jacques Sayegh, Mike Shriqui, Pamela Medjuck Stein, Rabbi Michael Stroh, Rabbi Reuven Tradburks**

Discrimination in education funding

For better or worse, Canada is now in the midst of a winter federal election campaign. Now is, therefore, the opportune time for members of our Canadian Jewish community to engage with federal politicians about issues of key concern to the community.

The importance of Canada's taking a fair and balanced approach to issues relating to Israel and the Middle East is one such issue. A lesser-known federal election issue that directly affects our community is Canada's continuing violation of the United Nations human rights treaty, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), by failing to provide a remedy for discrimination against Jews and other religious minorities in education funding in Ontario.

In Ontario, 93 per cent of the children attending faith-based schools are fully funded. The other seven per cent get nothing, solely because they are not Catholic. The UN Human Rights Committee ruled in the 1999 Waldman case that this discrimination violates international human rights law.

This discrimination is both a federal and provincial issue. In Canada, education is provincial, while compliance with international treaties is squarely a federal responsibility. The Canadian government has an obligation under the ICCPR to provide an effective remedy if Ontario continues to fail to eliminate this discrimination.

On Nov. 2, 2005, after six years of inaction of the federal government, the UN officially criticized Canada for its failure to comply.

When the politicians trudge through the snow to solicit our support, let's be sure to ask them what they will do to ensure that Canada complies with its treaty obligation to provide a remedy for this discrimination. After all, if we don't stand up for ourselves, who will?

Jerrold Landau
equalfunding@yahoo.ca
Toronto

* * *

Magen David Adom's emblem

Magen David Adom (MDA) in Israel has not relinquished its emblem in order to join the International Movement of the Red Cross ("MDA set to join Red Cross," *CJN*, Dec. 15).

The State of Israel, which signed the Geneva Conventions, as did 192 other countries, had to establish an organization based on the principles of the Red Cross movement. Israel recognized the Magen David Adom organization as its national society in humanitarian activities, the equivalent of a Red Cross national society.

In 1949, the MDA applied to join the international Red Cross without relinquishing its emblem and was rejected. Over the past 50-plus years, the MDA would have been recognized by the international Red Cross if it had renounced its emblem.

So what is different now? One hundred and ninety-two states met recently and accepted a third emblem – a crystal. (The other two are the red cross and red crescent emblems). The diamond-shaped red crystal emblem is meant to protect medical teams in religious conflicts. It has been decided that a red Star of David inside a red crystal is a legitimate emblem that can be used inside the borders of Israel and elsewhere in the world.

The decision to recognize the right of the MDA to bear its emblem cannot be interpreted as an Israeli capitulation.

Arnold Rosner
National Executive Director
Canadian Magen David Adom

* * *

Modern Orthodox minyanim

What makes a prayer service Orthodox ("Thinking outside of the ortho-box," *CJN*, Jan. 5)? Is it the assumed commonality of Orthodox belief and practice among the participants? Is it the liturgy? Is it not counting women in the minyan and/or allowing them to participate? Is it the mechitzah, the physical and psychological barrier that traditionally distinguishes Orthodoxy from all other movements?

Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary, wrote that a conundrum of modern Orthodoxy was in allowing women equal access to the beit midrash but not the beit knesset. That has clearly changed over the years.

A select number of bold and creative modern Orthodox minyanim in Israel and North America have taken steps based on tshuvot written from within their own communities that are similar to some tshuvot written in quarters outside of their communities. Except for separate seating, which I assume is upheld at the "Toronto Minyan," this new service sounds the same as services such as Beth Tzedec Congregation's Little Minyan, a Conservative, lay-led participatory service where women are not counted in the minyan and do not lead Shacharit or Musaf, but may lead *Psukei D'zimrah* and the Torah service, as well as read Torah, receive aliyot and deliver divrei Torah. The service has lots of ruach and lots of singing.

The second important question regarding the minyan is, "Where is it?" Wherever it was last week, it will hopefully need a larger space in the weeks to come.

Lorne M. Hanick
Ritual Director
Beth Tzedec Congregation
Toronto

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Perspectives

A Jewish giant

By URI DAN
The Jerusalem Post

The cries of rejoicing among the Palestinian terrorist organizations and in the Arab and Muslim countries that support them at the news of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's critical condition are a bad sign. More than any other Israeli leader, and for more years than anyone else in Israel, Sharon has served not only as a symbol of Israel's security, but he has also become a deterrent factor in the face of Arab threats.

That is why the moment this symbol collapsed in Jerusalem's Hadassah University Medical Center is being taken by Israel's Arab enemies as a sign of Israel's weakening, a weakening that represents an invitation to step up hostilities. Consequently, not only is the moribund peace process close to death, but the ominous shadow of the threat of terrorist attacks and war is growing.

Sharon's collapse will create an unprecedented leadership and security vacuum, more than the demise of any other prime minister. His loss is a veritable natural disaster, a leadership and security catastrophe of colossal proportions. There is good reason why he became the most popular prime minister Israel has ever had.

I say this because I stood at Sharon's side on his many military, political and diplomatic battlefields – starting the moment he became the commander of the only paratrooper commando regiment at the time, number 890, in 1954, when our close relationship and friendship, which has lasted more than 50 years, began.

Since that time, Sharon has been a key figure – as an Israel Defence Forces officer and as a minister in Israel's governments – in all the wars against the Arabs. Everywhere he acted, he attained a decisive victory over the Arab enemy, from the reprisal attacks against Palestinian terrorism in the 1950s, to crossing the Suez Canal in 1973, to the eviction of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat from Beirut in 1982.

As prime minister, he efficiently eliminated Arafat's suicide-bomber factory and lived to see Arafat dead and buried. Sharon related to him as "the greatest murderer of Jews since World War II." No Arab bullet, mortar shell, tank or plane ever managed to deter Sharon.

At the same time, he contributed to the establishment of stable and peaceful ties with Egypt and Jordan, and was willing to do more than any other Israeli leader to reach a settlement with the Palestinians. However, they once again missed the opportunity. For many years to come, they will not find facing them an Israeli leader capable of building up a peaceful coexistence between the two nations – unless Sharon rises from his sickbed.

The spirit of madness that has overtaken the terrorist organizations already views Sharon's removal from the scene as a general collapse of Israel's wall of security, and as an invitation to continued aggression.

Only Sharon, with his great love for Jerusalem, could have taken my advice to go up to the Temple Mount on Sept. 28, 2000, to challenge the attempt by then prime minister Ehud Barak to allow Arafat a foothold in the site most holy to Jews.

On the blackest day in Sharon's public career, in February 1983, when he was thrown out of the Defence Ministry after the Kahan Commission imputed him with indirect responsibility for the Sabra and Shatila massacre, I stood up and said: "Those who don't want to see Sharon as defense minister will get him one day as prime minister." In those days, the Israeli media and politicians carried out a political lynching of Sharon, determining that his political career was over.

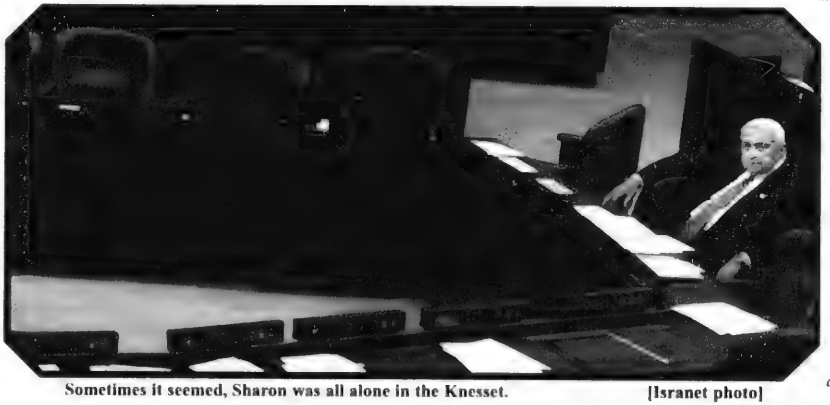
My friend did not believe my forecast and asked why I said what I did. I explained to him that his removal from the Defence Ministry served as a signal to Israel's enemies that their most dangerous opponent had been thrown off the Israeli wall – and that that would bring war in time. And when the war came, the Jews would turn to him to save them. I added that I hoped I would be wrong, "but because I have worked with you in the Defence Ministry, I know just how rotten our political and security establishments are."

And indeed, the first intifadah came in 1987-1992, and it was followed by the first suicide attacks in 1996. During that time, there was no one else of Sharon's caliber among Israel's security leadership. He always excelled at taking responsibility for the most daring campaigns and operations, meticulously planned down to the smallest detail, with himself making the most difficult decisions.

That is how Sharon was from the time I first met him: standing on the military or political battlefield, whether with a tank or a bulldozer, always managing the campaign with astonishing cool-headed control.

The collapse of the man no enemy bullet could defeat, and in the finest of hospitals in Jerusalem, the Jerusalem that Sharon so loved and never intended to divide, has laid bare the true tragedy of Jews in Israel and the world – that for the time being, no leader able to enter the shoes of the Jewish Gulliver, Ariel Sharon, can be seen on the horizon.

Uri Dan is a longtime friend and adviser of Ariel Sharon.



Sometimes it seemed, Sharon was all alone in the Knesset. [Israel photo]

After Sharon...

By DAVID HOROVITZ

It was not so many years ago that he was a national and international pariah, barred from ministerial office, reviled and spent. Yet as the full extent of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's incapacitation became plain, it was already clear that Israel is a changed and uncertain country without him at its helm, and that many Israelis feel thoroughly bereft without his massive, overwhelming presence.

His convictions altered utterly in recent years. The architect and advocate of Jewish settlement in territories we captured in the 1967 war became the only prime minister to forcibly dismantle long-established communities there; former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin never did that. But if politicians changing their spots is commonplace, what was unique about Sharon was the assurance he managed to exude that his new convictions were the sensible ones, and never mind what he had advocated before.

Sharon was on the brink of making history in Israel and winning three successive elections not by following a consistent political path. Anything but. He was striding to victory because, unlike any of his rivals, ordinary men and women with ordinary frailties and flaws, he had persuaded Israelis that he was of a different league, a political superman, immune to the limitations of other mortals. He was by no means universally admired, but he had a vast middle ground of confused Israelis wanting to believe that he knew what he was doing – that he, and only he, could steer the country to security and tranquility.

He achieved this following despite never fully detailing the course he was pursuing; indeed, that very vagueness was one of the secrets of his popularity. Trust me, the implicit message ran. Keep me in power, and everything will be all right.

And the Israeli public was ready to do so – notwithstanding that history of zigzagging, and more. By rights, he should have alienated just about every voter by now – the left by invading Lebanon, the right by leaving Gaza, the environmentalists by throwing the bulldozers at every housing problem, not to mention most everyone who expects standards of integrity from their leaders by allegedly playing fast and loose with campaign finance laws and embroiling himself in a series of unsavoury financial and influence-trading escapades.

Despite all that, more Israelis were backing him than any of his rivals – a reflection not only of the power and resonance of Sharon's personality, but of the perceived paucity of the alternatives.

Had he specified exactly what policies he intended to follow, come cleaner with the electorate, he would have been doing our democracy a service and he would, of course, have left far less of a vacuum now. He would also have dented that extraordinary perception, so widely felt, of his own indispensability.

But no man is indispensable. And no man can forever defy those mortal limitations – no matter how lightly he may shrug off the unavoidable toll of advancing years, or dismiss the particular strains of an unhealthy lifestyle and eating habits, or appear so easily to shoulder the uniquely onerous burden of leading embattled Israel.

Sharon's self-declared personal ambition to set Israel's permanent borders will not be realized now. Time has run out on that dream. History turned too slowly for him.

And as is always the way, the spotlight now moves on, and the question of Sharon's abiding influence hinges on what happens inside the vehicle, Kadima, a political party that he had assembled and tailored to his personal political contours.

Though Kadima was all too plainly Sharon's party, it has a logic that potentially survives him.

Amir Peretz heads a Labor party that overflows with ex-security chiefs. But while both his desire to alleviate economic inequalities in Israel and his positions on peacemaking will bring him some support, his own inexperience in defense-related issues, indeed his lack of any ministerial-level experience, limit his appeal.

The Likud party, meanwhile, has resolved its internal conflict and returned to some of its traditional positions under new-old leader Binyamin Netanyahu.

Many longtime supporters will have sighed with relief that Sharon's departure and Netanyahu's succession had put an end to the aberration of the past two years, when a party dedicated to thwarting the establishment of a Palestinian state west of the Jordan River was led by a prime minister with the opposite intent. But others, who had embraced what they saw as Sharon's pragmatism, will have been alienated.

Between those Labor and Likud poles, the same electorate that was so masterfully wooed by Sharon now waits and worries.

The cynics derided Kadima members Ehud Olmert, Tzipi Livni, Shimon Peres, Haim Ramon and Tzahi Hanegbi as opportunists united only by their sense that Ariel Sharon represented their best ticket to continued political power and influence. A descent into bickering over the succession of the leadership of the party, replete with the kind of personal mudslinging that Sharon had sought to nip in the bud, will vindicate those critics and destroy Kadima electorally. Not so, however, a consensual organization of the Knesset slate, championing the platform Kadima's members say has long been taking shape.

The electorate will tolerate far less from other Kadima leaders of the calibrated vagueness they forgave in Sharon. At the same time, the party will necessarily lose support the more clearly it sets out its positions. But there is, nonetheless, a wide swath of central ground that Sharon bestrode and that Kadima could still occupy if it were to try to derive positive momentum from his decline.

His rivals will seek to prevent Kadima's flourishing now. Will the fact that the prime minister so dominated that nascent party now doom it? Or will his colleagues demonstrate that there is life for Ariel Sharon's party, and his vaguely defined vision, without Ariel Sharon.

David Horovitz is the editor of the Jerusalem Post.

We've never had it so good

Jews are out of the ghetto. Though that has increased the threat of assimilation, the benefits greatly outweigh the dangers. There are at least three reasons why I unashamedly celebrate this new reality.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

I am a Zionist. In addition to fostering unconditional love for the people and the land of Israel in the light of Jewish sovereignty, Zionism has shown us that Jews need never again be victims.

Ironically, those who today, out of alleged love of Zion, see Israel as a Jewish ghetto surrounded by millions of potential assassins, deny the thrust and the achievements of Zionism. Their professed love of the Jewish state is stifling and could become a menacing self-fulfilling prophecy.

Jews today have no reason to see themselves as poor ghetto dwellers. Israel is proof that Jews can look after themselves as a sovereign people. Israelis seem to doubt that Diaspora Jews recognize this. Therefore, say in Canada, Israelis tend to have more in common with non-Jews than with Jews and are reluctant to be part of the Jewish community.

As well as being a Zionist, I am a Reform Jew. In addition to teaching me to view Judaism historically and to interpret its sources in the spirit of a faith that is open to the world and responsive to the call of God, Reform Judaism, like Zionism, has persuaded me that Jews no longer need to see themselves as victims. Though full integration has taken its time, the results are unmistakable. Reform Judaism is the product of Jewish emancipation and telling evidence of its success.

I also teach Judaism. In addition to being privileged to impart Torah and help Jews to live by its precepts, I have come to realize that a ghetto mentality deters many young people from identifying as Jews.

Whereas their parents and grandparents may have been moved to commitment and solidarity by being reminded that the world is hostile to Jews, the young are often put off by this message. They don't see themselves as children of the ghetto and respond best to positive affirmations of Judaism.

That is why I keep away from organizations that put the fear of anti-Semitism, including its anti-Zionist incarnation, at the centre of the Jewish agenda. Even if such fear commands short-term loyalty, it sows long-term seeds of disaffection. Young Jews want to celebrate Judaism, not to fight its enemies.

This doesn't mean that anti-Semitism should not be confronted or that the many dangers to Israel should be minimized. But we must encounter our enemies with confidence and determination, not sow panic in our own ranks.

We must accept the historic truth that Jews have never had it so good and permit ourselves to confidently celebrate freedom, equality and sovereignty.

Outward Bound canoe trip a learning experience

By MATTHEW POTTENS

With summertime approaching, a vast array of opportunities surface for students across the world. In 2002, I realized the perfect way to attain my desire for fun, change, and a way to strengthen my sense of self over the summer – through a physical and rewarding activity, also known as canoe tripping.

Matthew Pottens in Halifax

The summer of 2002, I survived a 21- day canoe trip in the wilderness surrounding Thunder Bay, Ont., with Outward Bound Canada. It was the most challenging experience of my life, and by far the most rewarding.

Throughout the months approaching July, the upcoming summer had seemed bleak. Heavy violence in Israel prevented Biluim Israel, the final phase of Canadian Young Judaea's leadership training programs, from happening, and I was left with a tough decision to make. With some convincing from my mom, and some heavy research, it seemed like Outward Bound would be a positive experience for a confused 17-year-old.

The day arrived, and I was on an airplane heading toward the beautiful Thunder Bay area. After arriving and meeting and greeting, we were off to the first campsite. As if the uncertainty and the new faces weren't enough to handle, on the way to the campsite we had to stop twice to allow two monstrous black bears and their cubs to pass by the ancient dirt road we travelled on. We finally arrived and got more acquainted with one another. We came from different parts of the world, including Canada (Toronto, Aurora, Ont., Calgary), France, Austria and the United States (Pittsburgh).

After a day of getting to know one another, we set off for the Outward Bound main camp. We needed to pack food, get equipment, and learn some basic skills before going on our two-week, non-stop canoe trip. After two long days of paddling, we arrived at the main camp, got what we needed and set out to overcome the challenges of the wilderness.

The first day of the adventure proved to be the toughest. We were up before the sun and we were charged like nine-volt batteries. We had no idea what were getting into.

After a nice paddle, we arrived at our first real portage. It was only about two kilometres long, which would normally take a group about an hour. But when a vast wilderness region meets up with a forest fire, what was a portage, now was a pile of trees that were ripped out of the ground, broken into smaller trees, and lying one on top of another to form a massive wall – and preventing anyone from getting in or out.

We entered, saws in hand, and began destroying this beast of a portage. We started at 9 a.m., and after nine hours of gruelling physical work, which included sawing and pulling canoes through, under and over trees, we decided that our only option was to sleep inside of the beast. We set up camp on the flattest possible ground, devoured some jelly sandwiches and called it a night. The next morning we got an early jump and made it through the portage by lunchtime. A projected couple hours of work had turned into a day and a half of frustration, discouragement, physical pain and exhaustion. Yet, we survived, and I am glad I experienced it. Besides, what doesn't kill me only makes me stronger.

This is merely a fraction of what an Outward Bound experience offers. In a future article, I'd love to tell you all about my solo experience on Outward Bound. On a solo trip, you are left alone in the wilderness for two nights and three days, with little food, a pen and a journal to write in. There is much more to Outward Bound than just physical challenges. It's about dealing with the unknown. It's about meeting challenges. And it's about learning – learning about yourself, about others, about the environment, and most of all, about your potential.

The holiday season

After I handed in the last assignment of the term, a feeling of giddy euphoria washed over me. I had conquered this term. It was over. An entire two weeks of vacation were before me and no school-related responsibilities hung over me, a stark contrast to the last sleepless days, hunched over my drafting table, feverishly trying to finish assignments while fighting off the need to sleep. My plans for the vacation? Sleep. Lots of sleep.

Gershon Richter in Winnipeg

After two days doing nothing but sleeping, eating junk food and watching television I realized that I was bored. This is not to put down those activities – sleeping is quite enjoyable, I have no problem eating, and television remains one of my most effortless "activities." But in my boredom, I began doing two of these activities at the same time, and although television and eating worked fine, television and sleeping proved rather difficult.

As the boredom grew, I sought something to do and turned to the many fine shopping establishments available. You are certainly aware that the winter vacation period is also the holiday season, and it is well-known that during this season, normally sane people may become psychotic, present-buying machines, like some kind of capitalistic consumer version of the Terminator.

The various religions that celebrate holidays at this time, including Christmas, Chanukah and Kwanza, encourage people to give gifts, and with great fervour, many adherents of these religions go out to buy their gifts. People who don't celebrate these holidays have to buy gifts simply because someone bought them a gift. In the end, it becomes an endless, tortured circle of gift-buying, where everyone loses and the stores win.

My one attempt at going to a major shopping mall failed miserably. The parking lot was so full that cars were everywhere, sometimes parked three deep. Every parking spot within two kilometres was full, and outraged drivers yelled at other outraged drivers in a scene that reminded me of some kind of sado-masochistic bumper car video game.

When you did get in, the experience was surreal – people lined up to get into stores, credit cards flashing in the air, adults and children screaming and crying, all packed into a space so filled with other people that the floor was completely invisible under the mob.

As *Winter Wonderland* began to play for the 800th time, people looked haunted and scared, frantically glancing at their watches. It was like a post-apocalyptic movie where Santa Claus takes over the world and remakes it in his yuletide image. I ran out screaming. The memory (and the nightmares) bolstered my resolve to escape, and even during Boxing Day, I stayed far away from anything that could be vaguely mistaken for a retail outlet.

And Boxing Day is itself a mystery I have yet to solve. Its purpose seems to be to sell things for even less than they sold for a week earlier. The origins of Boxing Day are so shrouded in secrecy that after 10 minutes of research into the subject, I turned up only the facts that Dec. 26 is Boxing Day, and the day of the founding of the Communist Party of India (1925).

Knowing what we do about Boxing Day sales, I find it surprising that anyone goes shopping at all before Christmas. First, people spend all their money (and more) before Christmas, and then they are offered more things for less money immediately thereafter. After the first time, I would be suspicious. After the second time, I wouldn't spend *any* money until Boxing Day.

Tell your kids more presents will come the next day, when you can afford more presents for less money, fight fewer people to do it and still get presents for anyone you wish. Aside from beating people over the head with the shear volume of ads and flyers saying, "Hey shoppers, things will cost less in two days," there is not much more that can be done to make the point clear.

Next year, when you are faced with the burden of holiday gift shopping, do yourself a favour and wait a few weeks. Not only will you escape the evil of Santa Claus's world retail domination, you might also qualify for membership in the Communist Party of India.

The Kirshner File

Ariel Sharon transformed himself

Ariel (Arik) Sharon fought his last battle last week as he teetered between life and death. The Israeli prime minister, having been felled by a massive cerebral hemorrhage on Jan. 4, was in critical condition in Hadassah Hospital after undergoing surgical procedures to staunch bleeding in his brain. Even if he survives this dire bout with mortality, Sharon's prospects for a full recovery and returning to work are extremely slim. Sharon's political career is effectively over, his powers having been transferred to his deputy, Ehud Olmert, the former mayor of Jerusalem. Facing fresh elections on March 28, Israel has been plunged into a season of uncertainty as Israelis ponder the implications of the end of the Sharon era.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Prior to the latest turn of events, Sharon, 77, seemed comfortably positioned to win his third consecutive term since February 2001. True, he suffered a minor stroke on Dec. 18, but he bounced back from that setback. Sharon, having bolted the Likud party after Israel's momentous withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and four isolated settlements in the northern West Bank last summer, formed a new centrist party, Kadima, on Nov. 21. His decision to resign from the Likud, a right-wing party he had been instrumental in creating, reinforced the impression that he planned to carry out further unilateral withdrawals from the West Bank following his re-election. In the wake of last year's pullouts, he ruled out additional unilateral steps. But if he had not intended to make more moves, he would have remained at the helm of the Likud, which is now headed, once again, by his perennial rival Benjamin Netanyahu.

Sharon claimed that he was committed to the 2003 "road map," the yet-to-be-implemented internationally-sponsored peace plan that envisages a two-state solution. But in all probability, Sharon's strategic objective was to draw Israel's final borders by unilateral means – the withdrawal from Gaza and parts of the West Bank, the construction of a 685-kilometre separation fence along the Green Line and through the West Bank, and the expansion of settlements in major blocs encompassing 80 per cent of Jewish settlers.

Rightly or wrongly, Sharon concluded that there was no trustworthy Palestinian partner with whom he could negotiate long-term interim agreements, which he had previously promoted. Sharon often said that he would not engage Mahmoud Abbas, the current president of the Palestinian Authority, in talks unless Abbas seriously cracked down on armed Palestinian militias, from Islamic Jihad to the Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, which have repeatedly broken last February's unwritten truce. Last October, Sharon's defence minister, Shaul Mofaz, went even further, dismissing Abbas as "a one-man show" and ruling out the possibility of reaching peace with "the current Palestinian leadership." The Palestinian prime minister, Ahmed Qureia, responded in kind by declaring that Israel was "running away from peace" and "trying to impose unilateral solutions."

All rhetoric aside, the fact is that Abbas, being weak and indecisive, has not complied with one of the key provisions of the road map, the clause that enjoins the Palestinians to cease all violence against Israel immediately and unconditionally. Although there was a significant decrease in violence in 2005, the Palestinians are still sending out suicide bombers and shelling Israel with Qassam rockets and mortars. But Israel has also been remiss in fulfilling its "road map" obligations, not having put a full stop to settlement activity and tolerating unauthorized outposts.

It remains to be seen how Sharon's interim successor will deal with these pivotal issues should he, as likely, defeat Netanyahu in the forthcoming general election. Whatever approach Olmert adopts, it seems clear that Netanyahu has begun rebranding Likud as a moderate party. In recent remarks, he said that a Likud prime minister, Menachem Begin, signed the 1979 peace treaty with Egypt, that the Likud backed the 1994 peace treaty with Jordan, and that he, as premier, signed "responsible, measured agreements" with the Palestinians. He was referring to the 1997 Hebron agreement and the 1998 Wye accord. In the same spirit, Netanyahu has marginalized Moshe Feiglin, an extremist Likud figure.

Tellingly enough, Sharon, an army general until his retirement in 1972, resorted to similar tactics during the 2001 election campaign, when he moderated his policies and promised voters "peace and security," which he never delivered. Until that point, Sharon – the son of two Russian immigrants, Samuel and Vera Scheinerman, who arrived in Palestine in 1922 – was driven by a hawkish outlook. A man who was physically present at virtually every seminal moment in Israel's history, from the 1948 war on down, Sharon was deeply suspicious of his Arab adversaries and believed that the only language they understood was the language of force.

Ariel (Arik) Sharon

One of Israel's founding fathers, Sharon was born on Feb. 27, 1928, in Kfar Malal, a moshav south of Petah Tikvah. A member of the Haganah, he fought in the War of Independence, leading an infantry company in the battle for Latroun. In 1953, he founded and led the 101 special commando unit, which carried out reprisals against Arab terrorists. In a highly controversial retaliatory raid, he attacked a village in Jordan, Qibya, killing numerous civilians.

During the 1956 Sinai war, he led a paratroop corps. Commanding an armoured division during the 1967 Six Day War and heading the Southern Command during much of the War of Attrition, he destroyed the terrorist infrastructure in the Gaza Strip in 1971. He left the army after being passed over for promotion as chief of staff. But he was pressed into service in 1973 as the commander of a division in the Yom Kippur War. As a soldier, Sharon was bold, innovative and magnetic, and will be remembered for the courage and daring he displayed in the crossing into Africa, an offensive that turned the tide of the war.

Yet Sharon had his defects, as Uzi Benziman writes in his biography, *Sharon*. He had a tendency to flout orders, his relations with others were self-serving, and he did not hesitate to lie. These qualities, as well as his unbounded ambition and his ability to focus, served him well as a politician.

Elected to the Knesset shortly after the 1973 war, Sharon joined Begin's Herut party in 1977 after a stint as Yitzhak Rabin's security advisor. Appointed minister of agriculture in Begin's first government, Sharon expanded Israel's previously modest network of settlements in the West Bank, establishing facts on the ground.

Subsequently, as minister of defence, he evacuated Israel's settlements in the Sinai Peninsula in order to preserve Israel's peace agreement with Egypt. As well, he conceived and coordinated the 1982 invasion of Lebanon, a venture that more or less imploded when Israel's Christian Phalange allies murdered hundreds of Palestinian civilians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in a human and public relations disaster. In 1983, the Kahan Commission found him indirectly responsible for the massacre, and he stepped down in disgrace.

A survivor, Sharon gradually rehabilitated himself, first as minister of industry and trade in a national unity government (1984-1990) and then as minister of construction and housing (1990-1992) in Yitzhak Shamir's cabinet. In both portfolios, Sharon consolidated Israel's presence in the West Bank, Gaza and Golan Heights (which he was loath to relinquish, even in exchange for peace with Syria). As foreign minister under Netanyahu, he acceded to the Wye accord, but then urged Jewish zealots to seize hilltops in the West Bank and establish outposts.

Despite his willingness to cede Sinai settlements, Sharon opposed the land-for-peace formula, as embodied in United Nations Resolution 242. He voted against the 1978 Camp David agreement and was an ardent opponent of the 1993 Oslo accords. "We do not trade land for peace," he said in 1991. At best, he offered the Arabs "peace for peace," claiming that territorial concessions "will only bring us closer to war." Hewing to this stance, he harshly criticized the sweeping concessions made by the Israeli prime minister, Ehud Barak, to the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, at the failed Camp David summit in 2000.

As leader of the Likud, Sharon triggered rage and indignation among Palestinians when he visited the Temple Mount, in eastern Jerusalem, on Sept. 28, 2000. Sharon's motive was to shore up his political position and lay claim to that area, but his visit touched off the second Palestinian uprising. As prime minister, Sharon's response to the intifadah was tough. He exerted constant military pressure on the terrorists and isolated his nemesis, Arafat.

But eventually, he publicly acknowledged that Palestinian statehood was inevitable and conceded that Israel, for largely demographic reasons, could not sustain its occupation of Gaza. By embarking on this path, he alienated his base and buried the dream of Greater Israel, but he emerged as Israel's most popular politician. In doing so, he recast himself as a pragmatist and realigned Israeli politics. This will be his legacy.

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CBC Radio reporter credits success to reading

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

As a child with her nose stuck in whatever books she could get her hands on, Marsha Lederman loved the idea of creating pictures in her head with words rather than images.

"I love telling a story through sounds and words and putting pictures in people's imaginations," said Lederman, CBC Radio's national arts reporter.

"I think that comes from reading a lot as a child and having the pictures in my imagination instead of being up on a screen. I think that had an impact of what I wanted to do: tell stories without the actual pictures."

The 39-year-old North York native said she has always known she wanted to be a writer, and took the necessary steps to land her dream job.

Lederman enrolled in the radio and television arts program at Ryerson University in Toronto in 1985, and after she graduated with honours, she took advantage of every opportunity that came her way.

Before landing her first job with CBC Radio reading the news on the Metro Morning show and, later on, Ontario Morning, Lederman made a point of leaving her comfort zone of Toronto to work in cities such as Barrie, Hamilton, and Vancouver. She even moved as far away as Ireland to broaden her scope.

She also hosted a talk show on Talk 640 in Toronto before she achieved her goal of joining the CBC.

"I knew I wanted to be a writer, and I was very interested in journalism, and I was particularly interested in broadcast journalism because I like to speak, I like to talk. That sounds bizarre," Lederman said with a laugh.

Marsha Lederman

"I liked to perform as a kid and it seemed like it was a good combination. I've always known this is what I wanted to do," she added.

"I love radio. I love the anonymity of it and I love the imagination that comes with radio," she said.

One of the benefits of being a journalist is that every day is a new opportunity to learn and inform, Lederman said.

"I love it, because I feel like I am a natural student. I love school. I love learning. The beautiful thing about being a journalist is that you are constantly learning something new, constantly exploring a new story, and then you… teach other people.

"It's fantastic. You're getting paid to learn something and talk about it or write about it, and I think it's great."

As CBC's arts reporter, Lederman interviews musicians, actors, authors and artists. She said she understands that the issues she tackles may not be life-changing, but her stories do help maintain a balance of politics and art.

"It's important that we know what is happening in the world. As an arts reporter, I'm not reporting on the war in Iraq or major international issues," she said.

"But I feel like arts and culture are just so important for the world to have and to be able to bring these stories to people. It's great to shine a light on great beauty and profound thought."

She recalled developing a documentary series about the Holocaust for Talk 640.

"It was the year that [film director Steven] Spielberg's *Schindler's List* came out and it was just about the same time that the issue was at the top of mind because of this film. It was really rewarding for me. I remember having a listener call in to say that they hadn't known about the Holocaust until hearing the piece that I did. To me that was very gratifying."

Although Lederman said she loves working at the CBC, she has another passion she refuses to give up.

"I would love to be writing. That was something that I loved to do and still love to do, although I find very little time for it now," she said.

She has a goal to eventually write a novel about human complexities and "the things in life and the world that frame those complexities."

"But it is hardly a back-up plan," she said. "It really should have been the other way around. I should have been a fiction writer with a back-up plan of being a journalist. As a fiction writer, chances are you're going to be starving. As a journalist, you're only close to starving. It's more practical," she said, exhibiting her dry wit.

Although writing may be her first love, Lederman said she couldn't be happier at the CBC, from which she can see herself retiring one day.

"I feel very blessed to work at CBC. I walk into that building many days and I look around the atrium and I think, I can't believe I get to work here and I get to do this job. I am so lucky."

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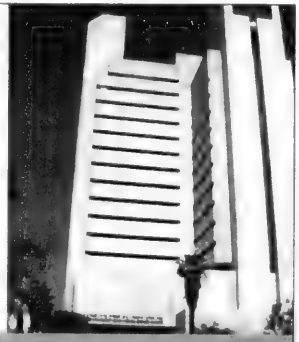

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Hamas, chaos may delay PA vote

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

On the eve of the official Jan. 3 kickoff of the Palestinian election campaign, major Canadian and international media outlets reported skeptically about Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas's threat to delay parliamentary elections scheduled for Jan. 25 if Israel bars Arabs from voting in east Jerusalem.

Reuters, Associated Press, BBC, and CBC, among others, cited analysts who saw this as a tactic to divert attention from the PA's real concern: that Hamas may pose a serious challenge to Fatah's control of the Palestinian Authority. As the new year began, polls estimated that Hamas could win 40 per cent of the seats in Palestinian Legislative Council. A few even predicted a Hamas victory.

In *Ha'aretz* (Jan. 3), Arnon Regular wrote that Israeli officials are against allowing east Jerusalem Arabs to vote for Hamas, a terrorist organization committed to Israel's destruction. "However, they also do not want to be blamed for sabotaging the election and are said to be seeking a compromise." One idea being re-floated is to allow the Arabs to vote in Abu Dis and other villages surrounding Jerusalem. However, this has been wholly rejected by the Palestinians.

In the *New York Times* ("Abbas to discuss delay of elections with Hamas," Jan 3), Steven Erlanger interviewed Khalil Shikaki, a highly respected Palestinian pollster and director of the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research. Shikaki said that while Israel's policy on the east Jerusalem vote is currently ambiguous, Israel will prevent the vote if this stand is backed by the United States and the European Union. "Israel will play along and take the blame, only if the international community winks and says, 'Please give Fatah the excuse.'" Erlanger noted that with indications the United States is urging Israel to allow the elections, "it appears that Fatah does not yet have its excuse."

Journalists also focused on the growing chaos in the Gaza Strip. Gunmen from various clans and gangs have kidnapped foreigners, shot at PA police, and taken over government buildings. "Palestinian police have been unable to halt the violence that has gripped Gaza since Israel withdrew in September," reported CBC News (CBC.ca, Jan. 2).

A case in point was the Dec. 28 kidnapping of Kate Burton, a British human rights worker, and her visiting parents.

CTV's Tom Kennedy reported about the family's release on Dec. 31: "[There have been] more than a dozen kidnappings in Gaza in the past year," Kennedy said. "Palestinian leaders call the kidnappers despicable but seem powerless to stop them."

On CBC Radio's *World Report* (Dec. 31), Aaron Schacter also dealt with the Burton kidnapping. He said that the abductions of foreigners "have underlined the inability of Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas to impose order [in Gaza] since Israel's withdrawal in September" and may diminish Abbas's chances in the upcoming elections.

Schacter also spoke about the barrage of Qassam rockets that Palestinians have launched from Gaza towards Israel's southern coastal cities. Abbas has been unable to stop the assaults, even though groups such as Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, an adjunct of Fatah, Abbas's own ruling party, have carried out many of the rocket launchings – among other acts of violence.

In the midst of the chaos, lawlessness and violence, a number of NGOs and all unnecessary UN field workers have left Gaza. At the same time, several dozen European election monitors have begun to deploy in the West Bank and Gaza, despite the concern for their security. Several analysts question whether Palestinian elections can be held at all when even PA police officers are not safe from armed gangs. The same concern applies, of course, to the Canadian monitors who are scheduled to join the team already in place.

In the Jan. 3 *New Republic*, editor-in-chief Martin Peretz looked at the broader implications of the chaos in the PA. "How has all this registered in Israel? The fact is that almost no one any longer believes in a negotiated peace with the Palestinians. Not because sensible and humane Israelis can't imagine a fair divide of the land between the river and the sea. But because Gaza has truly shown them that there are – let's be perfectly frank – no Palestinians with whom to treat."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

Two convicted in Roma hate case

Two men pleaded guilty last week to hate promotion charges in connection with a white supremacist demonstration against Roma (also known as Gypsies) outside a Toronto motel in 1997. Charges against four others were dropped.

Canadian Jewish Congress, which monitored the case, reported that one of the defendants was given a conditional discharge and the other received a suspended sentence. Both are required to write a letter of apology to the Roma community.

The judge in the case made it clear this was not a minor offence in any way, Congress reported. She also noted that none of the defendants was still involved in the white supremacist movement, or had committed other criminal offences.

In 1997, members of a white supremacist group held a demonstration outside the Lido Motel in Toronto where a number of recently arrived Roma refugees from Czechoslovakia were being housed. The accused were charged with promoting hatred against Roma.

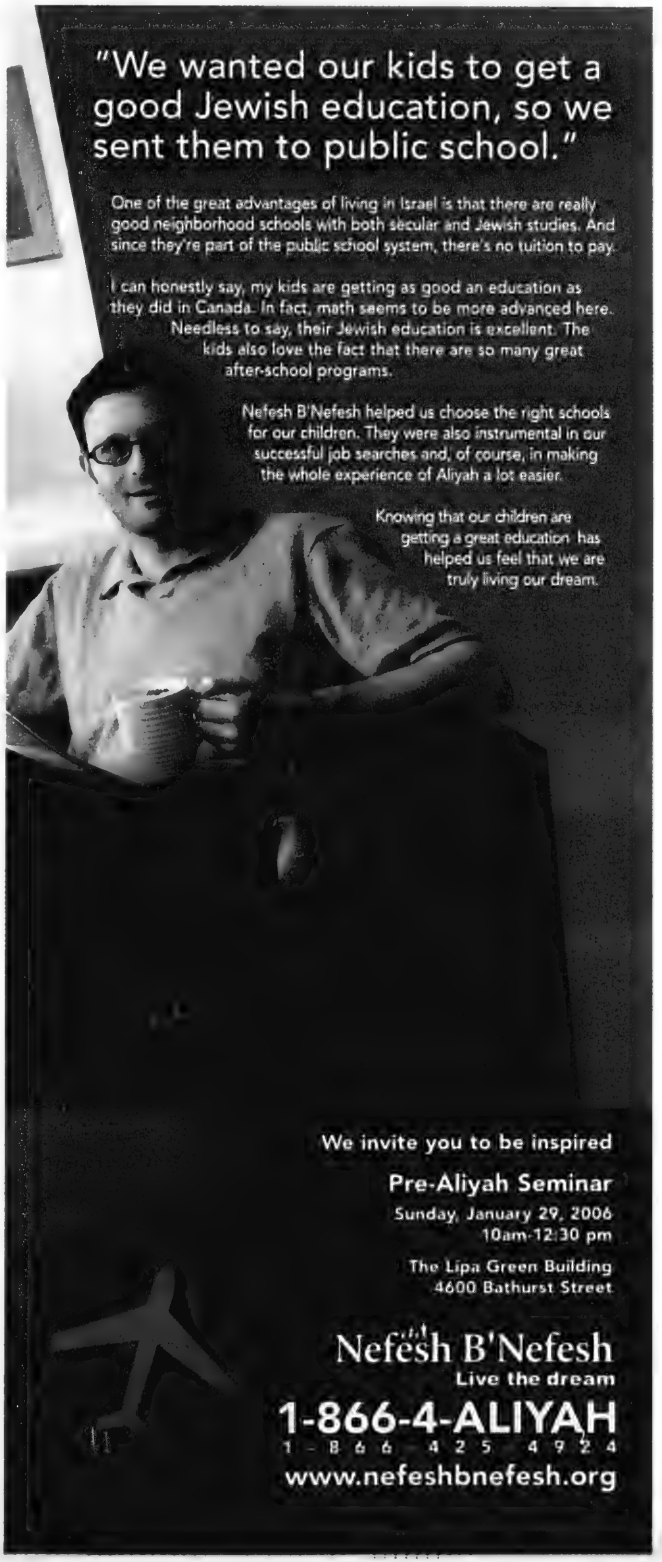
The six defendants were acquitted in March 2000 in the Ontario Court of Justice when the court accepted defence arguments that evidence presented referred only to Gypsies and not Roma.

The case eventually ended up in the Supreme Court of Canada, where the acquittals were overturned last February. At that time, a new trial was also ordered.

"We are satisfied with this result," said Joel Richler, chair of Congress' Ontario region who also acted as legal counsel to Congress on its intervention in the case at the Supreme Court.

"The convictions in this case make it clear to all Canadians that this kind of hatred will not be tolerated in a civil society," he said last week.

"This feels like waking up from a bad dream," said Paul St. Clair, executive director of the Roma Community Centre. "This decision brings closure to the Roma community, thanks to the tireless effort of Congress and the Toronto police."


"We wanted our kids to get a good Jewish education, so we sent them to public school."
One of the great advantages of living in Israel is that there are really good neighborhood schools with both secular and Jewish studies. And since they're part of the public school system, there's no tuition to pay.
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Pre-school director's retirement signals end of era

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre underwent a major renovation a few years ago that transformed the 52-year-old structure, originally known as the YMHA, into a strikingly modern glass building.

But its preschool – consisting of two light-filled classrooms filled with books, art supplies, toys and animals including a rabbit, mouse, fish and frogs – has changed very little over the years. Even the toddler-sized tables and chairs are original.

"Whoever designed the building was a genius!" enthused Hélène Comay last month, a week before her Dec. 23 retirement. "Both rooms opening on a playground. Big windows. Light."

Hélène, as she is known to the children, will be honoured at a Feb. 5, Sunday afternoon tribute at the JCC. The event, with entertainment by local jazz singer Molly Johnson, is also a fundraiser for the school.

Although she began teaching at the school in 1957, it was only about five years ago, as Comay entered her mid-70s, that she began to ask herself when she ought to retire.

"I still like what I'm doing," she would think, postponing a decision.

But last year she realized that the time to retire would in fact be while she was still enjoying the work that kept her busy morning and afternoon, five days a week.

"She hasn't slowed down," said Soraya Yacoubi, who has taught with Comay for the past 10 years and is now on maternity leave. "She has the same passion and dedication to her work.

"She treats the children with great respect, and she listens to them."

Comay – born Hélène du Bouchet in 1926 in Paris, France – was a classroom teacher at the school for 48 years. For more than 40 years, she also served as the school's director. Her modest "office" was a desk tucked into the corner of the room linking the two classrooms, which also houses, among other things, the children's washroom.

For Comay, a mother of two and grandmother of four, her work has always been centred on the children's needs.

"It's a very play-based school," she said. The program is "very much individualized… We look at each kid and go from there."

As a young woman, Comay thought she wanted to work as a children's therapist. In 1949, she and her husband Eli moved to London, England, where he was involved in doctoral research. While there, Comay called child psycholanalysis pioneer Anna Freud to inquire about studying with her.

"She was very wise," recalled Comay, perched on a childsize chair for the interview. "She said the first thing to do is get a job in a nursery school, get to know young children. Once I did that, I felt that's where I wanted to be."

Comay's experience with youngsters dates back to her own teenage years. After France was invaded by the Nazis in 1940, Comay's family left Paris and made their way to Boston, where she worked with terminally ill children in a hospital ward. Her mother was a doctor who following the Nazi invasion – could no longer practice medicine because she was Jewish.

Comay, who was educated at Mount Holyoke College and Radcliffe College (now Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study Harvard University), also lived in Chicago and Montreal, before settling in Toronto.

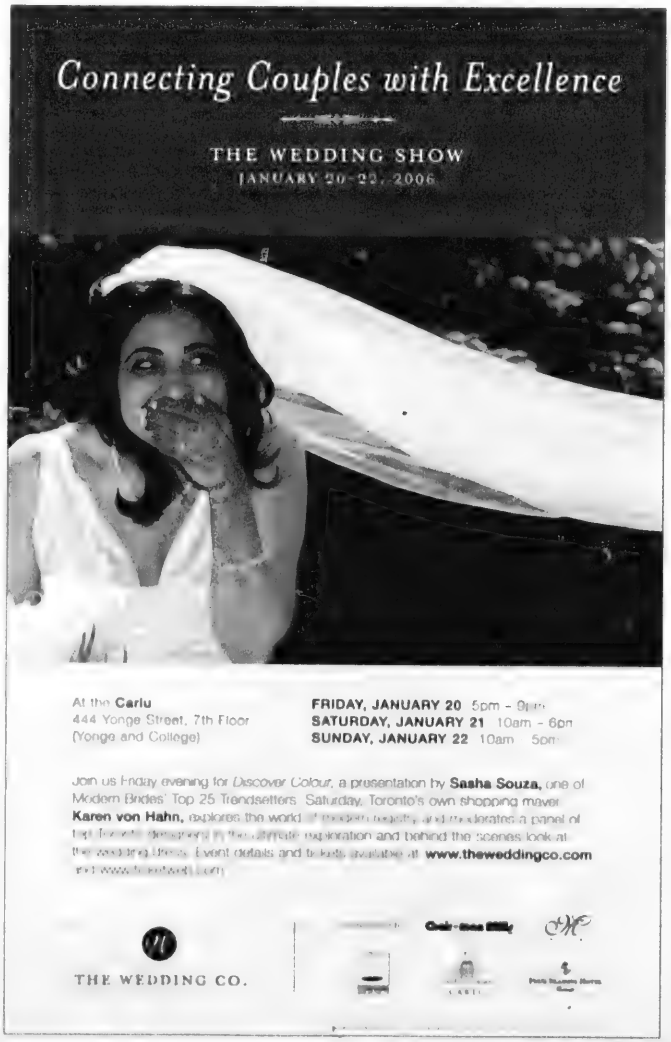
She is a firm believer in exposing children to good literature, good toys, good art materials and good music. In the nursery, she read to the children every day – books that she deemed well-written and with a good story.

"I'm passionately interested in having kids hooked on good books so that when they're ready to read, this is something that will be important to them."

What does it take to be a good preschool teacher? "It's a matter of remembering what it was like to be a child," Comay said. "And listening."

For further information about the tribute, e-mail nstribute@mnjcc.org, or call 416-924-6211, ext. 255.

Hélène Comay reads to a group of four-year-olds at the Miles Nadal JCC preschool. [Frances Kraft photo]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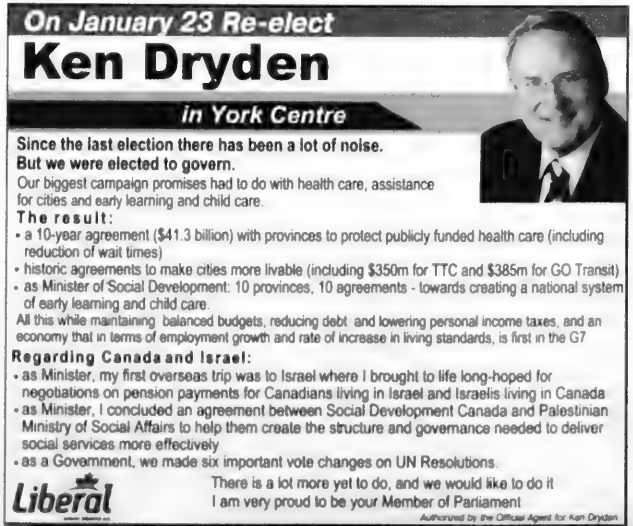
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• as Minister, my first overseas trip was to Israel where I brought to life long-hoped for negotiations on pension payments for Canadians living in Israel and Israelis living in Canada
• as Minister, I concluded an agreement between Social Development Canada and Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs to help them create the structure and governance needed to deliver social services more effectively
• as a Government, we made six important vote changes on UN Resolutions.
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Greater Toronto Area

Mae Waese fought for changes in education

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Obituary

Mae Waese, who was instrumental in working for improvements that would help educate all children in the Toronto area, and an active community advocate, died of cancer on Jan. 4. She was 74.

A skilled negotiator, Waese served as a trustee on the North York Board of Education from 1978 to 1986 and was its chair from 1983-86. At the same time, she sat on the Metropolitan Toronto School Board, which she chaired from 1988-92. She had a reputation for meeting every challenge, using each one as an opportunity to explore methods of improving a situation.

Mae Waese *[CJN File photo]*

Regardless of what position she held or awards she received, Waese held on to her roots – her family, longtime friends and colleagues.

Her parents had come to Canada from Dridz, Poland, and throughout her life, she took an interest in the Dridzer Benevolent Society where she served as president.

The eldest of four daughters, she went to King Edward Public School and then to Harbord Collegiate.

After her marriage and while raising her three children, she enrolled in Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at University of Toronto and obtained a degree in adult education. She later served on the board of governors at OISE.

Her lifelong association and commitment to education began when her children attended Wilmington Public School in the 1960s. Waese spearheaded the introduction of French into the public school system and was an active member of the committee that brought alternative education to the Wilmington school. She was the president of the Wilmington Home and School Association and set in motion many innovative projects.

At the same time, she became active with the National Council of Jewish Women and served on the executive both locally and nationally and as the chair of Council's Suburban Study branch where she was a member for some 50 years.

Her commitment and determination, which often challenged the status quo, brought her into contact with politicians and community leaders. Three years ago, she was appointed to the board of the Ontario College of Physicians and Surgeons.

Waese's associations reached all segments of the Jewish and general community, including the Urban Alliance on Race Relations, the Canadian Jewish Congress, the North York Library Board and numerous others.

Among the many accolades and awards that she was given, in 1999, she received the Dr. Harry Paikin Memorial Award from the Ontario Public School Association. The award recognizes the outstanding contribution of individuals across Ontario to the educational system.

Waese is survived by her husband, Lou, children Heather and Arnon Glatter, Bradley and Karen, James and Matt, five grandchildren and sisters and brothers-in-law Marcia and the late Sigmund Lightman, Barbara and Gerry Raber and Ronnie

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Jewish Life

The immigrant who was 'different'

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

Not everyone came to Canada through Halifax's famous Pier 21. In December 1956, one young man's crossing ended in eastern Canada's "other" port – picturesque Quebec City. From there, it was a short train ride to Montreal.

It was not a search for adventure or fortune that brought immigrants like this one to Canada at the time – it was Moroccan independence. After years of European colonization of Africa (by France and Spain, in the case of Morocco) and years of social upheaval and political instability, Morocco was independent.

The Jews had always favoured the European presence, which they saw as progressive, enlightened and full of opportunity. Now, with the country reverting back to a Muslim state, foreboding and uncertainty were the order of the day. Rumours were rampant, among them that all young men would be forcibly conscripted into the king's newly formed army. Even though he was an only son, this young man's family spirited him out of the country.

On his second day in Montreal, at the direction of the Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS), our young man went out looking for work. His first attempts were typical of what thousands of other Jews of North African descent would encounter.

Our eager young immigrant found himself sitting in front of a Jewish tailor. It seemed that, as pleasantly as he presented himself, the tailor was increasingly more suspicious and uncomfortable. It was soon apparent that the interview was centred more on the religion of the applicant than on his ability to do the job.

The same question arose again and again. "What is your religion?" "Are you Jewish? Are you really Jewish? Are your parents and family Jewish?" It didn't seem to matter that JIAS had arranged this appointment, that both the applicant's first and last name were biblical; the Jewish tailor could not accept that this dark-skinned young man in front of him, so fluent in French (but with not a word of Yiddish) could really be Jewish.

"Where are you from?"

"Morocco."

"Morocco? Are there Jews in Morocco?"

"Well, yes of course."

"What kind of Jews?"

In desperation, the young man produced his passport which clearly indicated his name and that of his parents – all biblical. His religion was even noted: Jewish. Still the suspicious tailor fumbled with the passport. What, he asked were those scribbled lines on the document? Arabic writing, was the response. Arabic writing! "Are you an Arab?"

"No sir, I'm Jewish."

After much humiliating repetition, a job was indeed offered. The problem was the pay was so ridiculously low that it was evident this was not an offer at all but a ruse to convince the immigrant himself to decline. For the Ashkenazi Jew of the time, it was much too bizarre to accept an individual as a fellow Jew whose complexion was not as fair as his own, who spoke not a word of Yiddish, whose family name was not of Germanic origin, who hailed from Africa – from an Arabic country to boot.

This must be an Arab imposter, the tailor would reason. He can't be one of us.

Eventually, the young man found a government job. Able to communicate excellently in French, he became friends with his co-workers who soon took a liking to him.

"Dans quelle eglise priez-vous?" they asked him. "At which church do you worship"

"Well," answered the young man, "actually none. You see, I'm Jewish."

"Pas possible! Jews aren't French. Who ever heard of a French Jew? Jews speak only Yiddish and a little English. Everyone knows that!"

Eventually our young immigrant settled in Toronto, where a three-month contract with the government evolved into a 30-year-plus career as a civil servant. He is now actively and happily retired, a proud Jew who might still only know but a few Yiddish words – a shanda!

10 words for the new year

1. Solitude

Someone who does not reserve one hour every day for oneself is not human – *Nachman of Bratslav*

Being alone does not mean being lonely. It means cutting off the external, the superficial and the superfluous, and seeking instead the inner strength which one finds best in solitude. It enriches the spirit and ennobles the person, and one who denies himself its refuge in not living life to its fullest. – *Henry King*

2. Laughter

To laugh at ourselves we have to stand outside ourselves – and that is an immense benefit. Our puffed-up pride and touchy self-importance vanish: a clean and sweet humility begins to take possession of us. We are on the way to growing a soul. – *A. Powell Davies*

A man without mirth is like a wagon without springs. He is jolted disagreeably by every pebble in the road. – *H. W. Beecher*

3. Time

Living one day at a time is the magic that lifts the crushing burden from our shoulders and divides our time into manageable portions. On God's clock for human beings there is no yesterday, no tomorrow – only the great now. – *G. M. Mathews*

Finish your day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; begin it well and serenely and with too high a spirit to be cumbered with your old nonsense. This day is all that is good and fair. It is too dear, with its hopes and invitations, to waste a moment on the yesterday. – *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

4. Hope

I avow my faith that we are marching toward better days. Humanity will not be cast down. We are going on – swinging bravely forwards along the grand high road – and already behind the distant mountains is the promise of the sun. – *Winston Churchill*

If you have occasional spells of despondency and self-pity, if once in a while you begin to feel sorry for yourself, don't despair! The sun has a sinking spell every night, but it rises again all right the next morning. – *Rabbi Richard C. Hertz*

5. Friendship

Friendship is like a treasury; you cannot take from it more that you put into it. *Benjamin Mandelstamm*

Friendship is like stone. A stone has no value, but by rubbing one stone against another, sparks of fire emerge. – *chassidic source*

6. Thought

A man's mind stretched by a new idea can never go back to its original dimensions. – *Oliver Wendall Holmes*

A great people think they are thinking when they are merely rearranging their prejudices. – *William James*

7. Learning

Too many of our people want an easy-going religion, one which does not interfere with their leisure, their sleep or their television, which calls for no study and no observance, which does not challenge or disturb them, a religion without any spiritual travail, without any stab of thought or conscience, without any sacrifices, the religion of a self-pampering people. No religion has ever survived in that kind of emotional and intellectual vacuum, Judaism least of all. – *Rabbi A. H. Silver*

8. Contentment

When Pyrrhus was about to sail for Italy, Cineas, a wise and good man, asked him what his intentions and expectations were.

"To conquer Rome," said Pyrrhus

"And after that?"

"We will subdue Carthage, Macedonia, all Africa and all Greece."

"And when we have conquered all we can, what shall we do?"

"Do? Why, then we will sit down and spend our time in peace and comfort."

"Ah, my Lord," said the wise Cineas. "What prevents our being in peace and comfort right now?" – *George L. Walton*

9. Happiness

Happiness sneaks in through a door you didn't know you left open. – *John Barrymore*

If your ever find happiness by hunting for it, you will find it as the old man did his lost spectacles – on his nose all the time. *Josh Billings*

The secret to being miserable is to have enough leisure to bother about whether you are happy or not. – *G. B. Shaw*

10. Caring

The person who has learned to be kind has mastered the most vital subject in life's curriculum. If he has learned how to bring a ray of light where there is darkness, a touch of softness where life has been hard, a word of cheer to lift drooping spirits – that person is best equipped to live life as it should be lived. – *Rabbi Sidney Greenberg*

Jewish Life

The ROM's Chinese-Jewish artifacts

By ZE'EV GLICENSTEIN

A wooden Torah case, two pages from a Rosh Hashanah machzor and several other artifacts from the historic Jewish community of Kaifeng, China, are on view in the newly restored galleries of the Royal Ontario Museum that opened in late December.

Unless you know where these pieces are, you're liable to miss them as you stroll through the ROM's magnificent new display spaces, which show off the collections with crystalline clarity.

The items of Chinese-Jewish provenance are in the display case to your right as you enter the Mathews Family Court of Chinese Sculpture, one of a set of adjoining galleries that runs alongside Philosophers' Walk. Although these interesting and storied pieces have been loaned to other institutions (including Israel's Beit Hatfutsoth Museum) in recent decades, they haven't been dusted off for home display since the early 1980s.

The display case also contains a drain mouth and chime stone from the Kaifeng synagogue, among items related to other foreign religions. The drain mouth was used for ritual washing and the chime stone was likely rung to call congregants to prayer, in imitation of Eastern practices. "The synagogue was just like a Chinese temple, except that it faced west towards Jerusalem," according to Sara Irwin, the ROM's specialist in bronze-age China and other disciplines.

Hanging on the wall, a rubbing from a stone stele details the community's history: one side dates from 1489, the other from 1523. The Chinese inscriptions record that the first Jews came to Kaifeng as traders; Irwin suggests they traded in cotton or silk and probably arrived before 1126, when the city was capital of the Northern Song dynasty.

As the slightly corrupted Hebrew of the machzor pages reveals, the community had been in steady decline long before its last rabbi died about 1800. A long-established pattern of scribal misspellings suggests that this isolated pocket of Jews had been slowly losing their knowledge of Hebrew over the generations.

Pathetically, the elders once displayed a Torah scroll in the marketplace, offering a reward to any traveller who could interpret it. "Morning and night, with tears in our eyes and with offerings of incenses do we implore that our religion may again flourish," one wrote in the mid-1800s. "We have everywhere sought about, but could find none who understood the letter of the Great Country (Hebrew) and that has occasioned us deep sorrow."

By the time Canadian Anglican Bishop William C. White (1873-1960) arrived in Henan province about 1910, the synagogue was long gone and only legends and artifacts remained.

As the famed collector travelled far and wide amassing what would become the ROM's extensive Chinese collections, he took a keen interest in the Jews of Kaifeng, even trying to revitalize the community by convening a conference of its descendants in the '30s. He was especially intrigued with Chinese-Jewish genealogy and found several historic Chinese war heroes and mandarins of Jewish descent.

The University of Toronto published White's definitive three-volume text, *Chinese Jews*, in 1942. The last in a series of five major works that he authored over a decade, it was reprinted as a single volume in 1966. Although the physical remnants of the Kaifeng community may be found in several international institutions, White's comprehensive study insures that the ROM will always be associated with this small, vanished Jewish outpost.

While he challenged other researchers to follow him in this "wonderful vista of adventures in historical exploration," perhaps no one will ever shed more light on the distinctively Oriental Jews of Kaifeng than this unlikely but determined specialist from Toronto.

Gefilte fish on the web – Part 2

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Today we continue sampling the best Internet sites for that quintessential Jewish food – gefilte fish.

An excellent assortment of gefilte fish recipes can be found at the RCFJ Recipe Archives. **[http://tinyurl.com/7q6d9]** If you've tired of the classics, you can try your hand at Leslie's Mexican Gefilte Fish, Marian Burros's Gefilte Fish Loaf and Maryland Spicy Gefilte Fish. And for something a bit different, there's Alaskan Halibut and Salmon Gefilte Fish Terrine. There's even a recipe for Chrain, the perfect complement to gefilte fish, which calls for horseradish root, sugar, vinegar and mustard.

Over at the Jewish-food Gefilte Fish Archives, there's Dilled Salmon, Chilled Terrine, Beet Mould and 40 others. **[http://www.jewish-food.org/recipes/gefindex.htm]** Arielle offers five variations including Beet Gefilte Fish Mould. **[http://recipes2.alastra.com/fish/]**

One popular time saver is using a frozen loaf of fish that, according to its recipe, will give you "the look and taste of homemade." **[http://tinyurl.com/8zhsm]** But don't get Joe Hartman started. The owner of Hartman's Kosher Meats in Toronto sells roughly 30 loaves of gefilte fish each Friday afternoon, and says the delicacy is lost on the younger generation. "These kids don't appreciate what goes into making gefilte fish," he says. 'They don't put their heart and soul into it like their parents or grandparents did. It takes lots of work, but now you can just walk into any supermarket to buy it.'" **[http://tinyurl.com/c85hj]**

Tammy from New York seems to straddle both sides of the homemade versus store-bought debate. Tammy is the winner of the Great Gefilte Fish-off and has supplied her late bubbie's delicious recipe. But Tammy says, "FYI, making gefilte fish is, quite frankly, a pain in the ass. Even my grandmother would agree. She and I both got lazy in our old age and doctored the store-bought stuff, which turned out surprisingly well and fooled everyone." **[http://tinyurl.com/8y3qn]**

So if you want to cheat, the folks at Torahbytes want to help. They advise you to buy one large jar of gefilte fish. The secret of this recipe is adding your own beets, carrots, onions and seasonings to the fish. **[http://www.torahbytes.org/sechel/Gefilte.htm]**.

Here's a suggestion for people who just love the *idea* of eating gefilte fish: Vegetarian Gefilte Fish. The recipe calls for eggs, onions, carrots, potato and matzah meal but not a speck of pike. **[http://www.raskinfish.com/recipes.htm]** On the other hand, if you hate fish (or have an allergy) but love the look of gefilte fish, then check out the "False (Chicken)" variation. **[http://tinyurl.com/d9u9w]**

Oddly, the ZenWeb Gefilte Fish page has no recipes, but it does have gorgeous pictures that show all the steps involved in preparing a traditional platter. **[http://www.zenreich.com/ZenWeb/gefilte.htm]**

Not surprisingly, there seems to be quite a bit of lore surrounding the origins of gefilte fish. Once fanciful legend traces them back to the Great Gefilte Lakes in Upstate New York. **[http://tinyurl.com/85w58]** Another tells of the mythical "Mighty Gefilte" that yielded to a Galilean fisherman. **[http://tinyurl.com/75kgd]**

Any good cook will tell you the secret to gefilte fish is finding just the right balance between ground fish such as pike, carp and, of course, whitefish. But Scott Gilbert has accomplished something few others can claim. The intrepid scientist at Swarthmore College's Society for Developmental Biology has actually photographed a "gefilte fish embryo." According to Gilbert, the picture on his website "is a chimeric pike and whitefish blastula which should (if all goes well) develop into a mature Gefilte." **[http://tinyurl.com/9nk45]**

A few years ago, the Israeli postal service probably did more to get gefilte fish into the mouths of thousands of people than a generation of bubbies. It immortalized the food on a postage stamp. Along with stamps honouring other classics like falafel and couscous, the gefilte fish stamp depicts five pieces of fish crowned with carrot slices. And in the top right corner of the stamp, the humble fish grinder. **[http://tinyurl.com/cbl89]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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The Slifkin affair: a lament for Orthodoxy

By JOSEPH YOSSI ADLER

The Torah exhorts us to passionately and diligently seek justice (Deuteronomy 18:30). Demanding intellectual honesty and creating an environment where differences of opinion may be aired without fear of consequence are certainly important components of justice. Recent developments in the Orthodox Jewish world, however, cast doubt on whether this ideal is achievable.

Guest Voice

The vast majority of the western World has accepted the age of the universe and certain other well-established scientific principles. But there is a segment of Orthodox Jewry led by some rabbinic figures in B'nei Brak in Israel that has questioned some of these fundamental assumptions. Even an allegorical reading of the creation story in Genesis is considered taboo in some of these circles, notwithstanding that many well-respected rabbinic figures over the centuries have supported such a less-than-literal reading.

Now that alone would not be so vexing, but in the last year, a haredi scholar named Rabbi Nosson Slifkin, along with his religious texts which attempt to reconcile science and Torah by using traditional sources, has been added to a fast-growing list of banned Jewish authors and writings. Furthermore, a prominent Toronto rabbi, Rav Shlomo Miller of Kollel Avrecihim (who is a known and respected rabbinic figure in haredi circles worldwide) recently issued a letter in which he joins over 30 prominent haredi rabbis in condemning Rav Slifkin and banning his books.

The ban is about a year old, but only recently has a rabbinic figure in the Toronto community as prominent as Rav Miller joined those who have advanced the ban. In his letter, Rav Miller further suggests that this "wicked man" breached certain fundamentals of faith, though none were specifically enumerated. This approach is symptomatic of a much wider offensive launched by the haredim to silence once-traditional opinions with which they disagree.

In addition to the ban of Rav Slifkin's texts and other "disapproved" writings, the past couple of years have seen certain widely renowned haredi rabbis and yeshiva luminaries in Israel, the United States and Canada joining together to publicly ban various modern technologies (including the use of the Internet and cellphones and the viewing of movies on airplanes) and have imposed stricter guidelines for kashrut observance and other areas of Jewish practice.

Notwithstanding that life for Orthodox Jews is already very circumscribed and difficult, these haredi leaders are determined to set their lines in the sand and to impose their will even upon large communities of Orthodox Jews who do not subscribe to their stringent interpretation of Torah.

These troubling developments have unleashed a tidal wave of concern within modern Orthodox and even some haredi circles and have caused this writer, as well as many others within the Toronto community and worldwide, a great deal of pain and distress.

It is important to note that those concerned about the treatment of Rav Slifkin, for example, accept, even embrace, the rights of others to disagree with the content of his texts, as we all believe in the fundamental freedom to articulate disagreements on matters of religious faith. We have no quarrel with those who may take an opposing opinion, and in fact, our tradition encourages genuine debate and dialogue, as evidenced by the scores of debates in the Mishnah, the Talmud and the thousands of religious texts published thereafter. Debate is entirely healthy provided that it is "for the sake of heaven."

Our concern is that the condemnation of Rav Slifkin and the ban on him and his writings are precisely designed to quash any such debate. We also strenuously object to the harsh and cavalier manner in which Rav Slifkin has been treated by these haredi leaders. We have yet to learn of the particulars of the complaint against Rav Slifkin that would warrant such a harsh condemnation. After all, Rav Slifkin is now an outcast in his own community, his livelihood has been damaged and his reputation tarnished, all without a fair hearing. The rabbis who condemned Rav Slifkin and his words acted without regard to the principles of justice as envisioned by the Torah.

As a result of these categorical condemnations of a man of Torah and his words of knowledge, tensions within the Toronto Orthodox community have been exacerbated. Those who question the motives of these haredi rabbis lose faith in their leadership and their ability to represent an authentic Orthodox Judaism that is palatable to them. This crisis of faith will have grave ramifications for years to come, both in terms of the relationship between the modern Orthodox and the haredi worlds, and in terms of the haredi relationship to the world at large.

I fervently urge members of the Toronto Jewish community to support Rav Slifkin in his efforts to publish and disseminate his texts, and to condemn in the strongest terms possible any attempts to silence or demonize him and those that support dissenting opinions. We must resist their attempts to eliminate open discussion at every possible opportunity. We must feel free to cite traditional sources without fear of haredi reprisals. And, finally, we must insist on our right to exchange ideas in an open and respectful environment, as our collective future depends on it. Justice and Torah demand no less.

Joseph Yossi Adler is a lawyer and a concerned Orthodox Jew.

Correction

In the story "20 Quebec groups urge Israel boycott" (*CJN*, Jan. 5), Sara Saber-Freedman's position with the Canada-Israel Committee was misidentified. She is, in fact, its chief operating officer

Bernard Betel lecture series

The Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living is bringing in several academics for a weekly, three-month lecture series beginning Tuesday, Jan. 10.

Topics will include grandparenthood, status of Jewish life on Canadian campuses and memory and aging. The University of Toronto's Ben Schlesinger and York University's Martin Lockshin and Shelley Hornstein kick off the series on Jan. 10.

"The goal of the Life Long Learning Institute (LLI) at the Betel Centre is to offer a variety of lectures and discussion that will help stimulate seniors' minds," says LLI's chair Esther Ship.

The lecture series will be held on Tuesdays from 10 to 11:30 a.m. in the centre's synagogue at Bathurst Street and Steeles Avenue. The cost is $2 per lecture for members and $4 for non-members. Membership to the centre is $42.80, including GST.

For more information, please call Mara Koven, LLI co-ordinator, 416-225-2112, ext. 119.

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The Officers, Executive, Board of Directors and Staff of the Toronto Jewish Free Loan Cassa mourn the passing of
Bert Meyer Cohen z'l
and extend their deep condolences to his family.
Bert was an exceptional person, devoted to family and community. While volunteering for the Loan Cassa, he served with distinction, compassion and humour.
He will be missed.
May G-d comfort you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.
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Only paid mazel tov announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come, first served basis as space allows.

Family Moments

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SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words maximum.
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or e-mail them to:
cblackman@cjnews.com

Mazel tov to Shelley & Corey Levin who were married June 30 at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Congregation.

Congratulations to our daughter Dafna Lorber for receiving her master's degree from University of Toronto. With lots of love, Mom and Dad.

Mazel tov to Dorothy & Robert Sterling who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary Dec 11. Love from their children and grandchildren.

Shoshana Starkman & Randy Solomon thank everyone for making our Nov. 20 wedding so special.

Andrew Norman at 6 months old. Proud parents Dr. Peter Hodes & Donnalene Tuer-Hodes and grandmother Senta Hodes-Gilbert.

Mazel tov to Sara (left) and Nicole, who recently celebrated their bat mitzvahs in Jerusalem. Love, all your brothers, sisters and family.

Happy 10th birthday Jan. 23 to Sydney Brooke, daughter of Maxine & Josh Schulman. Love, Bubbie Henna & Zaidy Irving Pomeranz.

Happy third birthday Jan 21st to Jacob Harley, son of Cary & Cindy Pomeranz. Love, Bubbie Henna & Zaidy Irving Pomeranz.

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By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, Jan. 16, is the deadline for the Jan. 26 issue and Monday, Jan. 23, is the deadline for the Feb. 2 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Jan. 12

***THE SACRIFICE* BY WISEMAN**

Beth Emeth Synagogue presents a lecture by **Russell Brown**, professor of Canadian literature, University of Toronto, on *The Sacrifice*, a novel by **Adele Wiseman**. 8 p.m. 416-633-3838 or www.bebv.org.

Saturday, Jan. 14

MOVIE NITE AT BETH JACOB

Families are invited to the Beth Jacob Movie Night to see Walt Disney's *National Treasure*, an adventure starring **Nicholas Cage**. 7:30 p.m. at 147 Overbrooke Pl. Refreshments served. All welcome. $2.

SINGLES' THEATRE EVENT

Teatron Theatre invites singles 35+ to meet, mingle and see the play *The Home of the Brave* at the Leah Posluns Theatre. 8 p.m. $25, includes refreshments. To reserve, 416-785-1395.

Sunday, Jan. 15

RESOURCES ON THE PC

Shaarei Shomayim presents a Jewish Computer Resources Breakfast and Seminar with **Rabbi Moshe Shulman** speaking about "Hebrew and Jewish Resources for the PC." 9:15 a.m.-noon. 416-789-3213 or visit www.shomayim.org.

BROTHERHOOD BREAKFAST

Beth David Brotherhood presents "Religious Melodies and Their Origins," with **Cantor Marshall Loomer**. 9:15 a.m. Charge. 416-633-5500.

BENSOUSSAN CONCERT

Beth Emeth Synagogue sponsors a concert with **Aaron Bensoussan** and the Dafina Orchestra and special guests Men with Babies, 7:30 p.m. at the Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. W. $10 cover. For tickets, call 416-633-3838.

ISRAEL'S IMAGE ABROAD

David Baker, senior foreign press co-ordinator in the Israeli prime minister's office, speaks about Israel's international image and how the world media handles Middle East issues. 8 p.m. at Beth Shalom Synagogue. $5. 416-783-6103.

Monday, Jan. 16

DIABETES AND THE SKIN

Dr. Frank W. Rosenberg, a dermatologist, speaks about "Diabetes and The Skin" at a meeting of the Jewish diabetes chapter meeting. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. $1. 416-363-0177, ext. 7403, or visit www.diabetes.ca.

Wednesday, Jan. 18

WANDERING JEWS

Judy Snowbell Diamond lectures on "Wandering Jews: How Far Have We Come?" a six-week course using biblical texts and commentaries to examine the generation of Israelites that wandered through the desert. A multi-dimensional picture that challenges the contemporary relationship of God and Israel is uncovered. Wednesday evenings beginning tonight through Feb. 22 at the Garnet Williams Community Centre, 501 Clark Ave. W. 8-9:30 p.m. Men and women welcome. Fee. For registration, call 416-877-2050 or ww.mekorot.ca.

THE DATING DRASHAH

Bnai Torah Congregation and Sasson V'Simcha host The Dating Drashah, a lecture series for singles by **Rabbi Yechiel Goldreich**. Tonight "Gossips and Research: Lashon Hara and Dating," 8:30 p.m. $5. 465 Patricia Ave. 416-256-4497.

Other news

HOME OF THE BRAVE

Teatron Theatre presents the play *Home of the Brave* by **Arthur**

Continued on page 21

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HEBREW UNIVERSITY OF JERUSALEM

What's New

Continued from page 20

Laurents, a drama that deals with anti-Semitism in the United states Army during World War II. The play tells the story of a group of soldiers who volunteer for a dangerous mission to a Japanese-occupied island. Prejudice and fear are exposed and friendships are tested in the tense situation. Performances, Thursday, Jan. 12, Saturday, Jan. 14, and Sunday, Jan. 15, at 8 p.m. Matinee Sunday, Jan. 15, at 2 p.m. For tickets, call 416-855-6651 or visit www.teatrontheatre.com.

SHANI TARAGIN

Shani Taragin delivers a community lecture on "The Exodus from Egypt: The Ideal vs. Reality," Tuesday, Jan. 17, 159 Almore Ave. at 8 p.m. She leads a morning of learning for women on "Moshe and the Midwives: Seeds of Redemption," Wednesday, Jan. 18, from 9 a.m.-noon at Ulpanat Orot, 45 Canyon Ave. $10 each, $18 for both. For information, call Mekorot at 416-877-2050.

CONCERT: SONGS OF ISRAEL

Beth David Congregation presents "Songs Of Israel," a concert featuring **Marshall Loomer, Ben Silverberg, Tibor Kovari, Mickey Lewin, Naomi Peleg Brandt** and the Ultimate Sound Band. Thursday, Jan. 19, at 8 p.m. $20 in advance or at the door. Call 416-633-5500.

THE BIBLE AS POLEMIC

Carl Ehrlich, professor of the Hebrew Bible at York University, will be the scholar-in-residence at Temple Har Zion for the weekend of Jan. 21 and 22. His topic is "The Bible as Polemic." Potluck contribution, Saturday lunch; Sunday breakfast, members $5, non-members $8. Reserve for Sunday by Jan. 19. Call 905-889-2252.

ROCKING SHABBAT

Beth Sholom Synagogue presents "Rocking" a Friday night Kabalat Shabbat, Friday, Jan. 20, at 6 p.m. with **Rabbi Aaron Franzraich, Cantor Eric Moses** and **Larry Shilling**. Oneg Shabbat dinner following service. Members $30, non-members $36; teens 13-18, $20; children 3-12, $15; under 3 free Dinner by reservation only. Call 416-783-6103.

BIOETHICS

Dr. Norma Baumel Joseph, chair of the department of religion at Concordia University, lectures on "Life and Death: The Bioethics of Rabbi Moshe Feinstein," Sunday, Jan. 22, 8 p.m., at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 416-789-3213 or www.shomayim.org.

SUPPORT GROUP

Baycrest offers Caring For A Loved One, an education and support group for children and relatives of dementia sufferers. Topics include how to manage challenging behaviours, effective communication and how to navigate the health- care system. No charge. To register for new sessions in 2006, call 416-785-2500, **Nira Rittenberg** at ext. 3587 or **Bev Adler**, ext. 2308.

HÉLÈNE COMAY FETED

After 48 years as the director of the downtown JCC Nursery School, **Hélène Comay** is retiring. The community gathers to celebrate Comay, Sunday, Feb. 5, 2-5 p.m., at a reunion. Students and parents of nursery school children are invited to share a story or help plan this tribute to Hélène. Call 416-924-6211, ext. 255, or e-mail nstribute@mnjcc.org to get involved.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jiastoronto.org. To register, volunteer or for information on these programs, call **Joanna** at 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

Conversation Cafés: Newcomers to Canada are invited to practise speaking English in a casual and friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Offered in two locations, BJCC and Bathurst & Steeles.

JIAS Toronto offers programming for newcomer children and teens. For information, call **Jodi** at ext. 28.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Shawna Sidney**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

When You're About to Separate: What To Tell The Kids: A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. Tuesday, Jan. 17, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

Fathering After Divorce: A four-week group to help single fathers understand the crucial role they play in their children's lives. Thursdays, beginning Jan. 19, 7-9 p.m. at the Lipa Green Bldg, 4600 Bathurst St.

Contact **Diane** at ext. 246 to inquire about the following programs:

Parenting Children with Challenging Behaviour: A six-week group for parents of children who frequently demonstrate difficult behaviours such as temper tantrums, talking back, not following rules and poor emotional control. Mondays, begins Jan 30, 6:30 p.m. 4600 Bathurst.

PALS Social Skills Groups: Eight-week groups for children who have difficulty making or keeping friends. Children will develop skills and experience a positive social experience. Parent group will focus on understanding and enhancing social skills. Ages 6-8, begins Tuesdays, Feb. 14. Ages 9-11, begins Thursdays, Feb. 9.

Adolescent Social Skills Groups: These eight-week groups provide teens an opportunity to develop and enhance social skills, increase self-esteem and make new friends. Ages 12-14, Tuesdays, begins Feb 21. Ages 14-17, Wednesdays, begins Feb 15.

FOR SENIORS

The Association of Jewish Seniors general meeting takes place on Thursday, Jan. 26, 1:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. **Robyn Young** speaks on "Active Living for Older Adults." Call **Tammy Parker**, 416-635-2860.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday dance, Jan. 15; Casino Rama, Wednesday, Jan. 18; beginners Hebrew, Wednesdays 12-1:30 p.m. $25/month; bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Call 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. Jan. 12, movie; Jan. 19, sing-along. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Spend Thursday, Jan. 19, at the Betel Centre with "Stories from the Heart," 12-1 p.m.; "Fun with Yiddish," 1-2:30 p.m.; and "Nafty Naftolin's Komedy Kabaret," 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Special Computer Event, Wednesday, Jan. 25, 9-11 a.m. For info and registration on computer courses and labs, call ext 128.

Winter festival, Wednesday, Jan. 25, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Inter-generational event. Includes vendors and entertainment. Free.

Cherry Blossom Festival trip. Plan for spring in Washington, D.C. March 26-29, members $500, non-members $600.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

"Secrets to Youthful Aging," an eight-week series with **Phil Feilds**. Mondays, 10-11:30 a.m., beginning Jan. 16.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Join the BJCC before Jan.15 and receive 25% off and two free personal-training sessions on your new adult membership. Call ext. 291. Some conditions apply.

Current Events with **Peter Diament**, every Thursday 12:45-2:15 p.m.

The aquatic department now offers private swim lessons. $125 for five 30-minute lessons.

The Koffler School of Music now accepting registrations for classes beginning in January. Babies Music, age newborn to 3, Jammin' Tots, age 3-5. Suzuki violin beginning at age 3, and private lessons piano, violin, guitar (children and adults). For registration, call ext. 228.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Winter-Spring program schedule is available on line, www.mnjcc.org or at the MNJCC. For further information or to sign up, contact ext. 0.

"Great Jewish Composers of Broadway" with **Jordan Klapman**, Sunday, Jan. 15, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Members $5, non-members $8.

"Jewish Meditation," Jan. 15-March 19, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Charge.

Good Age Club: Weekly programming for those 55+. Includes speakers on health, lifestyle, investments, and current events, games, films and trips. Thursdays, 1-3 p.m.

CANADIANS JOIN REFORM BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Morris Cooper of Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto, left, and Jeff Dermer of Shaarei-Beth El Congregation of Oakville were installed as members of the Union for Reform Judaism Board of Trustees at the Union's recent Biennial Convention in Houston. The Union for Reform Judaism is the congregational arm of the Reform movement, representing more than 900 synagogues in North America.

Obituary

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Fay Silverman	Dec 23/05	3560 Bathurst St
Isaak Barou	Dec 24/05	6250 Bathurst St
Klara Verzsenyi	Dec 24/05	75 Poplar Plains Cres
Mary Rosen	Dec 25/05	90 Fisherville Rd
Alan Ockrant	Dec 26/05	100 Thornbrook Crt
Chaim Avron	Dec 26/05	10 Ruddington Dr
Louis Ross	Dec 27/05	225 Horsham Ave
Ruth Brand	Dec 27/05	1555 Finch Ave E
David B. Greenspan	Dec 27/05	15 Montclair Ave
Aryeh Haimovitz	Dec 27/05	143 Latimer Ave
Mary Held	Dec 27/05	2973 Ashdowne Rd
Esther Fanny Feld	Dec 28/05	48 McAllister Rd
Jack Ganz	Dec 28/05	1101 Steeles Ave W
Max Hain	Dec 29/05	1101 Steeles Ave W
Bert Cohen	Dec 29/05	400 Walmer Rd
Pauline Robins	Dec 29/05	2045 Finch Ave W
Gordon Schachter	Dec 29/05	189 Chambers Cres
Jeanette Kock	Dec 30/05	3179 Yonge St
Bryna Freeman	Dec 31/05	15 Shalmar Blvd

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Rabie, Eada	Dec. 21/05	1101 Steeles Ave W
Teichner, Molly	Dec. 23/05	Private
Kasner, Esther	Dec. 23/05	Private
Fogelman, Niuta	Dec. 23/05	10 Senlac Rd
Salzman, Gitla	Dec. 23/05	282 Searle Ave
Glober, Victor	Dec. 24/05	Private
Weinstein, Molly	Dec. 26/05	660 Briar Hill Rd
Wolman, Anthony	Dec. 27/05	90 Brookview Dr.
Dodick, Kiva	Dec. 27/05	3636 Bathurst St.
Carol, Eva	Dec. 27/05	3560 Bathurst St.
Epstein, Sara	Dec. 27/05	429 Walmer Rd
Weiss, Stanley	Dec. 27/05	Private
Nuriel, Sinyora	Dec. 28/05	5935 Bathurst St.
Miller, Nellie	Dec. 28/05	100 Canyon Ave
Keri, Irene	Dec. 28/05	100 Antibes Dr
Guilevitch, Riva	Dec. 29/05	Private
Weinstein, Gerald Stanley	Dec. 30/05	220 Sunset Beach Rd
Langer, Regina	Dec. 30/05	10 Tangreen Crt
Fluxman, Louis	Dec. 30/05	3560 Bathurst St
Friedman, Henry Jindrich	Dec. 31/05	8 Chater Crt
Parker, Helen	Dec. 31/05	Private
Solish, Stanley Morton	Jan. 1/06	78 Westbury Crt
Bortenstein, Rubin	Jan. 1/06	Private
Cooper, Rabbi Samuel	Jan. 2/06	Private
Rubenstein, Rube	Jan. 2/06	5 Josephine Rd
Itkis, Grigori	Jan. 2/06	601 Finch Ave. W.
Liss, Alexander	Jan. 2/06	40 Red Maple Rd
Koren, Henry	Jan. 2/06	Private
Pelz, Joseph	Jan. 3/06	317 Joicey Blvd
Warner, Fred	Jan. 3/06	Private

HEBREW BASIC

Bella Miller	Dec 24/05	40 Harding Blvd

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Layton saw himself as Jewish maverick in stuffy Canada

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

His authorized biographer Francis Mansbridge wrote in *Irving Layton: God's Recording Angel* that the celebrated poet saw himself as a "hot-blooded Jew cavorting in the Canadian drawing room, kicking out the windows to allow fresh air to enter."

In his heyday in the postwar period and into the 1960s, the pugnacious Layton styled himself as the outsider who was going to shake up the staid sensibilities of English Canada and make poetry a force for raising consciousness. He also liked to tweak his fellow Jews for their bourgeois complacency and philistinism.

But try as he might, Layton made few enemies, at least, not for long. The outpouring of tributes upon his death last week at age 93 after suffering from Alzheimer's disease for a dozen years reflects the affection many held for him. With his years of bluster and swagger long behind him, the once leonine Layton in the past decade had become almost a pussycat.

Many were moved by his physical frailty, the decline of his mental and creative powers, and his aloneness, despite five marriages, four of which were official.

He had been living since November 2000 at Maimonides Geriatric Centre, where he enjoyed having his works read to him.

Extraordinarily prolific, he published 50 books between 1945 and 1992. His poetry had a lyrical and romantic style, but the content was often ironic, acerbic or erotic. Jewish themes were common.

University of Ottawa English professor Seymour Mayne believes Layton is second only to A.M. Klein among Canadian Jewish poets, and ranks with Canada's best five or six ever.

He thinks Layton has a lasting place in the Canadian canon, and he expects his work will now receive the scholarly and critical interest that it did not while he was alive. Among readers he already sees a revival, especially among the young. His students like his poems, especially for their wit.

Layton's relationship with the Jewish community, though sometimes strained, remained strong, and he was "fiercely" Jewish, after his own fashion, Mayne said. He pointed out that after the Six Day War, Layton became a supporter of Israel, and did not waver in later years. In the 1970s, he took part in demonstrations for the freedom of Soviet Jewry.

In person, Layton was vivacious and gave his full attention to people he was with, Mayne said. "He was especially generous with his time and counsel to other, younger writers who would take their troubles to him. His door was always open. In that way he was like a chassidic rebbe, ready with a sympathetic ear and word of advice."

Retired Concordia University English professor Mervyn Butovsky thinks Layton rushed far too much material to print before it was fit to be published. But he said some of his poems are very good, especially those that were heartfelt.

Butovsky, who was a contributor to the 1993 "*festschrift*" anthology *Raging Like a Fire: A Celebration of Irving Layton*, along with some of Canada's leading literary figures, said Layton "picked and chose" various and often disparate elements, from the Israeli army to Karl Marx, to construct a complex Jewish identity that suited him.

One of his last anthologies, *Fortunate Exile*, published by McClelland and Stewart in 1987, was devoted to his writings on a Jewish theme. It was dedicated to "Father Abraham and his angry progeny."

Butovsky points out that Layton said he saw himself as "a prophet and a clown," which was bound to perplex others.

In 1997, on his 85th birthday, friends rallied in Montreal to raise money for full-time care to allow the failing Layton to stay in his home. In 1999, the Montreal Jewish community paid tribute to Layton with an evening during Jewish Book Month, held soon after the release of his son David's scathing childhood memoir *Motion Sickness*.

There were 20 speakers, including his eldest child Max, then 53, who distanced himself from his half-brother's portrayal. "I want to make clear that my father was not only a great poet, but a darn good father, and I love him dearly." He said it was true his father was "torn between his muse and his domestic obligations," yet could be fun and affectionate, and never dull.

At the event, Toronto television mogul Moses Znaimer recalled that when Layton was his English teacher at Herzliah High School in the 1950s, on the first day of class he wrote on the blackboard "99 per cent" following by a series of nines. "With a piercing gaze, he said that was the percentage of people who are philistines. We had no idea what that was, but I was determined not to be one," Znaimer said.

Stan Asher, who was a teacher at Herzliah in the 1960s, remembers Layton would peddle his books at school. "He would say he was offering it to me at wholesale prices and promised that one day it would be a collector's item."

Musia Schwartz, a devoted friend to the end, first met Layton when she was a young immigrant from Poland after World War II attending his English class at the Jewish Public Library, along with other survivors. Their horrifying stories inspired some of his poems on the Holocaust.

Layton did not live a conventional Jewish life, but he never severed his association with the community. He was born Israel Lazarovitch in 1912 in Tirgul Neamt, Romania, the youngest of eight children. The family immigrated to Montreal the following year. They were poor; his father was a quiet religious man, his mother – to whom he was strongly attached – was a formidable character.

She believed her youngest was destined for greatness because he was born naturally circumcised.

Books, other than holy ones, were regarded as a frivolity, and Layton only discovered literature during his recuperation from serious burns suffered when a candle set his nightshirt on fire as a boy, according to Donald Winkler's 2003 documentary *A Red Carpet for the Sun: The Life of Irving Layton*. Layton himself also spoke of a Baron Byng High School teacher as awakening him to the beauty of poetry.

Layton earned a degree in agriculture at Macdonald College in the 1930s and, in a communist phase, toyed with the idea of going to live in the Soviet Union. Instead he joined the Royal Canadian Air Force in 1942.

After the war he was at loose ends, until one day when he was in a cafeteria, in the proverbial blinding flash, he was inspired to write a poem. Grabbing the waitress's pencil, he dashed off *The Swimmer* in five minutes. Layton was basically self-published through the late 1940s and 1950s. The title of the film by Winkler is taken from the collection that earned Layton a Governor General's Award in 1959.

The advent of television allowed Layton to develop his persona as an iconoclast. He discovered the showman in him, and the power the medium had to make his work known.

He was openly sensual, derided Chrisitianity as "Judaism with a nose job" and embraced Jesus as a fellow Jew. Until then, he had been living a conventional life in Cote St. Luc, raising two children with his second wife Betty Sutherland and teaching school.

He taught at Concordia University (then Sir George Williams) from 1950 to 1964, and returned in 1989 as writer-in-residence for a year. He left the university a massive collection of manuscripts and correspondence, and in 2000, its Institute for Canadian Jewish studies acquired the desk he wrote at.

Institute head Norman Ravvin said at the time it was a perfect place for it because of Layton's impact on younger Canadian Jewish writers and his "staking out [of] an outspokenly Jewish poetic voice that helped put Canadian poetry on the map."

Concordia awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1976, the same year he was named an Officer of the Order of Canada. He also received honorary degrees from Bishop's and York University, and was a professor of English at the Toronto school from 1969 to 1978

Family friend and occasional visitor Rikee Madoff said that the day before he died, Layton "looked good, his face smooth and calm." He sat beside the piano as she played old Yiddish songs for him.

Coast to Coast

Community honours school's founding teacher

By WILF GEROFSKY
Special to The CJN

HAMILTON — One woman's determination to give her children an education that would help shape them as proud Jews in a child-centred learning environment led to the establishment of Hamilton's Kehila Day School almost seven years ago.

Julia Kollek's children, Talia and Amiel, were attending Celia Berlin's Temple Playhouse preschool at Temple Anshe Sholom, and Kollek was impressed by the quality of Berlin's teaching style, which Kollek says focused on meeting the children's needs rather than being curriculum centered.

Julia Kollek

She wanted her children to continue to receive this type of education in the early school years and began the process that led to the formation of what she laughingly calls "the little day school that could!"

Kollek spent the next three years talking to parents and community leaders and visiting Jewish day schools in Canada, the United States and Europe. She attended a conference on Jewish education in Atlanta. With Suzie Solnik, another interested parent, she commissioned a professional survey that they paid for themselves. The survey indicated there was enough interest to start a school.

"Kehila was founded as a team effort, and the first board members were amazing," Kollek says.

Although she admits there was plenty of opposition at first, there were dedicated supporters too. Kehila opened in September 1999 in premises leased from Temple Anshe Sholom.

The initial enrolment was five children, which grew to 11 the first year. This year, the school has 30 students from senior kindergarten to Grade 4. About one in four students in Jewish day schools in Hamilton now attend Kehila.

"The name Kehila, meaning community, indicates a key objective of the school, which is to be one that tolerates and accepts all expressions of Judaism and respects the teachings of each," says principal Ariel Zaltzman.

Jewish studies are integrated with the teaching of the core curriculum Zaltzman says. At their Chanukah concert last month, for example, the children sang both traditional songs and songs written for the occasion, in English, Hebrew and French. Jewish content is included in everything studied. The school also has a strong arts program, with professional artists coming to conduct classes in music, art and dance.

The curriculum is child-centered, tailored to the needs of each individual child. If a student excels in math, for instance, he or she is exposed to an enriched math program. An immigrant youngster from Israel who does not speak English will receive English as a second language instruction. Most of the Hebrew teachers have Hebrew as their first language, and the kids pick it up very quickly, Zaltzman says.

The school does not ignore physical needs either. Fridays, the children are bused to the Jewish Community Centre to have phys ed classes in the gym.

So successful have the efforts of those who started up Kehila been that one of school's teachers, Zehava Chaimovitz, was honoured with a Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award for excellence in Jewish education at the assembly of 5,000 Jewish community leaders and educators held last month in Toronto. The Grinspoon-Steinhardt Awards recognize teachers in communities across North America who have made a commitment to the field of Jewish education, honouring outstanding classroom-based teachers.

Zaltzman dreams about a relationship that would spread across the entire spectrum of Jewish life in Hamilton, with an ever-growing enrolment.

"It's all about dreamers. Joseph was a dreamer, Jacob was a dreamer," he reflects. "You've got to be a dreamer."

MILITARY EXHIBIT NOW OPEN: More than 30 Jewish war veterans were on hand last month for the launch of a new exhibit titled "For King and Country: The Jewish Canadian Military Experience." The exhibit, an initiative of the UJA Federation Ontario Jewish Archives, will be on display on the fourth floor of the Lipa Green Building for the coming year. **[Eve Marks photo]**

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Announcement

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with

DR. NORMA BAUMEL JOSEPH

Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Religion, Concordia University, Montreal, Director of the University's Women and Religion specialization, Graduate program Director of the Doctoral Program in Religion.

As a renowned scholar on women & Judaism; Jewish law & ethics; and women & religion; she has received numerous awards and grants. She was consultant for the films *Half The Kingdom* and *Untying the Bonds ... Jewish Divorce*, and is the author of many publications, including "Jewish law and Gender," *Encyclopedia of Women and Religion in America.*

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The Canadian Jewish news

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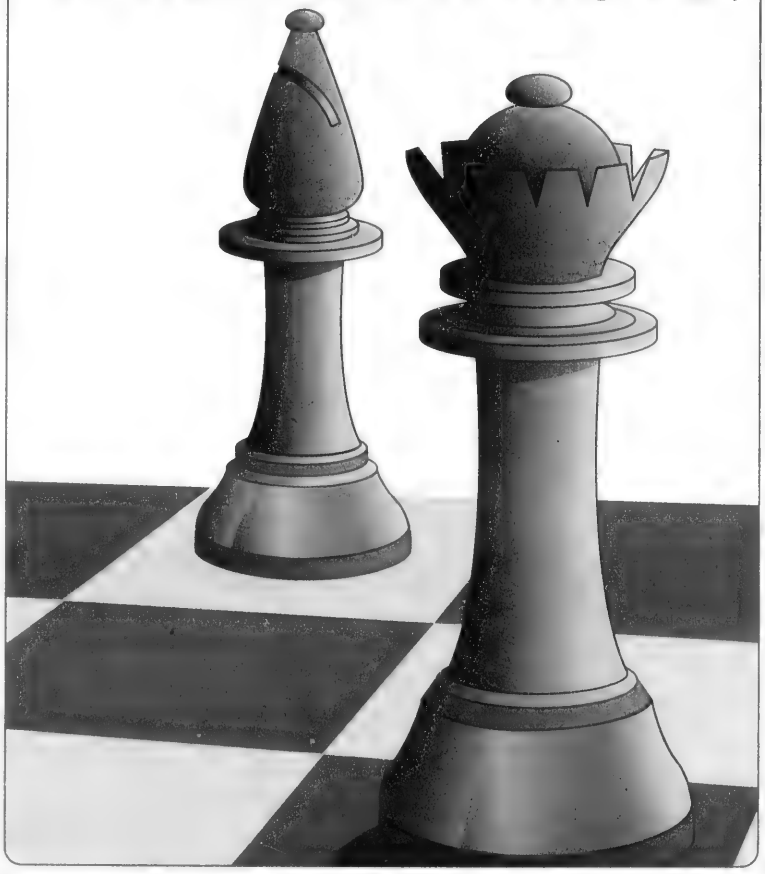

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Coast to Coast

Mtl. community welcomes immigration uptick

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

The Montreal Jewish community's efforts to stem its three-decade-long demographic decline by promoting immigration are showing encouraging results, says Victor Goldbloom, the new president of Jewish Immigrant Aid Services Montreal (JIAS)

The numbers are well below the optimistic forecast in 2002 by FEDERATION CJA officials that as many as 10,000 Jews might come to Quebec over the next couple of years, largely as a consequence of the economic collapse in Argentina and a rash of anti-Semitic events in France.

But with a current caseload of close to 2,600 individuals, JIAS is busier than it has been in recent memory. This figure includes both those who have arrived here in the past two years and are receiving services from the agency, and those who are in the immigration process, and, for the most part, still living abroad, but receiving support from JIAS. During 2005 alone, more than 600 JIAS clients settled here.

While the number of Jews coming from Argentina has tapered off, France is an increasingly important source of immigrants.

Argentine immigration peaked in 2003, when 644 individuals arrived or were being processed. In 2004, the figure was 594 and, this past year, 463. By contrast, only 76 Argentines were on the JIAS caseload in 2001.

The number of French Jews has almost tripled in the same period. In 2003, the agency had 206 clients from France (again, either arrived or finalizing their immigration papers). In 2004, that increased to 430 and, for the year just ended, to 582. In 2001, JIAS had just 58 French clients.

Goldbloom notes that the actual number of Jews coming here from France may be as much as 50 per cent higher. Many are believed not to be seeking the services of JIAS, because of economic independence or familiarity with Quebec's language and culture. A number are thought to be university students who decide to stay, attracted by career opportunities.

"We have set out in recent months to try to communicate with people who come on their own. They may have financial resources, but still need some help in resettlement, and we would like them to be an active part of the community," Goldbloom said.

On the other hand, virtually all of the Argentines are seen by JIAS, he said, even though most are well-educated and middle class. Finding employment for them has been a challenge because of the professional corporations' limited recognition of foreign credentials, a matter the Jewish community has taken up with the Quebec government.

Re-qualifying is not always a viable option. "It's not easy, for example, to find a residency at a hospital," he said.

The slowdown in immigration from Argentina is likely due to the easing of the economic crisis there since the election of a new government under President Nestor Kirchner in 2003, Goldbloom said.

"Our sense, however, is that the improvement has not entirely done away with the anxiety Jews have about their future there," he said.

Goldbloom stressed that the evidence indicates that those who have settled here are not telling family and friends back in Argentina not to follow them.

"They are saying very positive things about the way they were helped by JIAS, which starts with meeting them at the airport," he said.

The largest single source of Jewish immigrants to Montreal remains the former Soviet Union. More than 700 clients (both here and expected to soon arrive) are from these countries, but Goldbloom points out that most are family-reunification cases and they are older on average than the Argentine and French newcomers.

JIAS is also handling about 350 immigrants from Israel. Goldbloom said a substantial proportion of them came to Israel from elsewhere, most commonly the former Soviet Union, "but all along had wanted to come to North America."

Overall, about 540 JIAS clients are children under age 18, a boon to an aging community.

Heading the community's immigration agency is the latest challenge for the 82-year-old Goldbloom, a doctor by profession who served as a Liberal MNA from 1966 to 1979 and as Quebec's first Jewish cabinet minister.

He was then CEO of the Canadian Council of Christians and Jews, and served as Canada's Commissioner of Official Languages from 1991 to 1999.

In the past few years, he chaired the federation's now-disbanded task force on immigration, established by former president Steven Cummings, who made reversing the population slide a priority of his tenure.

Goldbloom will be called upon to use the tact and even-handedness he is known for. In wooing prospective immigrants, JIAS has to avoid appearing to be doing two things: robbing Israel of olim, and contributing to the decline of another Jewish community.

All Jews approaching JIAS are asked if they have considered Israel as a destination.

"Aliyah has to be No. 1. We do not want to compete with that. But if people are questioning the wisdom of staying where they are and have a made a choice not to go to Israel, we want to make them aware of our willingness to welcome them. What we can't be is aggressive or predatory," Goldbloom said. Loss of members has been more of an issue for the much smaller Argentine community than it has been for France, where there are about 600,000 Jews.

Continued on page 26

Advertising Feature

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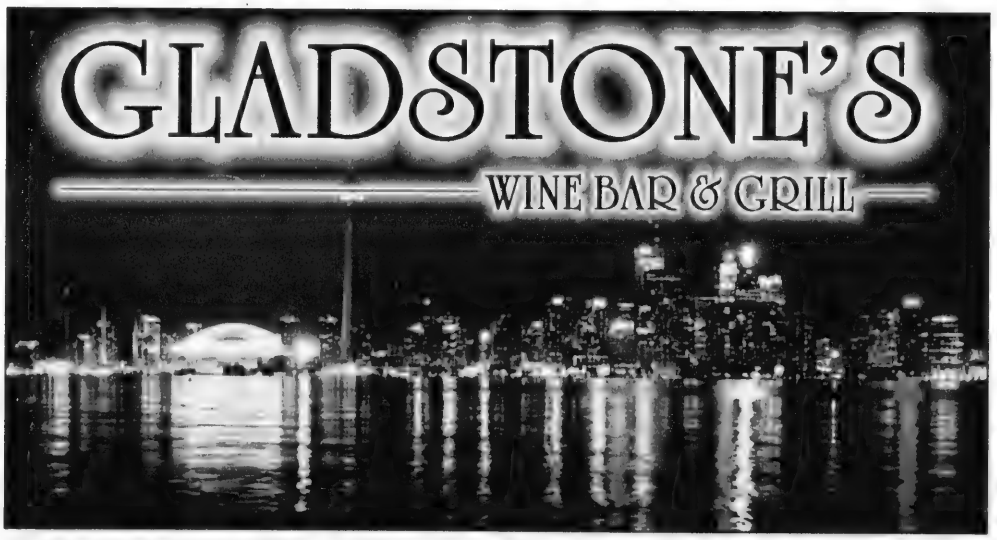

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JIAS has full-time rep in Buenos Aires

Continued from page 25

"When we first went to Argentina, we were concerned we might be resented by the local community. We have tried to be particularly respectful and not do anything without the knowledge of the community leaders."

The Quebec government has been encouraging Latin American immigration and the Argentines' applications are being handled in an "efficient" three months, allowing arrival here within one to two years, he said.

JIAS has a full-time representative in Buenos Aires, a position it intends to keep for the time being. "A year from now, we will review the situation," Goldbloom said.

The Buenos Aires representative has also contacted other South American communities, but to date, immigration from outside Argentina has been low, about 130 clients currently.

"We had expected we might get a fair number from Brazil, but that has not materialized," he said.

JIAS has no representative in France, but its staff is going there occasionally and "we have excellent cooperation" with the Quebec delegation in Paris, Goldbloom added.

Whether the upward trend in French immigration will continue is by no means sure because, Goldbloom notes, the French government is taking anti-Semitism more seriously and statistics show incidents are down by about half. "It obviously wants to reassure the Jewish community that it can respond effectively."

Goldbloom has made two visits to Argentina and Brazil. More recently, he also visited France on two occasions, as well as Belgium, although the latter has not been a source of immigrants to date.

JIAS is marketing the quality of Jewish community life in Montreal, highlighting its cohesiveness, institutions and generosity. "One of the first questions the Argentines will ask is if there is a Jewish school they can send their children to," he said.

While Montreal does have a large Jewish day school system, Goldbloom said, not all who want to have been able to enrol their children because of either lack of places or inability to pay.

"Schools plan for their enrolment ahead of time, and when a couple of dozen children come along unexpectedly, they can't say there is a place for them automatically," he said.

Montreal's climate is one thing JIAS cannot do anything about, but it does see that newcomers get warm clothing if they need it, he said.

Despite the obstacles they may face, Goldbloom said he is "impressed with how courageous and patient" the newcomers are.

Language does not appear to be a major issue.

While English tends to be their second language, most Argentines learned some French before they left and are continuing to do so here. JIAS also runs its own language classes.

"I'm impressed by how many can express themselves in French," he said. "I'm not aware of any who have not qualified because their French was not good enough."

The question of whether the recent influx is here for the long term can't be ignored."To the best of our knowledge, very few who have stayed here a while have moved to another place. But obviously, for young people, mobility within Canada or North American is a reality," Goldbloom said.

Quebec's attractiveness to Jewish immigrants may also dim if the Parti Québécois wins the next provincial election and holds another referendum on sovereignty, a fact the Montreal Jewish community must also take into account.

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גידי קורן וחברים

לעצור את "קדימה"-יפורס שירותק

פוליטיקאים נוגו אציל נפש שטובת הציבור נר לעכוזם הרחב, צדיקים שכל קשר בין הבטחות וקיומן אפילו לא מקרי. והכוונה לנבחרי ציבור בכל רחבי תבל בלי הבדל מין, דת או צבע. אך לעומת נבחרי עולם הערלים, כאשר מדובר במשחק ובכחש, אחיהם בישראל לוקחים את כל הקופה בלי בעייה.

שנים רבות היינו מרותקים לדרמות ולקומדיות שהתרחשו בין הקירות העידומים ועל הכורסאות המרופדות בכנסת, אך הקומדיה שעולה בשבועות האחרונים שוברת את שיא כל הזמנים. ומדובר בנסיון נואש של עסקני מפלגות להקים קואליציה ולהדיח את שרון ותומכיו משולחן הממשלה. וכל זה כדי לדחוק את מועד הבחירות בכמה חודשים בתקווה שהציבור ישכח עד אז את ראש הממשלה הפופולארי ולא יצביע עבור מפלגתו החדשה "קדימה". צעד שיאפשר לחברי כנסת שהיו ונשארו אלמונים לשבת עוד כמה חודשים על כורסה מרופדת מול תמונתו הערידית של חוזה המדינה. ובעיקר לחלק תפקידים וטובות הנאה למקורבים לפני שהבוחר ישלח אותם חזרה לחיים אפורים.

וכל זה כחודשיים אחרי שאותם קומיקאים דרשו את הקדמת הבחירות בתקווה שכוחם יגבר לאור המשבר בין שרון למרדי הליכוד. וכך מול הסכנה המאיימת לעוף מהכנסת מתממש חזון אחרית הימים, זאב מוכן לגור עם כבש, טומי לפיד עם רבי עובדיה, אמיר פרץ עם נתניהו. אחרי הכל כיסא סביב שולחן הממשלה חשוב יותר מטובת המדינה.

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שישאר

סרט מרגש על זוג חוזרים בתשובה שעומדים במבחן קשה של אמונה ברע הסוכות. השחקן הראשי שולי ראנד כתב סיפור נפלא, ושיחק אותו עם אשתו בחיים מיכל. התוצאה מוכיחה את מיטב הסרטים מיפן, דרום קוריאה, מאיפה לא-תעודת כבוד לסרט הישראלי שקפץ בשלוש השנים האחרונות אלפיים שנה קדימה. לכו לראות עם מישהו שאתם אוהבים. תשע בסולם קורן.

Water

הבמאים ההודית דיפה מֶהטָה מגלה לצופה המערבי את מצבן הענוס של אלמנות הודו, שעל פי המסורת מנדים אותן, כולאים אותן בבתים עלובים, בעוני ודלות. ואשה הודית, כפי שמספר הסרט, יכולה להתאלמן גם בגיל שבע, כשבעלה המיועד (ילד בעצמו) מת באופן בלתי צפוי. זהו סיפור מרתק של קבוצת אלמנות בשנות עלייתו של גאנדי לשלטון. מבלי לפגוע בעלילה אגלה לכם שזה אחד הסרטים החזקים והשלמים ביותר שראיתי בחיי. לדעתי-המועמד הבריח ביותר לאוסקר לסרט זר. עשר בסולם קהן.

ראו פצפרתם-אל תראו

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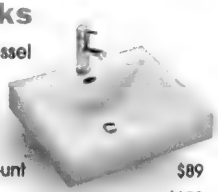

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For Dryden, Mostyn, it's déjà vu all over again

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

As the election campaign neared the half-way mark, Conservative leader Stephen Harper announced he had narrowed his focus to five key issues, the better to distinguish his party's priorities from those of the Liberals. Among the five is child care, where the Tories have staked out a let-the-parent-decide approach with a $1,200 per child taxable grant.

York Centre Liberal candidate Ken Dryden is happy to contrast his party's position with that of the Conservatives. As minister of social development, he had crafted the Liberals' child-care policy and pushed it at every opportunity, signing agreements to implement it with 10 provinces. He is certain the party's goal of a national, non-profit day-care system is what the public wants. His Conservative opponent, Michael Mostyn, believes his party's alternative better answers parents' and their children's needs.

It is an issues that should resonate in York Centre, a riding bounded primarily by Highway 401 to the south, Jane Street and Keele Street to the west, the west branch of the Don River on the east and Steeles Avenue to the north. There are a lot of kids in the riding, Dryden said, and the Liberal approach is one that better provides the early childhood education that is needed. Once taxed even at modest income levels, the Conservatives' $1,200 grant amounts to closer to $900 and "it's not a voucher. It need not be spent on child care."

Mostyn responds by noting the money ($1 billion per year) pledged by the Liberal government to support provincially run day-care programs would not help the less than 25 per cent of families that used day care, "nor allow for choices."

How does the Liberal plan help Jewish parents who value a Jewish education for their children? he asks. The Tory proposal "makes it easier to get a Jewish education or Jewish day care. That's what Jewish parents want to hear," he added.

For Dryden and Mostyn, competing for votes in York Centre is a case of déjà vu all over again. The two last tangled in the 2004 election, won by Dryden by a commanding 11,000 votes. The Tories have not held York Centre since 1958-62, when John Diefenbaker's Conservatives formed the government in Ottawa. Since then, it's been a Liberal stronghold, though Mostyn suggests the 2004 tally indicates he is making inroads on the Liberal stranglehold. The Liberal margin of victory, though large, was less than in the days when Art Eggleton used to beat his Tory opponents by 20,000 or more votes, Mostyn said. In 2004, Dryden won the riding with 21,520 votes, or 54.8 per cent of the ballots cast. Mostyn was second with 10,318 votes (26.3 per cent). NDP candidate Peter Flaherty finished third with 5,376 votes (13.7 per cent). This year's NDP candidate is Marco Iacampo, a 25-year-old policy assistant to City Councillor Maria Augimeri.

From left, Ken Dryden, Marco Iacampo and Michael Mostyn

At 25 per cent of the riding's electorate, the Jewish community is a rich source of votes. In addition to the Jewish component, there are sizeable Italian and Hispanic communities as well.

All candidates agree that the sponsorship scandal still resonates in the riding. "The fact has sunk in that there's a culture of corruption" in the governing Liberal party, Mostyn said.

A lawyer by profession and a graduate of Jewish day schools, Mostyn said the Gomery report, along with a general sense that "it's time for a change," often comes up when he stumps for votes. So, too, are issues of gun violence and the inadequate recognition of foreign credentials for recent immigrants – a big issue in a riding with a sizeable population of highly educated new Canadians.

"This federal government has not pushed enough to get regulatory agencies to accept foreign credentials," he said.

Dryden acknowledges the sponsorship scandal remains an issue, as has Canada's UN voting record. He points out that Justice John Gomery cleared Prime Minister Paul Martin, but even so, "nobody has paid a bigger price than the prime minister."

The political atmosphere has been poisoned, and "nobody has a bigger stake to make sure it does not happen again," he said.

Dryden said in his 17 months in Ottawa, he's seen how the sponsorship scandal has dominated other issues. "That can seem like the show. It isn't the show."

Instead, he points to developments like the health-care agreement, which will see $41 billion allocated to the provinces over 10 years, along with increased federal support for cities and the early childhood learning initiative.

Mostyn said the Conservatives have been advancing their own policy initiatives, key among them a tougher approach to gun violence. He suggested the Liberals' proposed handgun ban is mere window dressing, since, subject to some exceptions, "handguns have been banned in this country since 1934."

The Tories would address Canada's "revolving door justice system," which sees suspects released quickly only to commit further crimes. Tougher sentencing is required in the short term, along with long-term programs to deal with youths at risk, he said.

Dryden believes gun control is part of a solution, but he's not convinced that tougher sentencing would have any appreciable effect on crime.

"It's probably a small part of the answer," he said, as is the handgun ban. "Largely, the story is one of opportunity or not. When people don't find it [they]'ll find it in another way."

Iacampo, who said he is focusing on local issues in the campaign, said Dryden "has been missing in action" when it comes to neighbourhood issues.

The federal government "has not stepped forward to give youth activities to keep them away from drugs and guns," he said.

A candidate for the first time, Iacampo said he is running to give himself name recognition. The first issue he mentions is the future of the Downsview lands. Plans for a park have been percolating for 12 years and still nothing has been done, he said.

Dryden said that on Dec. 8, the cabinet approved transfer of the lands from the Department of National Defence to a crown corporation and the corporation board will determine the mix of parkland and other developments that will support the park financially.

On the international front, Mostyn said many of the riding's voters are "upset with our UN voting record towards Israel." Despite promises that Canada would shift its votes, there has been only one vote shift, Mostyn asserted. What's more, Foreign Minister Pierre Pettigrew laid a memorial wreath at Yasser Arafat's grave while declining to attend a memorial for former U.S. President Ronald Reagan.

Dryden, who visited Israel last February, maintains Canada has shifted its UN votes on six resolutions.

He said he has told people in government that the differences between our stated policy and "our votes on some of these resolutions is incomprehensible… The wording is unhelpful, the wording is destructive."

He said he has pushed for changes to Canada's UN votes.

Iacampo acknowledged the Mideast conflict "is a very complicated matter… I think the best role Canada can play is to support any initiative that opens a discourse to peace."

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Election 2006

Voting record on Israel at UN comes under fire

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

While describing Canada's United Nations voting record on matters relating to Israel as "middle of the road," Richmond Hill Liberal MP Bryon Wilfert notes there has been somewhat of a shift in voting recently.

"We've always tried to have a middle-of-the-road course," said Wilfert, the incumbent for this riding north of Toronto, which is about six per cent Jewish.

"This year, we changed a few votes."

In December, Canada shifted its vote from previous years on three United Nations resolutions at the world body's annual session on the Question of Palestine. Canada went on to vote against Israel on seven other resolutions.

But Wilfert's main opponent, veteran Richmond Hill city councillor Joe Di Paola, who is running for the Conservatives, said a few vote shifts don't go far enough.

Richmond Hill Liberal attacked on health care

"I think the Liberal record voting at the UN is dismal when it comes to Israel," said Di Paola, noting Canada voted against Israel a total of 11 times at the UN.

"There's a lot of rhetoric from the Liberal party, a lot of talk about being friends with Israel, but it's just not the case in action, especially when it comes to voting at the UN."

The riding of Richmond Hill is bordered by Highway 7 in the south and Gamble Road, Yonge Street and Elgin Mills Road East in the north. The east-west boundaries are Highway 404 and Bathurst Street.

Wilfert, himself a former Richmond Hill municipal councillor, has won three consecutive terms. In the 2004 election, he received 27,102 votes, more than double the Conservatives and far ahead of the New Democratic Party's 4,495 votes.

In addition to Di Paola, Wilfert is squaring off against first-time NDP candidate Wess Dowsett and Tim Rudkins of the Green Party.

Wilfert was quick to laud anti-terror legislation introduced by the Liberals.

"Since 9/11, we brought in Bill C-35, anti-terror legislation, which has now been reviewed [and is] providing significantly more dollars to the public security minister in terms of support for everything from… airports to border security," he said.

Dowsett, a negotiator for the United Steelworkers Union, rated current security measures as "fair."

"Issues have been exposed about a lack of security at airports," he said, adding that an audit would be in order to assess how effective security practices are and to outline suggested improvements.

As for the hot-button issue of funding Catholic schools but not other faith-based schools, Wilfert said it's a provincial matter and did not offer a view.

"It would be inappropriate for Ottawa to dictate to Queen's Park on that issue," he said.

But the other candidates did share their perspectives.

Di Paola recalled that a few years ago, the provincial Conservatives in Ontario introduced legislation that offered tax credits to parents who pay for their child's tuition for faith-based schooling. The Equity in Education Tax Credit was repealed by the Liberals.

"Determination of education [lies] with the provinces, but we will empower them to make decisions like that – giving tax credits," he said. "It's something that at the federal level we would be supportive of."

Dowsett said the present situation is unfair, though he does not support public funding for faith-based schools.

"On a personal note, I think it's wrong that one particular group should be treated differently than another," he said.

"Any education program outside of the publicly funded system that involved private funding is welcome in our society… But I don't think any of it should be funded by public money."

With respect to children in day care, vastly different funding policies are being suggested by the parties.

The Conservatives have pledged to provide parents with $1,200 yearly per child under the age of six to be used for childcare expenses.

The Liberals are emphasizing creating more spaces in day care, as are the NDP.

"We're going to put money directly in the hands of parents for them to determine which way they can best care for their children," said Di Paola.

Wilfert noted money won't benefit parents if the spaces aren't available.

"If you get money, but no spaces are available, it doesn't matter how much money you get," he said.

Dowsett agreed with the space argument, but said the Liberals have failed to act on it.

"It's odd that the Liberals take that position now," he said. "They've been making those promises for 12 years and haven't delivered on them. We'll actually do it."

The candidates for the opposition parties were quick to jump on the cuts the federal Liberals have made to health-care transfer payments to the provinces.

"Everybody remembers the massive cuts in transfer payments," Dowsett pointed out. "The first step is to stop the growth of private care… so we need a vehicle to track where federal dollars are going in this system."

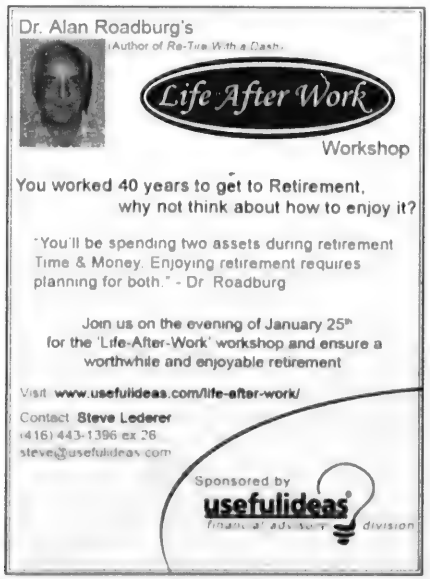
Wilfert downplays the cuts, shifting the blame to the provinces.

"It's not the amount of money you spend – it's how you spend it," he said, trumpeting the recent agreement the federal government reached with the provinces to set benchmarks for wait times.

Di Paola also favours cutting wait times and speaks of making Canada's health-care system a world leader.

"The Conservative party has announced guaranteed patient wait times for each surgical procedure," he said.

"It comes as a price tag to do that, but we will make that commitment… so that we can once again be the number one health-care provider in the world."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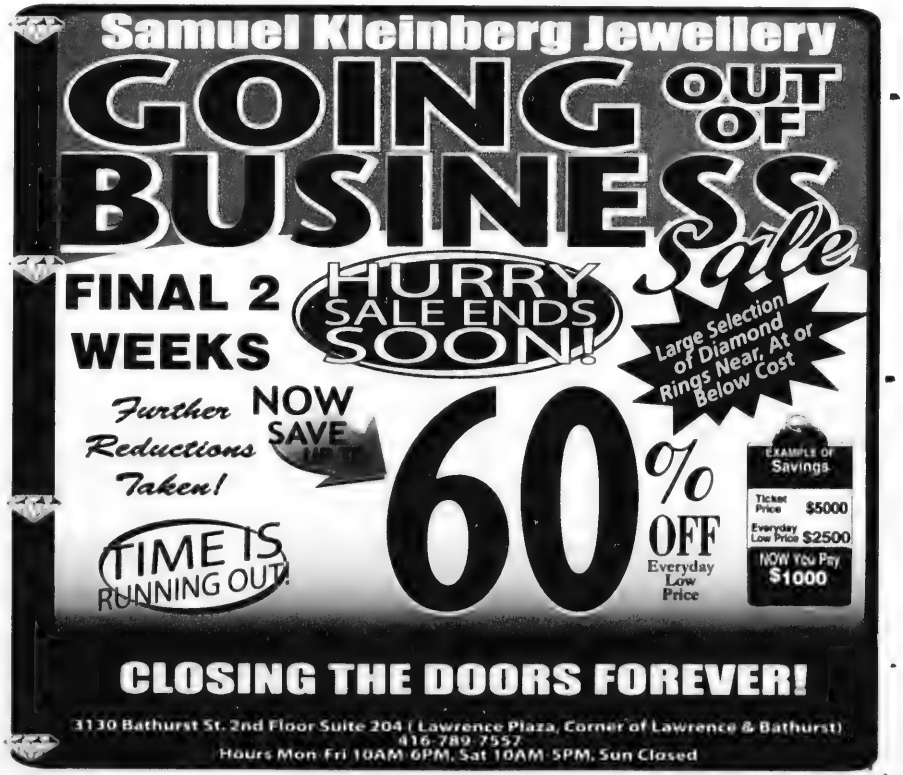
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Jewish MP Neville working hard for third term

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Anita Neville, the Liberal member of Parliament for Winnipeg South Centre, says she is working hard on this election campaign despite having done well in the last one.

Neville is the only Jewish MP from Manitoba and the only Jewish candidate in the province. She is the parliamentary secretary to the minister of Canadian Heritage, Liza Frulla, who is also the minister responsible for Status of Women Canada.

Neville has represented Winnipeg South Centre since 2000. The riding has the largest number of Jewish voters in the city. According to a 2001 census, there are about 7,600 Jewish residents in Crescentwood, River Heights and Tuxedo – the areas that comprise much of Winnipeg South Centre.

Neville says she has been a strong advocate for Israel and Jewish causes. She co-chairs Liberal Parliamentarians for Israel and has been involved in the drive to have Israel's Magen David Adom accepted into the International Red Cross organization and the effort to keep Al Jazeera broadcasts out of Canada.

"We have tried to make the appropriate members of the government aware of Jewish issues," she says. "And we have helped organize bilateral meetings between our government ministers and their Israeli counterparts, which have led to some joint initiatives between our two countries."

As for election issues, Neville reports that what she is hearing most frequently from voters is that they are angry about having an election at this time of year.

That is not the same message that her Conservative opponent, Michael Richards, is hearing. Richards, a lawyer running for office for the first time, says voters are telling him that they are concerned about government accountability. They are also talking about health care and the need for safer streets.

"My sense is that Jewish voters in the riding take a greater interest in the issues than the average voter," he says.

He says he hopes that after 12 years of Liberal government, the voters in Winnipeg South Centre are ready to vote for change.

Mark Wasyliw, the riding's New Democratic Party candidate, is also running for office for the first time. And like Richards, he is a lawyer.

He says he decided to run because he has seen, through his legal practice, the deterioration in society in the last few years and felt compelled to take action.

"Voters in this riding are disappointed in Anita Neville," he says.

"They were spoiled by having [former foreign minister] Lloyd Axworthy as their MP before. They also feel this government is tired, and they are upset about the government's priorities."

On issues related to Israel, Wasyliw says his major influence has been Abe Arnold, who is a leading Jewish left-wing critic of Israel. "While the wall seems to be successful in reducing the level of violence, it can't bring peace," he says.

Although the NDP candidate ran third last time in the affluent riding, Wasyliw says he hopes enough people who vote NDP provincially and Liberal federally there may back his candidacy this time.

The riding of Kildonan-St. Paul, which includes most of north Winnipeg on both sides of the Red River, is the only other riding in Winnipeg with a sizable Jewish population. Garden City, on the west side of the river, was reported to have a Jewish population of 2,535 in the 2001 census – with another 1,200 Jewish residents elsewhere in the riding west of the river.

Kildonan-St. Paul was traditionally a Liberal/NDP stronghold until the riding's boundaries were changed. Before the last federal election in 2004, Kildonan-St. Paul was split and the eastern portion merged with a more Conservative area east of the river and retained the name Kildonan-St. Paul. For many years, the district – known as Winnipeg North – was represented by the late Jewish NDP MP David Orlikow. He was defeated in 1988 by Rey Pagtakhan, who held the seat for the next 16 years.

In the last election, Pagtakhan ran in the western half of the riding, Winnipeg North, and lost to NDPer Judy Wasylycia-Leis.

In the last election, Kildonan-St. Paul voted Conservative in a tight race. Joy Smith, a former member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, finished with 275 more votes than her Liberal opponent, former city council and mayoralty candidate Terry Duguid. The two are back for a return bout.

Smith believes she is in a strong position in the race. "I have been working very hard since the last election," she says. "People appreciate my hard work."

She says infrastructure needs to be improved and crime combated. She mentioned voters' remarks about the Gomery Commission findings and spoke about day care.

She says she has spoken out against Iran and the Iranian president's threats against Israel in Parliament. "My father was a World War II veteran. We can't let another Holocaust happen. The president of Iran's comments should not be tolerated."

Smith says she is a strong supporter of the Canadian Human Rights Museum, the brainchild of the late Israel Asper, which is to be built in Winnipeg.

Duguid got off to a late start in the last campaign. He says that he actually won the vote on election day but lost in the advance polls. He is hoping to win this time out.

Duguid has been involved in the Canadian Human Rights Museum's fundraising campaign and has worked with the Jewish National Fund on several initiatives, including recently concluded agreements between the JNF and the governments of Alberta and Manitoba for sharing expertise on water issues.

The NDP candidate in Kildonan-St. Paul, school trustee Evelyn Myskiw, is making her first federal run, and says she is giving it an all-out effort.

She says what she is hearing from voters are concerns about health care, child care, education and poverty. She notes that she is largely hearing concerns about health care from Jewish voters in the area since a high percentage of them are seniors.

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Election 2006

Candidates square off in multi-ethnic Willowdale

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Running for his seventh term in nine elections, Willowdale's incumbent MP, Liberal Jim Peterson, says he is hoping to continue his agenda of building Canada's economy by investing in education and training.

"The major thing we have to do as the federal government is to ensure the ongoing prosperity of Canada. Right now, we have the best economy in the G7 countries," Peterson told *The CJN*, adding that as the minister of international trade, he budgeted $20 million to increase trade with four countries, one of them Israel.

In the 2004 election, Peterson garnered 61 per cent of the vote, defeating Conservative Jovan Boseovski, who is running again this year. Peterson's competition also includes Rochelle Carnegie of the New Democratic Party, who is running in her first election, and Sharolyn Vettese of the Green Party, who ran in the riding in 2004.

Although the riding's boundaries were revised in 2004, Willowdale still contains many affluent residential areas, and the average family income is $81,664.

The riding is bounded roughly by Highway 401 and the West Don River in the south; Steeles Avenue East in the north; Yonge and Bathurst streets in the west; and Leslie Street in the east, with a northeastern chunk extending as far as Victoria Park Avenue.

The 2001 census found that Chinese-Canadians comprise about 27 per cent of the riding's population, with substantial Korean and Iranian communities, and a Jewish community that both Peterson and Boseovski estimate at five per cent of the population.

Peterson, a lawyer who has also worked as an educator and a businessman, acknowledged the rise in anti-Semitic and racist incidents in Canada. He said those who commit hate crimes have to be prosecuted and need to be educated.

"It requires more work from faith-based groups working with each other… because we can't tolerate this," Peterson said, adding that he would like to see multicultural education become a part of the curriculum.

Boseovski, a corporate sales executive with the World Trade Group, said anti-Semitic incidents are not taken seriously enough.

He believes in tougher sentences for those involved in incidents such as the bombing of United Talmud Torahs school in Montreal in 2004.

Carnegie, the daughter of hockey legend Herb Carriegie, said that as a black woman, she carries the issue of racism "very close to her heart" and feels the government should take a more proactive approach to hate crime.

"There is a long history in Canada of anti-Semitism and racism. We need more education, more programs in schools to teach young people that everyone is the same. The people in charge don't take it seriously enough."

While each candidate agreed that more needs to be done to combat racism, opinions differed on Canada's votes at the United Nations on resolutions regarding Israel.

"There are a number of resolutions that were anti-Israel in an unfair way," Peterson said, adding that he is proud to be a part of a Liberal parliamentary group that reviewed anti-Israel votes and pressed for their revision. Canada changed its vote on three of them late last year.

Boseovski agreed that Canada needs to consider that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, and he said "we should be more supportive of the democratic countries in the world."

Carnegie said Canada should ensure that international laws are observed for both Israelis and Palestinians.

"We believe Canada should play a leading role in working for justice and peace in the Middle East. We believe in an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine and the killing of innocent civilians."

Peterson said he personally supports public funding for faith-based schools, but he called the issue a provincial matter.

Boseovski agreed that equalization is the best option, and suggested that offering tax credits to parents who choose to send their children to private school is a possible solution.

Carnegie said the emphasis should be on an inclusive public school system, which would help combat anti-Semitism and racism.

Other issues which strike a chord with voters are health care and child care. Peterson said the Liberals have pumped billions of dollars into both. As long as provinces back the National Health Accord, which is slated to put $41 billion into health care over 10 years, the system will improve, he added.

Peterson said he is also "delighted" that Ottawa has signed deals with 10 provinces to transfer $5 billion over five years to improve child care.

Boseovski said the Tories want a fully public system that follows the Canada Health Act. He said his party would give families $1,200 annually for every child under six, giving parents the option to spend the money as they see fit on child care.

As a single mother, Carnegie said she understands the importance of a properly functioning child care system, but she disagrees with the Conservatives' approach.

"I don't think that $1,200 a year, which translates to [less than] $4 a day, is going to help a family."

She favours a national care strategy, similar to the one in Quebec, which places high standards on the qualification of workers, and offers 180,000 subsidized spaces.

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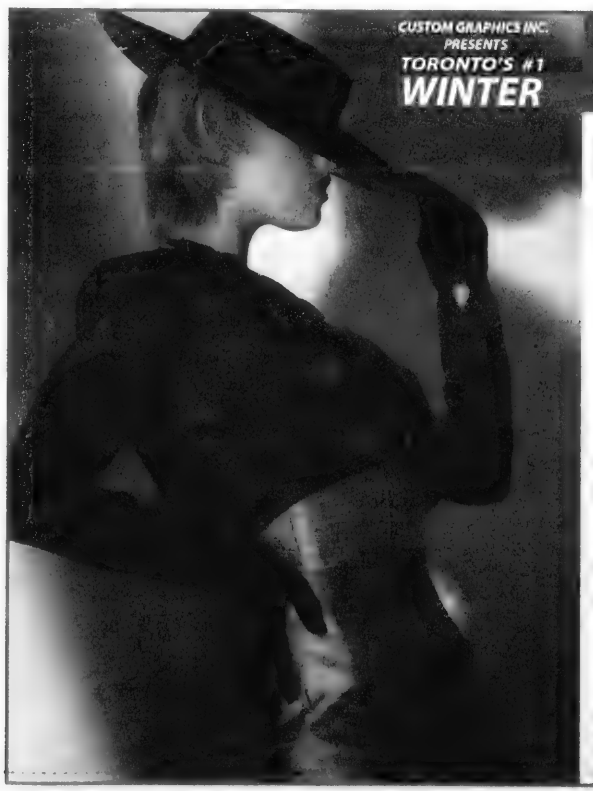

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Reisman shares secrets for permanent weight loss

By NORENE GILLETZ

January is always a difficult month, with cold, wintery weather and trying to lose those extra pounds brought on by holiday splurges. Weight loss and living a healthier lifestyle are always at the top of the list of most people's New Year's resolutions.

Rose Reisman, author of 14 best-selling cookbooks, believes that "only real and permanent lifestyle changes lead to positive changes in our health and well-being." Her newest book, *Rose Reisman's Secrets for Permanent Weight Loss* (Whitecap Books) is packed with practical information, scrumptious recipes and terrific tips to help you develop a healthier lifestyle for 2006 and beyond.

Whether you prefer a lower-fat, lower-carb or lower-calorie eating program, her nine easy-to-follow principles can work with any eating plan. Reisman says, "I've battled weight issues my entire life, and only by using these nine practices have I been able to maintain my weight. I feel younger, look better and know I'm healthier. It really works!"

Reisman will teach you how to set realistic goals, incorporate a healthy diet and exercise into your everyday routine and develop a support network for your lifestyle change. She shares the pros and cons of current fad diets and explains why quick fix plans never result in permanent weight loss.

She proves that eating right is also eating well. Her two-week diet plan with menu and recipe suggestions will help get you on the right track to good health. She offers 150 recipes for tempting dishes such as Salmon Fillet with Soy-Maple Syrup Glaze (recipe below), Broccoli with Creamy Goat Cheese Sauce and Cream Cheese-Filled Brownies.

Recipes include a nutritional analysis and are excellent for family or guests. Although not all recipes are kosher, you'll find lots of "food for thought" in this excellent resource. Here are some comfort foods to brighten up a cold wintery day. Enjoy!

GREEN AND YELLOW SPLIT PEA SOUP

There has never been a better comfort soup than split green pea. Reisman has many versions of this traditional soup in past cookbooks, so she combined both green and yellow split peas for this one. The flavours are amazing and the texture is smooth as cream.

2 tsp. vegetable oil
1 cup chopped onion
1 cup chopped carrot
1 cup chopped celery
2 tsp. minced garlic
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
5 cups vegetable stock
1 cup diced peeled potatoes
½ cup dried yellow split peas
½ cup dried green split peas
⅛ tsp. salt
⅛ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

Garnish:
¼ cup finely chopped green onions
¼ cup lower-fat plain yogurt

In a nonstick saucepan sprayed with vegetable spray, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Cook the onion, carrot, celery and garlic for 8 minutes or until the vegetables are softened and starting to brown. Stir in the mustard, stock, potatoes, yellow split peas, green split peas, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover and cook for 30 to 35 minutes or until the split peas are tender.

Puree the soup, in batches if necessary, in a blender or food processor. Garnish with green onions and a dollop of yogurt. Serves 6.

Calories per serving 200, Protein 14 g, Net carbohydrates 30 g, Fat 4.1 g, Saturated Fat 0.7 g, Cholesterol 0 mg, Sodium 450 mg, Fibre 9.1 g

SALMON FILLET WITH SOY-MAPLE SYRUP GLAZE

This simple glaze is so delicious, Reisman often has to make more to satisfy her guests. If you make it in advance, it will quickly become thick and sticky, but just reheat it to loosen it again. You can also grill your salmon skin side up. After you turn the fish, spoon some glaze over the top.

1½ lb. salmon fillets (4)

Soy-Maple Syrup Glaze:
¼ cup low-sodium soy sauce
¼ cup pure maple syrup
1 tbsp. cornstarch

Garnish:
2 tsp. sesame seeds
3 tbsp. chopped cilantro or parsley

Preheat oven to 425. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Combine the soy sauce, maple syrup and cornstarch in a small skillet. Bring to a boil and simmer on medium heat for 2 minutes or until thickened and syrupy.

Spoon 3 tbsp. of the glaze over the top of the fish. Bake for 10 minutes per inch. Garnish with sesame seeds and cilantro. Reheat the remaining glaze and drizzle overtop the salmon. Serves 4.

Calories per Serving 362, Protein 35 g, Net carbohydrates 14 g, Fat 18 g, Saturated Fat 4.4 g, Cholesterol 112 mg, Sodium 684 mg, Fibre 0.5 g

PEANUT BUTTER AND JAM MUFFINS

You can't find a better combination than peanut butter and jam. Always use natural peanut butter, containing peanuts only. The other types often contain hydrogenated vegetable oil and icing sugar. If there's any allergy to peanuts, look for other nut butters or try soy butter.

1 large ripe banana, mashed (about ½ cup)
3 tbsp. smooth peanut butter
1 large egg
½ cup low-fat milk
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
¼ cup all-purpose flour
⅓ cup whole wheat flour
¼ cup Splenda
1½ tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. baking soda
⅛ tsp. salt
3 tbsp. raspberry jam

Preheat oven to 350. Spray 12 muffin cups with vegetable spray.

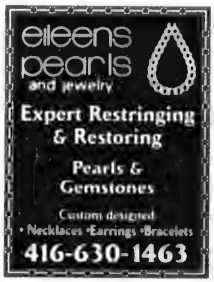
In a large bowl and using a whisk or electric beaters, combine the banana, peanut butter, egg, milk, oil and vanilla.

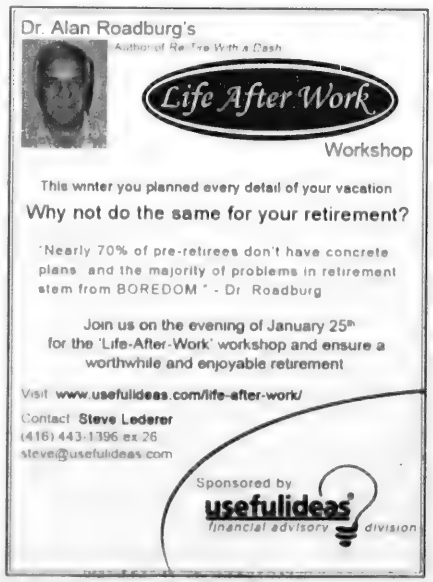
In another bowl, stir together both flours, the Splenda, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda and salt with a wooden spoon. Stir the dry mixture into the banana mixture just until everything is combined. Divide the mixture among the prepared muffin cups. Dollop a small amount of jam on top of each muffin.

Bake for about 12 minutes or until a tester inserted in the middle of a muffin comes out clean. Makes 12 muffins.

Calories per muffin 136, Protein 3.5 g, Net carbohydrates 17 g, Fat 5.1 g, Saturated Fat 0.8 g, Cholesterol 18 mg, Sodium 152 mg, Fibre 1.3 g

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author, cooking teacher and food consultant. For information, call 416-226-2466 or visit her website at http://www.gourmania.com

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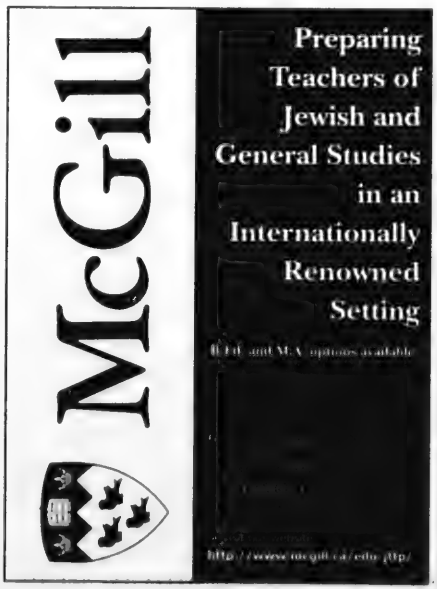

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The region: moving apart

By BARRY RUBIN
The Jerusalem Post

Opinion

The world is about to reconsider the way it views the Arab-Israeli conflict, as a result of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's past policy shift, his probable departure from politics and recent developments in the Palestinian Authority (PA).

The critical variable here is not what has happened to Sharon, but rather a Palestinian political situation that makes any progress toward peace impossible for years to come. Sharon's illness may be distracting attention from the Palestinian crisis, but it is ultimately much less important in shaping the region's future.

The immediate question is whether the current Palestinian leadership will find some excuse to cancel the planned Jan. 25 parliamentary elections, grasping at such straws as Israel's handling of voting in Jerusalem or Sharon's medical problems. But even this issue is secondary.

Whether the Palestinians go to the polls or not, the PA is rushing headlong back to the past. Both Hamas and the new Fatah leaders headed by Marwan Barghouti, are, under slightly different guises, returning to the strategies of the young Yasser Arafat. The fact that these strategies failed for four decades does not seem to be a factor in their calculations.

For Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas, things have gone so far that the only group who still think he counts for anything is the western media. His four pillars of support – Muhammad Dahlan, in charge of security; Abu Abbas, bureaucracy; Tayib Abd al-Rahim, administration; and Salam Fayyad, economy – have all deserted him. He is powerless, passive and clueless.

Abbas has good reason to worry about the election: both Hamas (under the charming slogan "change and reform") and the Fatah rebels headed by Barghouti will do as well as or better than Abbas' candidates.

Since the Abbas list includes many of the rebels, almost half of those elected by voters who want to choose Abbas could end up totally opposed to him.

Smaller radical lists, including both nationalist extremists and independent Islamist groups, will also get a considerable number of seats.

The Palestinian election commission resigned over government interference in the campaign, and it is likely that the actual balloting will be chaotic and marked by violence.

The violence has already started. There are daily reports of Palestinians and visiting western supporters being kidnapped for money; shootings – Fatah activists killed a Hamas man hanging up campaign posters in Gaza; and takeovers of government buildings by armed men, among other incidents.

None of this will change for a very long time. Indeed, the only way to re-establish peace would be by force.There is no group or leader on the horizon who could impose order, and at any rate, doing so would require an even higher level of violence.

But the single most remarkable event was a Jan. 4 armed attack by Fatah on the Egyptian army. To prevent Egypt's having any control over the Egypt-Gaza Strip border, Fatah gunmen killed two Egyptian soldiers and wounded 30, forcing that country's troops to withdraw. They then knocked a hole in the border fence allowing Palestinians to pass through at will.

This action was also taken to protest the arrest of a Fatah commander who was kidnapping foreigners. Naturally, the man was quickly released by the hapless Palestinian authorities.

The kind of thing Fatah gunmen did to the Egyptians is generally called an act of war. Of course, in the context of Arab politics, Egypt will do nothing for now except to publicly praise Abbas for the way he supposedly handled the crisis. This event shows how ridiculous it is to expect Egypt to do anything to safeguard this border or prevent terrorists and arms from crossing it.

At the same time, however, such incidents are another step in the developing alienation of the Arab world from the Palestinians. The Egyptians may say nice things about the Palestinian cause, but they are boiling mad and their anger will manifest itself in the future. No Arab state will give the Palestinians serious economic support. And as Hamas comes to parity with Fatah – and perhaps goes beyond it – this alienation will deepen.

The West is far more likely to misunderstand these developments than is the Arab world. There are three main dangers in the inevitable reassessment:

- insistence, flying in the face of reality, that Abbas is a viable leader, a moderate who should be helped by more concessions;
- wishful thinking that Barghouti is the new "man of peace" who will lead the Palestinians toward compromise even though his whole strategy revolves around terrorism. It should also be noted that Barghouti is more co-ordinator than leader. For example, his main ally in the Gaza Strip, Dahlan, is also one of his most bitter rivals.
- a nonsensical belief that Hamas can be moderated, a concept that makes the appeasement of Nazi Germany in the 1930s look reasonable by comparison.

It is time to face the facts. Sharon continued to move Israel toward moderation and a readiness for compromise while the Palestinians have gone in the opposite direction, increasing hatred of Israel, intransigence and terrorism with the goal of total victory.

The two sides are going to continue moving further apart in future.

Barry Rubin is director of the Global Research in International Affairs Center and editor of the Middle East Review of International Affairs.

PA leaders say they fear for peace process

By KHALED ABU TOAMEH
The Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Many Palestinians last week responded with ill-disguised glee to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's stroke, while senior Palestinian officials expressed fear his illness might set back the peace process and that his replacement might be even "worse."

Palestinian Authority Chairman Mahmoud Abbas, who returned to Ramallah after a week-long tour of the Persian Gulf region, was said to be following news of Sharon's condition with "great worry." His spokesperson said Abbas had phoned Israeli officials for updates.

Abbas expressed fear Sharon's absence from the scene would have a negative impact on the peace process. He also expressed hope that the latest developments in Israel wouldn't affect the Palestinians' plan to hold parliamentary elections later this month.

"On a purely humanitarian level, we feel sorry for Mr. Sharon," said Palestinian Deputy Prime Minister Nabil Shaath.

"Politically, it will increase the uncertainty we are facing to get back to the peace process," he said. "It is highly unpredictable to tell what will happen."

But prominent Palestinian spokesperson Hanan Ashrawi denounced Sharon as "a strong and charismatic leader who steered politics toward the right and extremism."

PA Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia, who met with Sharon several times over the past few years, expressed hope that Sharon's departure would not leave a political vacuum in Israel.

"What we care about is a serious peace process," he said. "We are looking forward to dealing with a new Israeli leadership that believes in peace with the Palestinians."

"His death will cause a political upheaval in both Israeli and Palestinian societies," former PA minister Muhammad Dahlan said.

He hailed Sharon as a leader who was loyal to his people, saying: "We wish him what the Israeli people wish him."

"Sharon's absence removes from the political scene a professional killer who mastered the murder of Palestinians and addressed the most violent, brutal and bloody strikes [against Arabs] in the history of the Arab-Israeli struggle," said Muhammad Nazzal, a Hamas leader in Beirut. "The Palestinian people can only hope that what is coming is better, not worse."

In Gaza City, Hamas spokesperson Mushi al-Masri said his movement believed the region would be better off without Sharon.

"This man has a black history," he said. "He has committed many massacres against our people and was responsible for the death of [Hamas leader] Ahmed Yassin and [former PA president] Yasser Arafat."

Ahmed Jibril, leader of the Syrian-backed faction Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, called Sharon's stroke a gift from God.

"We say it frankly that God is great and is able to exact revenge on this butcher. We thank God for this gift he presented to us on this new year," Jibril said.

Many Palestinians said they were happy to see the end of Sharon.

"I hate the man. I hope he dies slowly," said one young man helping the Fatah campaign for the upcoming parliamentary election.

"This is a great day for the Palestinians," said university student Sawsan Hamoudeh. "We hope the Israeli people will now elect better leaders."

Elsewhere, Palestinians handed out sweets in celebration, while gunmen in Balata refugee camp in Nablus took to the streets, firing their weapons in joy.

Palestinian commentator Ghazi al-Saadi struck a more pragmatic tone, noting that Sharon was "the first Israeli leader who stopped claiming Israel had a right to all of the Palestinians' land," a reference to Israel's recent withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and Sharon's clear description of Israel's hold on the West Bank as "occupation."

"A live Sharon is better for the Palestinians now, despite all the crimes he has committed against us," al-Saadi said.

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Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. Stories should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 10. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office.

E-mail: **info@cjnews.com.** Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Please note: submissions will *not* be returned. Only writers whose work is chosen for publication will be contacted.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual **Purim Art Contest**.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of *CJN* employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN*'s 2006 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for $25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, 2006. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 3, 2006.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 16, 2006. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et concours du Québec.

Israel & the Jewish World

Sharon's condition improving

By JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH
The Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Ariel Sharon began to breathe on his own Monday morning, after doctors started gradually reducing his coma-inducing medications.

Hadassah Ein Kerem hospital director Shlomo Mor-Yosef said Monday that Sharon was still attached to a ventilator and that the process of weaning Sharon from sedation could take hours or days.

He added that this is just one of many expected changes in the prime minister's condition and that updates would not be forthcoming for every small change.

"I want to reiterate and emphasize that the prime minister's condition is still serious," Mor-Yosef said.

Early Monday morning, Sharon's doctors had decided to bring him out of his induced coma, following a consultation in which they reviewed Sharon's condition. It was expected that only after Sharon woke up could his motor and cognitive capabilities be assessed. The doctors planned to assess the response of the prime minister's pupils to light, as well as his response to pain stimuli. The latter will be done by applying pressure to his hand or chest.

On Sunday, a computerized tomography (CT) scan showed that his intracranial pressure has decreased and other vital signs have remained steady.

Mor-Yosef reported that Sharon had no fever, which is a positive sign indicating he was not suffering from infection, despite the hole that was drilled in his skull to perform the three brain operations he has undergone.

"I can't yet say that the prime minister is out of danger, but there are slight signs of an improvement. The field of neurosurgery works at a slower pace than trauma or other disciplines that journalists deal with," said Mor-Yosef, asking for patience. "We are fighting to save his life."

The chances that Sharon will survive his massive stroke are "very high. He is a very strong man, and he is getting the best care," Jose Cohen, the neurosurgeon who has performed three operations on Sharon, said on Saturday.

Cohen warned, however, that the prime minister remained in serious condition, and noted: "He will not continue to be prime minister, but maybe he will be able to understand and to speak."

A protracted induced coma usually does not cause patients harm, said Amos Korczyn, a leading clinical and research neurologist at Tel Aviv's Sourasky Medical Center and at Tel Aviv University's Sackler Medical Faculty.

"The wake-up process," he said, "is gradual, as dosages of anesthetic drugs are reduced. When a patient regains consciousness, there is usually disquiet, and the patient may resist, especially because of being attached to a respirator. Then he can be given tranquilizers."

When the patient is awake, reflexes are tested and he is asked to move his limbs. Cognitive ability is measured by his reactions when he is spoken to. If he can't speak, he can nod, open and close his eyelids or write his responses.

"It is rare for such patients to have a complete recovery. We've all heard of miracles, but these don't often occur," Korczyn said.

The left hemisphere of the brain is called the dominant hemisphere – even in left-handers – and the right hemisphere is the non-dominant one. Sharon's strokes caused damage to his right brain, according to Hadassah neurologists.

"It has other functions than the left hemisphere," Korczyn said. "It has direct or indirect control on emotions. When we speak, we have intonations that enable people to assess the speaker's mood even when he uses a language they don't understand, like Chinese. But if a certain part of the right hemisphere is damaged, this is lost, and the speech is atonal."

He added that a stroke victim with right-brain damage may lose his body image and be unable to dress himself. There may also be partial paralysis, with difficulty walking or total paralysis on the left side. There is usually no vision or hearing problem, unless the back part of the brain was damaged, in which case the victim can lose half of his field of vision in both eyes. Speech resides in the left hemisphere, while memory is seated in both hemispheres. People with damage on the left side can see and read letters, but they may not be able to understand what the words say.

Some parts of the brain are doubled, thanks to evolution, so if one part is harmed the patient can sometimes relearn abilities and tasks up to a certain point, especially if he is younger and his brain has a higher degree of plasticity, Korczyn said.

Asked what message Sharon's stroke should have for the public, Korczyn said, "I would like the public to learn from it and adapt the lesson to their own lives. Adopt healthful lifestyles. If you are obese, lose weight by exercising and following a beneficial diet. The prime minister, fortunately, did not smoke. Get tested regularly for hypertension, and, if you have it, get immediate treatment. Reduce stress. Strokes can be prevented."

Quarter of Gaza evacuees still lack housing

By TOVAH LAZAROFF
The Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Five months since they were evacuated from their Gaza homes this summer, 25 per cent of the former residents are still living in hotel rooms, dormitories and tents, according to a report released Sunday by the nonprofit group Lema'an Acheinu, which has been assisting the evacuees.

The report paints a grim picture of the evacuees' economic, emotional and family situations, including drug and alcohol use by teenagers and an increase in divorce rates.

According to the report, more than 50 per cent have yet to receive any compensation funds and only 5.7 per cent of the 2,100 people who lost their jobs have found new ones.

The Disengagement Authority, however, disputes some of the figures. A thousand families have received 75 or 100 per cent of the funds due to them and another 500 were given advances, while some 200 families have yet to receive any money, said an Authority spokesperson.

He added that many of those in the hotels are waiting for their temporary homes to be built. Most evacuee families expect they will have to live in temporary homes for two years while they wait for their permanent ones to be constructed.

Early show of support for Olmert

Continued from page 1

But he received an early show of support with a weekend phone call from U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice.

There was also an internal reprieve from the Likud party, which decided against resigning from the government, reversing a decision made before Sharon suffered his stroke last week. "Now is not the time for such moves," Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom, one of four cabinet members from Likud, told Army Radio.

A Channel 10 television survey issued after Sharon took ill predicted that his new centrist party, Kadima, would take 40 of the Knesset's 120 seats in the election if it is led by Olmert.

But analysts suggested the showing reflected short-term public sympathy. *Ha'aretz*'s political correspondent, Aluf Ben, recalled the aftermath of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination in 1995, when opinion polls showed his successor, Shimon Peres, to be the clear favourite for re-election, only to be proven wrong by Benjamin Netanyahu's landslide win. "Instead of presenting himself as pressing ahead with Rabin's path, Peres made the mistake of insisting that he was an autonomous candidate," Ben said, suggesting Olmert was wise to play Sharon's reluctant stand-in.

Yet the Channel 10 survey found that Peres, should he lead Kadima, would perform better than Olmert, taking 42 Knesset seats.

Though Peres quit the Labor party last year to back Sharon, he has yet to formally join Kadima. But he voiced support for Olmert. "He supported the policies of Mr. Sharon and even occasionally was ahead of him," Peres told Britain's Sky television. "The policies for peace, the continuation of the policies of Sharon, will have my full support."

Halutz speaks of Iran's nukes

By HERB KEINON
The Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — IDF Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Dan Halutz said last week that Iran's nuclear program "can be destroyed."

Halutz made the comments during a conference at Tel Aviv University, Army Radio reported.

Israeli officials and politicians have openly discussed the possibility of an attack on Iran, either alone or with other countries, aimed at crippling Iran's nuclear development capabilities.

Meanwhile, Israel's Foreign Ministry responded to Iran's decision last week to resume nuclear fuel production research by issuing a statement saying "it is clear that this step calls for a grave and immediate international response – sending the issue to the [United Nations] Security Council."

The statement said such a move would "send a clear message that the international community will not reconcile with Iran's breaching its commitments."

According to the Foreign Ministry, Iran – by announcing its decision last week to resume its nuclear research and development – has rejected the international community's efforts to co-operate with it.

Iran's decision to resume unspecified research into nuclear fuel production – excluding, for the time being, the enrichment of uranium – was announced by a top Iranian nuclear official on state television.

Mohammad Saeedi, deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, said Iran's nuclear program had suffered significantly from having suspended its research over the past 2½ years, and he said his organization could no longer keep its scientists from proceeding.

Saeedi did not say what kind of nuclear fuel research Iran was planning to resume, but he said it did not include uranium enrichment.

The announcement was certain to raise further concerns in the United States and among its European allies who believe Iran is moving toward production of nuclear weapons. Tehran says the program is for electricity generation.

In Vienna, the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, said the agency knew of the decision and added it was important that Tehran "maintains its suspension of all enrichment-related activity" as a way of reducing international suspicions about its nuclear plans.

ElBaradei also called on Iran to "build confidence and enable the resumption of dialogue with all concerned parties."

The Iranian mission to the IAEA told the agency that Iran "has decided to resume from 9 February 2006… [research and development] on the peaceful nuclear energy program which has been suspended," ElBaradei told the IAEA's 35 board member nations in a restricted document made available to Associated Press.

A European diplomat accredited to the agency said it was too early to evaluate the significance of Iran's move and whether it would scuttle talks planned for later this month between Iran and France, Britain and Germany on behalf of the European Union.

The EU has previously said that any decision by Iran to resume work on its uranium enrichment program would be "the red line" that would mean an end to European attempts to negotiate differences with Iran over its nuclear program and would revive EU attempts to have Iran taken before the UN Security Council for violating the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

But the diplomat, who demanded anonymity in exchange for discussing EU strategy, said the Europeans would want to have details of what precisely Iran wanted to do before making a decision on future talks.

The West has long opposed Iran's enrichment of uranium because the process can produce fuel for atomic weapons, but Saeedi said the research now planned was not of that type.

"The research in this field will have little to do with the production of nuclear fuel," Saeedi said, adding, as the ElBaradei document confirmed, that Iran planned to keep the IAEA informed.

Iran has come under heavy international pressure from the IAEA, the UN's nuclear watchdog, as well as the West to abandon its program to produce fuel for its Russian-built nuclear reactor, which is due to come on stream this year, and for its future nuclear power plants.

Iran has vowed it will never give up its right under the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty to enrich uranium and produce nuclear fuel inside the country.

Technology trumps terror

By ERIK SCHECHTER
The Jerusalem Post

TEL AVIV — Military technology developed over the last five years has played a key role in the successes against Palestinian terrorism, said Israel Defence Forces Chief of the General Staff Lt.-Gen. Dan Halutz.

"Terrorism today is at 10 percent of the level it was in 2002 – 10 per cent in terms of the number of suicide bombers, the number of their successes and the number of victims," Halutz said.

The reason: technological improvements in the gathering and processing of real-time intelligence have made the IDF a more effective fighting force despite a 25 per cent cut in matériel.

Halutz spoke at a conference on military research and development held at Tel Aviv University last week, where he listed terrorism as the number 1 priority of the IDF in the coming years.

"Fighting on the open desert is relatively simple," he said. "But we are dealing with crowded, inhabited areas, which, because we are a country with values and morality, leaves us with many restrictions."

Throwing down a challenge to military industry professionals in the audience, Halutz said the IDF needs the ability not just to identify but also hit an enemy in a matter of seconds without hurting innocent bystanders.

Following terrorism in the order of IDF concerns is the development of enemy rockets and missiles, from the primitive Qassam to the long-range Shihab-3.

Halutz said that, in dealing with these threats, the military would have to strengthen its defensive capabilities.

"Israel will still have an offensive military doctrine, but we need to improve our defense," he said. "The legitimacy of offensive action – and we are part of an international community of norms – is on the decline."

Halutz said the last threat that the IDF may have to contend with was that of an outright clash with an enemy army. Accordingly, Israel must maintain its edge in intelligence and air power.

"The chances of [a conventional war] occurring are low, in fact very low," said Halutz. "But if we are not ready for it, it will happen. That's the paradox."

Perhaps preaching to the choir, Halutz told the audience that a domestic military industry was critical to the national interest, alluding to past rows with the United States over the reselling of American technology to other countries.

"We need our independence," said Halutz.

He said that the country leads, and must expand its lead, in developing remotely piloted vehicles, electronic warfare and night-vision technology.

"We stopped developing jet fighters in this country. I thought it was a mistake to abandon the Lavi [jet fighter]," he said.

Halutz noted that there was pressure to stop producing the Merkava. He criticized proponents of the cut as confusing the necessity of the tank itself with the country's need to retain the ability to produce armoured vehicles.

Hamas talks possible, Mofaz says

Israel's defence minister said negotiations with Hamas could happen if the Islamic terrorist group disarms. Shaul Mofaz's remarks were made in the run-up to Palestinian Authority parliamentary elections in which Hamas is expected to make significant gains. "If Hamas is elected, it will have to disarm, to recognize Israel's right to exist, to become a political body," Mofaz said in a speech. "Only then will the basic conditions be created, if they are created, for a future dialogue." Hamas refuses to disarm, but its leaders have hinted that the faction's charter, calling for Israel's destruction, could be amended if future conditions are right.

Funding scandal resurfaces

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's family is suspected of receiving $3 million (US) in illicit foreign funds. Police confirmed last week that an investigation is under way into allegations that Austrian magnates funnelled the money to the Sharon family, perhaps to help pay off contributions to Sharon's 1999 run to head the Likud Party. But there was no indication Sharon himself might be implicated, and media reports said the new probe could take months or even years to complete, well after the March 28 general elections are over. The prime minister has constantly denied any wrongdoing in the campaign-funding case, in which no charges were pursued against him. Sharon's eldest son, Omri, pleaded guilty to related charges and faces sentencing later this month.

Holocaust fund short on cash

An Israeli fund for Holocaust survivors announced it lacked funds to continue assisting some of the neediest survivors. Officials with the Foundation for the Benefit of Holocaust Victims blamed the Claims Conference for not providing additional funding to cover the increasing medical needs of aging survivors. The Claims Conference funds the majority of the needs, but has not answered its request for an additional $10 million that would cover two programs in question, the foundation said. The Claims Conference said it has increased its funding to the foundation every year since it was founded and expects to give it $40 million in 2006. Wolf Factor, an Auschwitz survivor who heads the fund, said more money needs to be channelled to needy Holocaust survivors instead of going to youth education and other projects. "The Claims Conference finances most of the foundation's budget, but the priorities in distribution of that budget are completely illogical," he said.

Zaka dives deep

Zaka, the volunteer Israeli emergency response society, has launched a new underwater unit. Two dozen amateur divers turned out for their first practice outing on behalf of Zaka, which gained fame in recent years for its cleanup work at the sites of terrorist attacks and traffic accidents. The divers will be on call to search for Israelis lost at sea. Unlike the main Zaka group, made up mostly of religious men, the diver unit is predominantly secular and includes women.

Donors shy on PA money

International donors are refusing to provide funds to the Palestinian Authority. The refusal, which is based on violations of the PA's commitments not to increase salaries in the public sector and the resignation of the PA's finance minister, Salam Fayyad, will lead to a $950 million (US) deficit for the Palestinians in 2006, the Israeli newspaper *Globes* reported. The Palestinian Authority's deficit for 2005 is expected to be less than $480 million, *Globes* said.

With files from JTA

Former Forest Hill Collegiate student directs *CSI*

By HARRISON JORDAN
Special to The CJN

Harrison Jordan

You may not have heard his name before, but you have definitely heard the name of the show that he produces and directs.

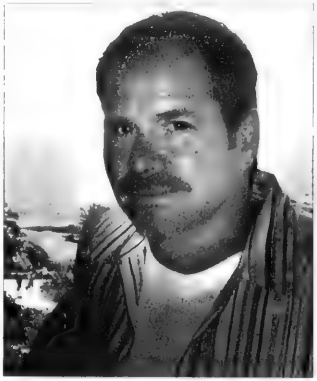
The show is *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, and Richard Lewis is one of the main directors as well as a supervising producer and a writer for the show.

Lewis, who is from Toronto, started making films here.

"I remember when I was about 14 years old, I made my first Super 8 movie at Forest Hill Collegiate in Mrs. Bird's class. My first film was an adaptation of Edgar Allan Poe's *The Tell-Tale Heart*," Lewis said.

Lewis' career began on the small screen, directing for the television series *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and *Superboy*, which were both presented on American network TV. He then directed the made-in-Canada movie *Whale Music*.

"William Peterson, the lead actor and executive producer (of *CSI*), saw this movie that I had made (*Whale Music)*, and he quite liked it," Lewis said.



Richard Lewis

But before Lewis was given the chance to become a director for *CSI*, Paul Haggis, the Oscar-nominated screenwriter who wrote the movies *Million Dollar Baby* and *Crash* and created the TV show *Due South*, asked him to direct an episode of *Due South*.

Lewis then moved to Los Angeles, where Haggis asked him to direct a few episodes for *Michael Hayes* and *Family Law*, two other shows that Haggis developed. Lewis went on to direct *Falcone*, a television show about an undercover FBI agent. Like most of the shows Lewis had directed, *Falcone* was made for CBS.

"Along with getting noticed by William Peterson, I was one of CBS's favourite directors, so they brought me on the show to direct the fourth episode of *CSI*. CBS liked how the episode was directed, so I went on to direct an episode later on in the first season, and eventually I was asked to become a producer and main director," Lewis said.

Although his contract with CBS for *CSI* ends at the end of next season, he will be kept busy with other projects.

"I have a feature film in development, and I have a pilot show deal with CBS, along with a new show I will be making this winter," Lewis said.

He still has ties to Toronto as his parents, his wife, his sister and his stepsons live here. "I spend a lot of time with [my family and relatives in Toronto], so I'm back and forth quite a lot," he said.

Harrison Jordan, 13, is a student at Crestwood Preparatory College in Toronto.

ALMOST TWINS?

Scores of eager participants took part in a contest last week in Tel Aviv to find the dog that most looks like its owner. Contestants were judged by resemblances of the face, body, clothing and posture. At left is the winning pair: Ever and his year-and-a-half old pug named Gandhi. Runners-up were, at right, Hadas and her 10-year-old mixed collie and German shepherd Killer, and 75-year-old Eve, below, with her chihuahua Feathers.

[Israel Sun photos]

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CJkids

KIDDISH

Jewish Kids' Fun Page
by Ellene Newman and Hallel Newman

SNOWBALLS

Snow day! No school! With a feeling of freedom, Aaron Cohen stood in front of the large living room window, watching the beautiful flakes gently drift down.

"*Come out and play*," the snow seemed to beg, and that's exactly what Aaron planned on doing. Maybe he would go sledding with his friends, Zach and Nathan. Or better yet, they could have a snowball fight. That winter, they'd already had three amazing snowball fights, which would have continued all night if their parents hadn't made them stop. Nathan was the best, relentlessly pelting both his opponents with a ceaseless onslaught of stinging ice. He was so good that Aaron usually had to team up with Zach just to stand a chance against him.

Aaron was still staring dreamily out the window when he noticed someone coming. It was Nathan! And slightly behind him, Zach! Wow, thought Aaron, perfect timing! He waved to Nathan, who waved back. He was about to wave to Zach too, but before he had a chance to, Zach put his finger over his lips. Nathan must not know Zach was right behind him, Aaron realized, and Zach was to surprise him. This was going to be great.

Stealthily, Zach closed the gap between himself and Nathan. Then he pounced, sending Nathan sprawling face down in the snow, taken completely by surprise. Nathan groped around, trying to find his glasses, and Zach, without wasting a second, launched Phase II of the attack. Not even bothering to make snowballs, he scooped up huge clumps of snow and dumped them onto his hapless victim. Through the closed window, Aaron could hear Nathan's vociferous protests. "What in the world do you think you're doing? Stop it!" but Zach continued to heave snow at him. Abruptly, Nathan spun around, glasses in hand, and launched himself at Zach. Zach slipped and fell, and Nathan reached into Zach's parka with one hand, and began shovelling snow down his back with the other. Aaron watched in shock. This wasn't a play fight anymore. This was real.

Zach shoved Nathan away and the two of them lay there, glaring at each other wordlessly. Then Nathan jumped up, shook the snow off himself, and ran home crying. Zach watched until he disappeared from view before getting up. He took a few steps toward Aaron's house, hesitated, and turned around to go home, leaving behind only the kicked up snow as evidence of the fight. Aaron, his day ruined, just stared.

The next day in school, Zach and Nathan completely ignored each other. Aaron hoped that they would make up, but they didn't. And by lunch, even though they usually ate together, they sat at opposite ends of the table. The only person they talked to was Aaron, separately of course.

Aaron desperately wanted to see the fight end, but he didn't know what to do. And then he remembered what he had learned about his namesake, Aaron the High Priest.

What would Aaron the High Priest do? When he saw two people in an argument, he would call each of them aside, and say, "The person you are in a fight with told me how he regrets everything and wishes to make up." When the two would meet, they would hug each other and become friends again.*

Well, it was worth a shot. He tried talking to Zach first. It took awhile, but finally Zach confessed, "I wasn't trying to get him upset. He loves fighting in the snow. The truth is, I was surprised when he got so upset at me…I wish the whole thing had never happened."

"So why don't you tell him that?"

"I can't. Not now."

After school, Aaron spoke to Nathan. "Look, I understand you're really angry at Zach, but you should know that he wasn't trying to get you upset. He thought you would love a sudden snowball fight."

"Not like what he did! He knocked me over, almost broke my glasses. I don't know what he was thinking!"

"I'm not saying that he's right for what he did. I just wanted to tell you that he told me he's sorry about the whole thing and he didn't mean anything bad."

Nathan didn't respond, and Aaron, feeling very awkward, went home.

He was just finishing his homework when his mother told him, "Aaron, your friends are here. They want to go sledding."

My friends? Friends? Aaron threw on his winter coat and gloves and raced down the stairs and out the door, where Nathan and Zach were waiting with the sled.

"Yo Aaron, think fast!" called Nathan, sending a sudden snowball at him. Aaron jumped to the side, and the snowball exploded on the wall behind him. Aaron quickly scooped up some snow, packed it together, and counterattacked. Within seconds, the yard was filled with hurtling snowballs, the sled all but forgotten. And Aaron Cohen, descendant of Aaron the High Priest, pursuer of peace, unleashed a barrage of snow and ice at those who dared defy him.

* *Avot d'Rabbi Natan 12:3*

MATCHING

There are five matching pairs of snowflakes mixed into all this snow. Can you find them all?

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Hollywood gossip columnist Louella Parsons a celebrity herself

The First Lady of Hollywood **by Samantha Barbas, University of California Press.**

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

A Hollywood era ended quietly 34 years ago with the death of gossip columnist Louella Parsons. At the height of her powers in the 1950s, she commanded a readership of 40 million in 1,200 newspapers in the United States and elsewhere, a record that may never be surpassed.

Samantha Barbas

Celebrities feared her, readers loved her and movie studio presidents deferred to her. The thrice-married Parsons was probably the single most influential journalist of her times.

Parsons, who was of Jewish origin, is the subject of Samantha Barbas' biography, *The First Lady of Hollywood*, an absorbing book about celebrity culture and Hollywood power politics. Running to 417 pages, it is a pleasing amalgam of rigorous scholarship and popular history. It will appeal to a wide range of readers.

A cultural icon who nourished her readers' romance with celebrity, Parsons was the undisputed queen of Hollywood gossip. Her competitors – Hedda Hopper, Sheilah Graham, Bob Thomas, Sidney Skolsky, Erskine Johnson and Aline Mosby – tried hard to emulate her.

She was born in Freeport, Ill., a thriving business and industrial centre 100 miles east of Chicago that had been settled by German and Irish immigrants in the 19th century.

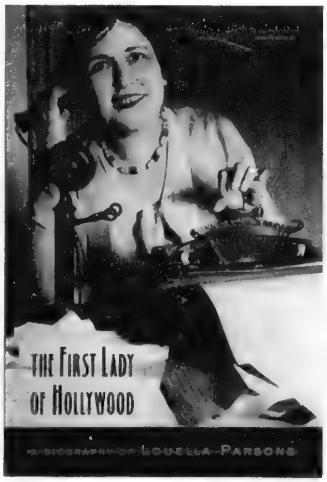
Her mother, Helen, was the daughter of Issac Stine, a German Jew from Wurtemberg who immigrated to the United States in 1847. Stine's wife, Jeanette Wilcox, was Irish.

Helen Stine married Joshua Oettinger, an assimilated German Jew from Danville, Pennsylvania, in 1881. He was one of Freeport's most prosperous businessmen. They had five children, all of whom were raised as Christians.

The Oettingers, one of the few nominally Jewish families in Freeport, were respected and well thought of, according to Barbas.

By all accounts, Parsons was a bright, articulate and intellectually curious teenager who, like her mother, was fascinated by the theatre. "Louella grew up during a transition in American women's history, when the passive, corseted, mid-century Victorian feminine ideal, characterized by sexual purity and domesticity, was slowly being challenged by the more modern and independent 'new woman' who sought greater opportunities outside the home," Barbas observes.

At 19, she was hired by a local newspaper to write for the "society page." Weddings, engagements and formal dinners were her beat. It whetted her appetite for journalism.



Like many Americans, Parsons was smitten by the new, budding film industry. She read fan magazines and developed crushes on actors. She also submitted unsolicited scripts to film studios in Chicago. All were rejected.

In 1911, a studio hired her as its chief scenario editor. That led to a position as a feature writer and motion picture columnist for a Chicago daily. Parsons boasted that she was the first movie gossip writer in the nation. Qualifying Parsons' claim, Barbas acknowledges that her column, Seen on the Screen, was the first daily one exclusively devoted to cinema.

Despite her popularity as a columnist, Parsons' talent was continually denigrated. Ben Hecht, the Chicago reporter who would become a Hollywood screenwriter himself, called her "the worst reporter the town ever knew," while Walter Winchell, the syndicated columnist, described her as a small-town hack.

Barbas does not regard these withering critiques seriously. As she puts it: "Louella's work was far more intelligent and competent than her critics gave her credit for." She adds that Parsons was a workaholic and an accomplished film reviewer.

In 1918, she moved to the *Morning Telegraph*, a Chicago daily with a well-deserved reputation for yellow journalism. There Parsons churned out a film column titled In and Out of Focus. This brought her into contact with the principal movie celebrities of the age: Douglas Fairbanks, Mary Pickford, Gloria Swanson, D.W. Griffith, Harold Lloyd, Cecil B. DeMille, Rudolph Valentino and Charlie Chaplin.

Barbas suggests that the turning point of her career occurred when media magnate William Randolph Hearst hired her as a movie columnist for the *New York American*. The newspaper was staffed, by among others, the celebrated sports writer Damon Runyon and the novelist Nat Ferber. She established a close but obsequious professional relationship with the star-struck Hearst, who ordered editors not to tamper with her copy.

In 1926, she accepted Hearst's offer to be motion picture editor of the Universal News Service and film writer at the *Los Angeles Examiner* at the then princely salary of $350 a week. Obsessively devoted to her craft, she worked 16-hour days.

Parsons arrived in Hollywood at a time when Jewish movie moguls and producers were still the objects of anti-Semitic attacks from nativists who claimed that Jews controlled American culture.

Although Parsons did not openly identify herself as a Jew, she nonetheless spoke out against anti-Semitism and informed studio bosses Louis B. Mayer, Jack Warner and Harry Cohn when she encountered actors with marked anti-Jewish attitudes.

Parsons had no real competition until Hedda Hopper, a stately blond who had been an actress, appeared on the scene to give her a run for her money. Barbas says that Hopper was an anti-Semite, but she does not substantiate her claim. One wonders how Hopper could have survived in Hollywood with such views.

Being Hearst's lap dog, Parsons unfailingly fought his battles. Relentlessly attacking *Citizen Kane*, the brilliant film directed by boy wonder Orson Welles, she carped that its malevolent chief character was modelled after Hearst. It was not one of her shining moments.

By the mid-1950s, Parsons had lost ground to Hopper. Her sugar-coated approach to the stars was no longer in vogue. Her health failed her, and she was in almost constant pain, suffering from colds and other bronchial ailments.

Parsons' readership dropped precipitously, and only 70 newspapers carried her column in 1962. By contrast, Hopper's column appeared in 130 newspapers.

After breaking a hip in 1964, she retired. Her chief assistant, Dorothy Manners, took over. Hopper, Parsons' nemesis, died two years later.

Parsons passed away on Dec. 9, 1972 at a convalescent home in Brentwood, a fashionable neighbourhood in Los Angeles. She was 91. Her funeral was attended by only a handful of celebrities, including Bob Hope and Jack Benny.

When she died, her influence was on the wane. But as Barbas correctly comments, Parsons' legacy lives on in the culture of celebrity and the public fascination with gossip.

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Cantor blends Ashkenazi and Sephardi rhythms

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

The musical soul and dynamic voice of Cantor Aaron Bensoussan fuse together two stirring styles.

One is the up-tempo rhythms and inflections of the Sephardim; the other is the passionate, somewhat mournful spirit of eastern European Jewry.

Bensoussan's singing repertoire is therefore especially diverse and, he admits, rather unique.

"After mastering the Ashkenazi way of singing, I started to incorporate some of the Sephardi motifs into the Ashkenazi prayers," says Bensoussan, a Moroccan émigré who has been the cantor at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda synagogue for six years. "This gives it a unique blend."

The multicultural range Bensoussan showcases in his singing is very much in line with his own personal beliefs about building bridges between the various groups in the Jewish community.

To that end, Bensoussan and his colleagues from the Dafina Orchestra, which includes non-Jewish musicians originally from Lebanon, will be performing a concert at the newly renovated Gladstone Hotel in Toronto on Jan.15.

The cantor views the concert as both a forum for outreach and exciting entertainment.

"Music is a strong vehicle to bring people from across the Jewish community together," he reflects. "And the Gladstone Hotel is an intimate place... where people don't have to feel they are pressured to be part of a religious ceremony, but are there just to enjoy the music."

The performance will feature Bensoussan's own compositions and offer various styles of music, including Judeo-Moroccan folklore classics, jazz and flamenco.

The chazzan began to hone a sharp ear for music as a child in Mogador, Morocco, a fortified port city now called Essaouira, which once had 25,000 Jews and was a popular vacation spot for numerous celebrities, including rocker Jimi Hendrix and filmmaker Orson Welles.

"I grew up listening to classical Arabic songs... and going to shul and participating in singing," he recalls.

He left Morocco in 1968 at the age of 14 and headed to New York.

In his new country, Bensoussan studied at various yeshivot and was encouraged by his mother to become a rabbi.

But when he was 18, Bensoussan attended a cantorial concert that fascinated him and sparked his interest in his present profession.

"The music that came out of [the cantor's performance] was so spiritual, and that cantorial cry just gets in your *kishkah*," he says. "So that's where I started to look into [being a cantor]."

Eventually, he enrolled in the Jewish Theological Seminary and dedicated five years to intensive cantorial training.

His mainly Ashkenazi colleagues were thoroughly impressed by the Sephardi style.

"When I first came to the seminary, I was asked to sing something, so I chose to sing *Kol Nidrei* and some chants from the Torah," he recalls. "That's how I got into [cantorial] school."

In fact, Bensoussan says the instructors were so moved by the Sephardi modes that they ensured he would maintain them.

After 11 years as a cantor at Temple Beth Shalom in Long Island, Bensoussan, wife Phyllis and son Joshua came to Toronto. The family has since grown with the birth of son Yoni, now three years old.

In addition to his cantorial role at Beth Emeth, Bensoussan has recorded eight albums, regularly performs in concerts, including at such venues as the famed Carnegie Hall, and is hoping to build up Dafina, which is in fact the name of a type of Moroccan cuisine similar to cholent, which is traditionally eaten on Shabbat.

Bensoussan explains that the orchestra evolved out of weekly, improvised jams held in his house.

"We experimented with different improvisations and a lot of people started coming to listen," he says. "I picked the name Dafina because it depicts the aroma of so many ingredients cooked slowly over Sabbath, which gives it that special taste which is unique on Shabbat."

For tickets, call 416-633-3838. The show begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St. W.

Cantor Aaron Bensoussan

Young author's debut novel garners GG Award nomination

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

After leaving a sheltered life in Toronto, 19-year-old Alice, a first-year McGill University student, has many lessons to learn: how to cook, do her own laundry and lose her virginity.

In *Nellcott Is My Darling* (Coach House Books), Golda Fried's debut novel, readers either revisit or learn what it's like to be a naive, inexperienced freshman, living on her own for the first time.

The book was nominated as a finalist for this year's Governor General's Award in English fiction, quite the accomplishment for the 33-year-old author from Toronto, now living in North Carolina.

From the start, it is obvious that Alice sees her first year at university as an opportunity to break free from her studious, straight-edge personality and her parents, who didn't allow her to wear makeup in high school, and to act in ways that would make her "mother's mouth drop open in horror."

Alice eventually replaces her best friend from high school, Bethany, "a political science student [who] studied in the science library because it was quieter," with her next-dorm neighbour, Allegra, a moody painter who shops at Value Village and dates much older men.

Alice seems aware of the tendencies that have kept her sheltered and spends more time trying to abandon them, than she does studying.

At a party, Alice approaches a snack table and attempts to fight the voice in her head telling her to stay away from the supposedly germ-infested hummus.

Continued on page 40

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Arts & Travel

Grade 9 student gains international acclaim as voice of Atomic Betty

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Thornhill actor and singer Tajja Isen, 14, is the voice of Atomic Betty on the animated Teletoon show of the same name.

Although the show is only in its second year, Tajja, a Grade 9 student at Westmount Collegiate, has already won an international award for her portrayal of Atomic Betty, who lives to right the galaxy from wrong. She went to Los Angeles last April to pick up the Young Artist Award for best performance in a voice role.

Created by Atomic Cartoons and co-produced by Toronto's Breakthrough Films & Television and France's Teleimages Kids, the program has been so successful that the merchandising has taken off. Atomic Betty's handlers have licensed everything from watches to baby's furnishings, cake decorations and dolls.

Just released is an *Atomic Betty* CD featuring Tajja's singing. All the songs on the album were written by *Atomic Betty* executive producer Kevin Gillis and his writing partner, Jack Lenz.

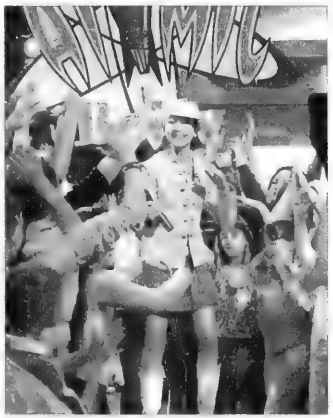
"Tajja Isen is an extremely gifted performer whose talents shine through... and we are incredibly proud to work with this rising young talent," Gillis says.

The producers recognized Tajja's singing ability, and aware that Tajja can promote the show and the show can promote Tajja's budding career, they have encouraged her to come out from behind her character and perform for television audiences as herself. She was recently in England and Atlanta, Ga., singing the *Atomic Betty* theme song on kids' television programs on networks that air the show. *Atomic Betty* airs in 120 countries.

Her next trip is to Washington, D.C., in early 2006 for an interview for XM Radio, a satellite network.

"It is very exciting, I'm definitely honoured that Kevin is taking an interest in bringing me away from the cartoon," Tajja says. "We have plans to do a Tajja album next. We also did two music videos that were a lot of fun. It was my first performing and dancing around on camera, so I was a little nervous. On the first video, for the theme song, I got to perform with a band – live. The first video was done half live and half animation. The second video, for the song *Alien Ball*, is done mostly live. It's a love story between me and an alien puppet from the show called Dingleberry."

A few months ago, Breakthrough and Spank Films followed Tajja around, filming a day in the life of the girl behind the voice of Atomic Betty. The piece will appear in an upcoming *Atomic Betty* DVD.



English kids cheer on Tajja Isen.

Tajja also plays piano and recently wowed a roomful of people at the *Atomic Betty* record release party by singing while playing an Alicia Keys tune. She would like to tour with a band some day.

She says she would like to act again, both on stage and in television and movies. "I would love to do more stage, especially Broadway and London's West End, but there haven't been a lot of opportunities for me yet

I think mostly because of the age barrier. I'm not old enough to do a lot of that stuff."

Tajja lives with her father Jordie, a chiropractor, mother Karen, and siblings Joshua, 10, Nissae, 8, and Koebe, 5. Joshua has done some voiceovers, and Nissae's voice is on *Miss BG* on TVOntario and will be heard on *Captain Flamingo* this February on YTV.

Tajja's past animated shows and specials have included the role of Sister Bear in *Berenstain Bears*, and performances in *Heidi*, *Braceface*, *Franny's Feet*, *Jacob Two Two* and *Zoe Kezako*. For the upcoming *Jane and the Dragon*, produced by Nelvana and based on the British book series, Tajja was required to put on an English accent. At age 11, she played Young Nala onstage in the Toronto production of the *Lion King* and garnered an Equity Emerging Artist Award nomination.

Book is a lesson on life and love

Continued from page 39

"Alice really wanted some food but was scared of having hummus as it was a communal dipping bowl. She wanted to get over this fear. She didn't want to be pristine. She grabbed a wedge of pita, dipped it in and brought it up to her mouth. She imagined cold sores blossoming on her lips."

Her innocence and paranoia always manage to shine through regardless of her efforts.

For instance, as she and Rally, a fellow film-society member, walk home from the party discussing Alice's meeting with Nellcott, a grungy, 23-year-old record-store employee who asked her on a date, she asks, "What's going to happen to me, Rally? Is this guy going to make me pregnant and drop out of university?"

Despite her fears that Nellcott has "had loads of sex, for sure," Alice is hopeful that he will understand that she didn't want to have sex in high school so she could study, get into a good university and avoid "bad blood."

It seems as though Alice is more preoccupied about how others will react to her secret, than with the idea of losing her virginity at all. What is never made clear, however, is why she is so reluctant to give it away.

As Alice progresses through her first semester failing Abnormal Psychology, taking up social smoking, going to parties and dating a guy "your parents would be scared of and your friends already were," it is apparent that she is maturing, but not yet an adult.

Although her experiences force her out of her shell, she still imagines the kind of person she wants to be when she grows up, which suggests she is aware that she is in the developmental stage of becoming a woman.

"The Alice in the future would own high-heeled shoes and bras that fit. She would have plants that would not die. She would have a magazine photo of John Cassavetes with his arm around his wife, Gena Rowlands, on the wall. She would wear her glasses just as often as her contacts and even feel semi-sophisticated about it."

But Fried reminds us, with an anti-climactic ending, that perhaps people shouldn't feel rushed to grow up.

This novel is reminiscent of children who spend their entire adolescence waiting to grow up, and when they finally do, they realize that being an adult is not all that it's cracked up to be.

Eye on Arts

By BILL GLADSTONE

NEW BOOK SPOTLIGHTS OSTRY ART DECO COLLECTION

The Royal Ontario Museum has just published *High Style: Masterworks from the Bernard and Sylvia Ostry Collection in the Royal Ontario Museum*, an exquisite 148-page coffee-table book that highlights major pieces of primarily Art Deco objects and furniture that the Ostrys have donated to the ROM since 1989.

The Ostrys, both of whom have served Canada with long and distinguished public service careers, focused not only on Art Deco but also two other movements – Arts and Crafts, and Art Nouveau – that spanned the late 19th century through the '30s. They collected furniture, art glass, ceramics, silverware, light fixtures and sculpture made by **Auguste Daum**, **Emile Galle**, **Louis Majorelle** and other celebrated artists.

After their first acquisition, a 1920s Art Deco suite of bedroom furniture, their collection grew quickly. Soon **Bernard Ostry**'s various pieces "overwhelmed his living quarters and began to spill over into his office," author **Alastair Duncan** writes, adding that he made the first of four sizable gifts to the ROM "in part, perhaps, to take back his home."

High Style showcases the best of the collection and demonstrates why it has helped to establish the ROM as a premier North American institution in this area of collecting. It is available in bookstores for $49.95.

* * *

Ever Again: Friends of The Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies presents two screenings of the film *Ever Again*, which examines the resurgence of violent anti-Semitism and terrorism that threatens Europe and the West. Besides exposing dangerous Islamic extremism, *Ever Again* examines neo-Nazism in Germany and the sharp rise of anti-Semitism on the political left. The screenings are free to friends and supporters. Cineplex Sheppard Grand, 2 Sheppard Ave. E. Sundays, Jan 15 & 29, 4 p.m. 416-864-9735, ext. 0, or swcmain@pathcom.com

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Former CBC food critic **Tannis Cohen** presents a Healthy and Innovative Food Demonstration at the Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living, Wednesday, Jan. 18, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

• Between 1933 and '41, more than 20,000 Jews fled Nazi Germany and settled in the New York City neighbourhood of Washington Heights. *We Were So Beloved: The German Jews of Washington Heights*, a film by **Manfred Kirchheimer**, profiles the community that has been dubbed "Frankfurt on the Hudson" by those who live there. It is newly out in DVD from First Run Features. www.firstrunfeatures.com

* * *

At the Galleries

• The photos of **Harry Joy**, 89, are on view at System 4 Productions Inc. 70 Wingold Ave., Toronto. Joy's photos (above) focus on the old Jewish neighbourhood in Kensington Market. From Jan. 12. 416-741-5542

• "Deep Skin" is an exhibition of paintings by **Jacquie Jacobs** and **Wynne Paquette**, two female artists who explore the female nude. Elora Centre for the Arts, Jan. 12 to Feb. 18. Opening reception and artists' talk, Thursday, Jan. 12, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. www.eloracentreforthearts.ca

• "Fascination in Colour," an exhibition of paintings in acrylic by artist **Adele Steinberg**, is on view at the Brookbanks Library, 210 Brookbanks Dr. (York Mills and Victoria Park area) until Jan. 31. Reception, Jan. 14. 416-395-5480

• Best of 2005 features work by award winners from the 2005 Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition. The 20 artists show their work at First Canadian Place Gallery, Jan. 16 to Feb. 17, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Oy Vey! Curious George speaks Yiddish

JTA

Curious George is available in Yiddish. A translation of the classic children's book about the playful monkey was put out by Yiddish House, a New York publisher run by the husband and wife team of Celeste Sollod, a veteran of the publishing industry, and Zackary Sholem Berger, a Yiddishist.

The pair published a Yiddish version of Dr. Seuss' *The Cat in the Hat* in 2003; astounded by its success, they decided to follow it up with the original *George* book.

Curious George was created by Hans Rey, whose name appears on the book as H.A. Rey, and his wife, Margret. The Jewish couple fled Paris before the Nazi onslaught with the book's manuscript hidden under their bicycle seats. "It's not just for Yiddish speakers — it's for people who want something fun and Jewish," Sollod said.

George der Naygeriker is available at some Jewish and general bookstores and online at www.yiddishcat.com.

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Advocate fights to re-open breastfeeding clinic

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

A local mother who says a world-renowned expert on breastfeeding taught one of her children how to eat is fighting to re-open one of his Toronto-area clinics that was closed recently.

Last month, North York General Hospital shut down a clinic run by Dr. Jack Newman, a Toronto pediatrician who each year helps more than 1,800 mothers learn how to feed their babies.

The facility was the last in a number of local hospital-based clinics run by Newman. Another one at St. Michael's Hospital was closed last spring.

But Thornhill social worker and mother of three Esther Goldstein said Newman provides a unique and vital service for moms who have been discharged from hospital and are tempted to turn to formula if they run into challenges in breastfeeding their newborns.

She said Ontario hospitals have been told by the province to balance their budgets by March, and many are doing so by eliminating out-patient programs such as breastfeeding clinics.

Newman said that more than 90 per cent of Toronto-area moms start out breastfeeding exclusively, but because of lack of support, most don't continue for the minimum six months recommended as essential by the World Health Organization (WHO).

North York General has hired a lactation consultant to identify mothers who may need support after discharge. But Goldstein believes that, with more than 5,000 births annually at the hospital and additional staff training responsibilities, one full-time consultant can't do enough.

As a pediatrician, Newman can accomplish far more than community-based nurses, lactation consultants or support groups, Goldstein said. He drains breast abscesses, corrects infants' tongue problems, and monitors challenging babies, such as those with Down Syndrome.

She also noted that Newman is a guru at helping women and their babies develop a good latch, adding that he's even helped adoptive mothers breastfeed successfully.

Said Goldstein, "He can latch the unlatchable babies."

She has experienced his unique approach first hand. During one visit years ago, he sat with her and her baby for more than an hour.

"He taught this baby how to eat," she said.

Since taking on his clinics' cause with the media, hospitals and government, she's received hundreds of letters with similar stories.

Dr. Jack Newman

Goldstein said Newman's clinic cost North York General nothing except space.

"They were talking about expanding it," she said, adding she recently met with hospital CEO Bonnie Adamson, but left disappointed.

A hospital spokesperson told *The CJN* that "we are focusing all our resources on our in-patients… Mothers and babies in the community should go elsewhere in the community."

The spokesperson had no information on how many new mothers would require assistance. "Not all women breastfeed… it's a personal choice."

Newman and his clinic partner, lactation consultant Edith Kernerman, are now operating out of the Canadian College of Naturopathic Medicine, across the street from North York General.

Newman said one of the most serious effects of the clinic closures is his diminished capacity to train physicians and other professionals.

Doctors are a frontline resource for mothers, but Newman said their breastfeeding teaching is "appallingly bad." He said pediatricians as a group are "the biggest problem we have with regard to the undermining of breastfeeding."

Goldstein is also frustrated by North York General's focus on in-patient care. Since most babies sleep for their first day and many mothers are discharged after 24 hours, before they begin producing milk, problems will often arise at home, when mothers are alone and tempted by free formula samples, she said.

She added that breastfeeding is a medical necessity, and that high-tech deliveries, short hospital stays, decreased postpartum support and a generation raised on formula all cost babies the healthy foundation they deserve.

Breastfeeding, Goldstein noted, helps prevent three common infant illnesses: ear infections, gastroenteritis and necrotizing enterocolitis, a potentially fatal bowel disease often found in premature infants.

It also protects against SIDS, meningitis, diabetes, Crohn's, as well as some maternal cancers, Goldstein said.

She said the medical journal the *Lancet* has called breastfeeding "the most effective method of disease prevention, ranking far above… vaccinations," and that the WHO estimates increased breastfeeding could save up to 1.5 million babies a year.

"Breastfeeding saves the government a bundle of money," Newman said, yet "too many health professionals… simply say to mothers 'It's not working, forget it'… Sometimes fixing the problem is easy, if you know how."

He and Goldstein both derided what they described as the government's short-sighted economic focus.

"Support for breastfeeding in Ontario is pitiful," New man said, adding that his efforts are being subverted by Ontario's Health Ministry.

"The new funding formula for hospitals is the direct cause of the closure of several clinics in Ontario. In trying to save money, they will end up spending more," he said. "It just won't look like it."

But Health Minister George Smitherman has said a 300-page petition he received from Goldstein calling for the clinics to be reopened carries little weight, since the hospitals themselves decided to close them.

"I respect that you had a passionate connection to a health-care provider, but one person does not a program make," he told participants at a Queen's Park "nurse-in" last month.

Goldstein disagreed, noting that Newman is unique and that since his first hospital-based clinic opened in 1984 at Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children, visitors have come from around the world to study his model, and he lectures around the world.

Newman still bills OHIP for patient visits and never charges for follow-up care – which Goldstein said includes being constantly available by telephone and e-mail – but he fears many mothers won't find their way to his new clinic.

Goldstein is still fighting.

"We need a proper clinic, so that [Newman] can transmit everything he's learned," she said. "This is the health of our kids."

Her campaign is ongoing and she can be reached at savetheclinic@rogers.com.

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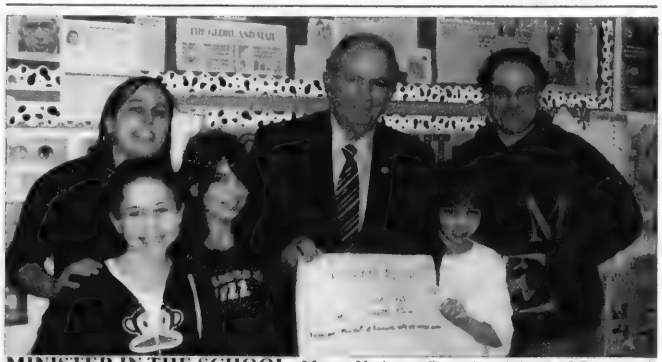

MINISTER IN THE SCHOOL: Monte Kwinter, Ontario minister of Community Safety and Correctional Services, visited Leo Baeck Day School Atkinson recently. He spoke to Grade 5 students about the role of a member of provincial parliament and cabinet minister. With Kwinter, centre, are, from left, Hailey Schenker, Rachel Shore and Shane Mosoff and, behind them, teachers Danielle Ryval and David Martosh.

[Jan Lapedus photo]

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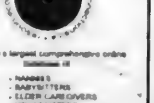

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Cycling trip makes Tour de France look like a jaunt to the mall

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When Henry Gold sets out on his 11,000-kilometre biking journey across much of rural Africa, he doesn't worry much about big game animals like lions, rhinos or leopards.

They're not the beasts you've got to worry about, he said.

No, it's the trucks, cars and SUVs in the continent's bigger cities that pose the greatest danger. In fact, he says, it feels safer riding a bike on the dirt roads of central Africa than it does on the streets of Toronto.

Safer, and certainly more exotic.

Every January for the past four years, Gold has led a motley assortment of biking and outdoor afficionados on a four-month epic trek across Africa. They begin at the pyramids in Giza, outside Cairo, and head south to the beaches of Cape Town, South Africa. It's a trip that makes the Tour de France look like a jaunt to Ontario Place and back.

The Tour d'Afrique expedition takes the riders through Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, Zimbabwe (in the past, not this year), Zambia, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa. The vast majority of the trip takes place on dirt roads, though the group does make it into some of the larger cities.

When he sets out on his fourth cross-Africa tour on Jan. 14, he expects 42 riders from 10 countries to start with him at Giza. Another 15 or 20 will join the group en route – an option he introduced by breaking up the trip into three different sections.

In past years, participants included a 19-year-old youth and his 72-year-old grandmother, as well as a retired couple. Some participants are avid racers, while most are like Gold, recreational cyclists who hope to broaden their horizons and enjoy a life experience like no other.

"People do what they feel," said the Czechoslovakia-born Gold. "It's a tremendous feeling of satisfaction to finish the route."

Gold, an engineer by training and an advocate on transportation issues, said flexibility is built into the voyage. The group stops for one or two days after every five or six to just "look around.

"We give people the opportunity to be tourists" at the "amazing" Victoria Falls, on the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia, as well as to rest and recover, he said.

Henry Gold organizing bikes in southern Africa

Because Western tourists on mountain bikes are quite an unusual sight in Africa, "we stick out like a sore thumb," Gold said.

But local Africans are not only in awe, they are by and large very helpful.

"Local people wave you down and offer you food and drink – even money, if you can believe that."

They also can't understand why anyone would want to ride their bicycles such a long distance in Africa. "They ask, 'Why?'" Gold said.

Good question. His answer: the Africa experience is quite unlike anything else the cyclists have experienced.

"You disconnect from the modern world and see how to live simply and enjoy it," he explained. "People get so high, you'd think they spent their time in a five-star hotel."

Cyclists become "self-reliant, confident. It's a tremendous experience because fitness is so high."

What's more, "It's like reverting to a hunter-gatherer state."

Well, not entirely. They are, after all, riding 21st century contraptions with two support vehicles following them all the way, carrying food, water, the cyclists' personal gear, and a nurse.

It's a realistic concession to the difficulties of cycling through Africa. If you had to load each bike with all that gear, including the tents the group uses most nights, it would weigh the bikes down too much and make the journey too difficult, Gold said.

Participants mostly camp in the bush, though when they travel through the larger cities, they can opt to spend a night in a hotel or camp on hotel grounds.

As to personal hygiene issues, people become less shy about it, "because everybody does it," Gold explained delicately.

The daily range varies from a low of 60 to 70 kilometres to 200 kilometres on a busy day – usually in Botswana, where the terrain is flat and the cyclists enjoy a rear wind.

Last July, Gold introduced another cycling option for those who believe the best hunting and gathering is to be done in Europe's finer restaurants and shops.

That trip follows the route of the Orient Express – the fabled train that begins in Paris and snakes its way through 3,690 kilometres in central and eastern Europe before ending in Istanbul, Turkey.

That eight-week cycling trip is more relaxed than the African adventure, Gold explained. Three days of biking are followed by one day of rest. Participants can leave their tents in the support vehicle and opt instead for a night in a hotel.

Unlike the dirt roads in Africa, cyclists can use more than 1,300 kilometres of bike paths in Germany, Austria, Slovakia and Hungary, where they can pedal along the Danube River.

The first Orient Express voyage was "a trip of discovery," Gold said, particularly for Jewish participants. While in Trier, Germany, he visited a monument to the rabbinic sage Rashi, and in many European towns and cities, old Jewish quarters are available to be explored.

The European tour included visits to thermal spas, sharing the road with horse-drawn carts and visits to picturesque villages.

Gold said his adventure cycling business developed out of an idea he had back in the late 1980s and '90s. At the time, he was a member of an NGO involved in African development issues. It was also the time when interest in mountain biking exploded and he thought rugged mountain bikes could provide a viable means of transportation in Africa. What better way to illustrate biking's advantages than to hold a long distance race, he thought.

The idea lay dormant until he revived it a few years ago. Now, he not only operates a viable adventure tour business, but he does so in an ecology-friendly way that suggest there are other ways to travel than with gas-guzzling, pollution-spewing vehicles. On Tour d'Afrique, you, too, can become a hunter-gatherer – if only for a few months.

Baycrest hockey tourney includes hockey legends

As far as shlepper hockey goes, it can't get much better than this: lacing up the skates with the likes of hockey legends Darryl Sittler, Borje Salming, Doug Gilmour or Dale Hawerchuk.

Four hundred or more players will enjoy "the ultimate hockey experience" beginning March 23 when the inaugural Baycrest Pro-Am Hockey Invitational gets under way at the Ice Gardens Arena at York University.

Billed by Baycrest as a "one of a kind event [and] your opportunity to rub elbows and shoulders with some of the great ones," it's also a fundraiser for Alzheimer's research and care at Baycrest.

The 40 participating teams will choose a teammate from among a glittering assortment of NHL and Maple Leaf greats. Potential draftees include Wendel Clark, Mark Napier, Gilbert Perreault and Danny Gare.

Drafting positions will be determined by the amount of dollars raised by each team. The more they raise, the higher they select. Each team is expected to raise a minimum of $25,000.

The tournament begins with a draft party on Thursday evening, March 23, when players draft and meet the NHL legends. Tournament games will be held on March 24 and 25. Each team will consist of between 10 and 17 players and is guaranteed a minimum of two games.

Geared to recreational players ages 35 and up, the teams will be divided into four groups: 35 and older, 40 and up, 45 and older and 55 and up.

Fundraising tips and support will be provided by the Baycrest Foundation. Teams will be set up with a personalized website to help raise money online from friends, family, business associates and others. If teams fail to raise the minimum $25,000 by 5 p.m. on Wednesday March 22, they won't be allowed to participate.

For more information, check out the Pro-Am's website at www.baycrestproam.com.

Election etiquette

Money Matters

Jay Kelman

The saintly Chafetz Chaim, Rav Yisroel Meir Kagan of Radin (d.1933), in his classic work on proper speech ethics, points out that up to 31 Torah prohibitions can be violated by improper speech.

As a general rule, all speech that reflects negatively on others is prohibited, irrespective of the veracity of such negative statements. Unlike western law, where truth is a valid defence against charges of slander and libel, Jewish law specifically prohibits gossip, even if it is true. Telling a lie just increases the severity of the prohibition.

The only exception is made when such information is needed to prevent harm. In these cases, the protection offered to the individual must give way to the broader public good, and revealing the information is not only allowed but becomes mandatory.

Such laws clearly limit, if not eliminate, a person's right to disparage a competitor's product, and they have huge implications for commercial advertising. With rare exceptions, one would be limited to pointing out the advantages of one's own products as opposed to mentioning the defects in the competition's. In fact, the Talmud declares that people who elevate themselves by degrading others lose their share in the world to come. A sobering thought indeed, as it is so much easier to put down others than to elevate ourselves.

Nowhere is "negative advertising" more pronounced than during an election campaign. Unfortunately, negative campaigning works quite well, all too well in fact, and thus the temptation to use or misuse it is too prevalent. Nonetheless, elections are (or at least should be) about the public good, thereby allowing greater "freedom of speech". While comparing and contrasting one's platform to that of one's rivals is the essence of a good campaign, one must ensure that it is policies and not personalities that are discussed. Making personal accusations not only serves no public good – unless there are criminal allegations, in which case legal authorities should investigate and if necessary publicize – it is next to impossible to substantiate them and, more often than not, they are based on opinion not fact.

Even when comparing policies, care must be taken to compare accurately and completely. While one is under no obligation to reveal all aspects of a given platform – provided the platform is not thus distorted – it would be unethical to compare the pluses of one's own plan against the minuses of another.

Here is one example from the current campaign. The Liberal party has promised substantially more money for child care than the Conservative party; however the Conservative plan will benefit many more parents. A claim by the Liberals that they are pledging twice as much as the Conservatives would be misleading and thus in violation of Jewish election laws – if it did not also include a statement to the effect that their plan while offering more benefits offers it to fewer people. If they, understandably, would not want to highlight this point then they must avoid comparing their plan to their opponent's and should rather advertise that they are pledging $10 billion for child care and refrain from comparisons.

Unsubstantiated claims must be avoided. Claiming that a certain policy is not the Canadian way is a meaningless statement if not supported by concrete evidence. All it does is to unfairly portray one's opponent in a negative light without justification. One must instead say that an independent survey of Canadians found that, for example, 62 per cent of people surveyed are opposed to this particular policy. As a slight variation in wording often elicits different responses, it appears that proper ethical behaviour would require full disclosure of the actual questions used.

Comments to rabbijay@torahinmotion.org

Golda Meir's Chocolate Chip Cookies

2 sticks unsalted butter or pareve margarine
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
1 3/4 cup flour
1 tsp. baking soda
1 tsp. salt
2 eggs
2 tsps. orange juice
1/2 tsp. grated orange zest
12 ozs. chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350°F. Cream together butter and sugars. In a large bowl, sift together flour, baking soda and salt. Gradually add to butter and sugar mixture. Slowly beat in eggs, orange juice and orange zest until mixture is smooth. Stir in chocolate chips.

Drop dough by tablespoons onto a greased baking sheet about 3" apart. Bake for 12-15minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven to a rack to cool.

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Runners get set to start the 29th annual Tiberias Marathon last week. The 42-km race was won by Kenyan John Rotich in 2 hours 15 minutes and 43 seconds, some three minutes short of the record set three years ago by Ethiopian Moges Taya. In addition to the 750 competitors who participated in the main race, another 4,500 people took part in shorter events of 12 kms. [Israel photo]

Winter shmoozing

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

It's winter. The days can be cold. We therefore spend many Canadian months nesting, like bears, and discovering ourselves in a much more intimate and concentrated way than in other seasons.

Me, I like nothing more in the winter than sharing a pot of chai tea with vibrant people and storytellers, and schmoozing about life. The other night I did just that with Eran, 27, an Israeli living in Toronto.

Eran is one of those guys who grips you, and does so with his eyes. They are dark, mystifying and puzzled, eyes you figure have seen a lot, too much. He has the uncanny ability to look into other people's eyes and accurately determine what lies within their soul. He was initially hesitant about reading my eyes, explaining that "a person must be careful with such a gift."

Eran was born in Kiryat Shmonah, Israel's northernmost city and a regular target for Katyusha rockets fired from Lebanon. Nechemia Meyers, a freelancer from the region writing about Kiryat Shmonah, said, "Three of my grandchildren spent much of their early childhood sleeping in an air raid shelter... while under heavy rocket attacks from Lebanon." (jewishreview.org)

Eran's father recently retired as a Kiryat Shmonah fireman, a job that required him to exit the bomb shelter and race to the scene of an explosion. No greater gift exists than to be a child, and the son of a fireman, especially an Israeli fireman. It is empowering to be the son of a valiant man.

The evening wore on and Eran's stories unravelled in full colour. The story I most enjoyed was one he told me matter of factly.

One night, a couple of years ago while still living in Kiryat Shmona, Eran returned home, unlocked the door, entered his apartment and discovered a man inside, running from room to room. Within moments, any movement stopped, both men stood their ground and stared for a pregnant moment in frightened/curious disbelief about the other's presence.

Eran spoke first. "Who are you and what are you doing in my apartment?" he asked. The man replied, "I'm stealing from you." Eran hesitated, giving respect to the irregularity of the retort, and asked him why he would do such a thing? The thief replied that he was sorry, but was poor and hungry with a drug habit.

Eran's response was brilliant, a true act of humanity. He asked the poor fellow if he wouldn't rather sit down and join him for a cup of coffee and sandwiches – and perhaps determine together a wiser solution to his problem.

The embarrassed thief and the fireman's son indeed pulled up a seat and schmoozed for the next couple of hours about Israeli politics, the economy and a plan for the young Jewish fellow to build a more honest and productive life. Eran said he only saw the amiable intruder once after that, during which no mention was made of the bumbled but constructive break-in.

In the freezing winter months, walking can be laborious and driving perilous. The season can make one feel as though he or she is in the middle of a gridlock on the Burlington Bridge – with nowhere to go, and little to do but take in the moment.

It therefore makes sense to stay home, sip a hot cup of tea and just shmooze. Inevitably, we can end up uncovering grand slices of life – like that of an Israeli fireman's son conversing with an inept thief... stories that might evade us on the warm, adventuresome days of summer.

avrum@veahavta.org SUDAN?

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This Week

National

Jewish community must work to develop good relations with Muslims, rabbi says. *Page 5*

Egalitarian minyan helps young Jews reconnect with community. *Page 18*

Hamilton agency helps fight Jewish poverty. *Page 30*

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New six-part series on Auschwitz airs on History Television. *Page 36*

Klezfactor's debut album takes klezmer music in a new direction. *Page 39*

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www.cjnews.com
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010484
Publication Mail Registration #09894

Bush calls Iran a 'grave threat'

By NATHAN GUTTMAN
Jerusalem Post

WASHINGTON — U.S. President George W. Bush warned last week that if Iran goes forward with its nuclear program, it might pose a "grave threat to the security of the world."

Bush, speaking after a meeting with German Chancellor Angela Merkel at the White House, voiced his concern over Iran's decision to pursue uranium enrichment, and he used the same language he used before launching the U.S. attack against Iraq.

Bush stressed that Israel was in the most danger from Iran's nuclear developments. When referring to Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's call to "wipe Israel off the map," Bush said that "the development of a nuclear weapon, it seems to me, would make them a step closer to achieving that objective."

Merkel, in her first visit to the United States since being elected to lead Germany, agreed with the tough line presented by the United States concerning Iran, and joined the call to refer the Iranian nuclear issue to the UN Security Council.

The United States has already gained the support of the European Union for the referral, and Russia has tended to support this move as well. U.S. diplomacy is focused now on China, who is a permanent member of the Security Council and holds the right to veto any decision brought to the forum. Iran supplies China with more than 300,000 barrels of oil a day, making it a valuable contributor to the Chinese economy.

Continued on page 33

German Chancellor Angela Merkel met last Friday with U.S. President George W. Bush at the White House.

[Carrie Devorah photo]

Doctors wean Sharon from respirator

By JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon underwent the successful surgical insertion of a tracheotomy tube Sunday night to help doctors wean him from his respirator.

He has been on the respirator since suffering a massive stroke Jan. 4.

A tracheotomy involves making a small hole in the windpipe and attaching a ventilator to it, rather than to a mask over his face.

Doctors said last week that Sharon might need the procedure because the tube connecting Sharon's windpipe with the respirator would start to cause him damage if it remained in for too long. The minor surgery, which the Hadassah University Medical Center spokesperson said was "part of his treatment plan," was preceded by a computerized tomography (CT) scan.

Sharon remained in critical but stable condition Sunday evening ahead of the surgery, the hospital said in a statement.

Asked whether doctors still hope Sharon will emerge from his coma, the spokesperson said: "Yes."

Doctors said Saturday that Sharon, who has been unconscious since the stroke, had activity on both sides of his brain.

Last week, doctors began weaning him from the sedatives that had kept him in an induced coma to give his brain time to heal from the stroke and three subsequent surgeries. By Saturday, he was only receiving light sedation, but remained unconscious.

40% of Ashkenazim share 'founding mothers'

By JUDY SIEGEL
Jerusalem Post

HAIFA — Although they probably weren't named Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah, four Jewish "founding mothers" who lived in Europe 1,000 years ago have been credited with being the ancestors of nearly half of all Ashkenazi Jews, who constitute the majority of the current Jewish population.

About 3.5 million people – or 40 per cent of Ashkenazi Jews currently alive are descended from these matriarchs, who were among a small group that probably migrated from the Middle East, according to the Israeli researchers. The researchers also provide evidence of shared maternal ancestry between Ashkenazi and non-Ashkenazi (Sephardi and Oriental) Jews.

The studies that led to these findings were performed by Doron Behar as part of his doctoral thesis, under the supervision of Karl Skorecki of the Rappaport Faculty of Medicine and Research Institute at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology and at the Rambam Medical Center in Haifa. Skorecki is best known for his 1997 discovery of genetic evidence indicating that the majority of modern-day Jewish men of the priestly tribe (kohanim) are descendants of a single common male ancestor, consistent with the biblical high priest, Aaron.

Continued on page 34

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Fatah fears electoral strength of Hamas — see page 33

The News in Brief

Canada

New Gem Deadline

TORONTO — A Tel Aviv judge last week once again ordered Boaz Manor, co-founder of failed Toronto hedge fund Portus Alternative Asset Management, to turn in allegedly ill-gotten diamonds within a week or face seven days in jail. KPMG, Portus' receiver, says he bought them with Portus funds after the firm failed. Manor, who fled to Israel after Portus' collapse last year, faces Ontario Securities Commission charges related to the firm, which the RCMP is also probing. KPMG is trying to find $800 million in missing funds and has gone to court in Canada and Israel to force Manor to help. The judge threatened to jail Manor before, but he denied having the gems, the *Globe and Mail* reported.

World

Eight Stabbed at Shul

MOSCOW — A man stabbed eight men at Moscow's downtown Bolshaya Bronnaya Synagogue just before Jan. 11 evening services, when it was full of worshippers. The man, Alexander Koptsev, 20, struck out at random before being pushed to the ground by Yitzhak Kogan, the shul's rabbi, who was stabbed, and his son. One man was in critical condition and four others were in serious condition, officials said. Russians, Israelis, and an American were among the wounded. Witnesses said the man, who looked like a skinhead, shouted, "I came to kill you" as he attacked. The shul is one of Moscow's oldest and the base of Agudas Chasidei Chabad in Russia. Authorities said Koptsev is not a member of any nationalist groups, but he was charged with racially motivated attempted murder.

Zundel Trial Back On

BERLIN — The trial of a Holocaust denier Ernst Zundel will resume Feb. 9 in Germany. A white supremacist who was a leading distributor of neo-Nazi literature in Canada, Zundel faces charges of inciting hate and denying the Holocaust, both crimes in Germany. Canada deported him to his native Germany in March 2005 after he was declared a security threat. His trial was delayed in November after the judge fired one of his lawyers. Zundel says both Canada and Germany are denying him the right to free speech.

Cleric Slurs Jews

LONDON — A Muslim cleric on trial in Britain for inciting hate said Hitler was sent into the world because Jews are blasphemous and dirty. Abu Hamza al-Masri made the comments last Wednesday in a London court. He faces eight charges of soliciting murder against "non-believers," including four against Jews. He's also charged with possessing video and audio recordings he intended to distribute to foment hate. The trial is expected to last at least three weeks. He has pleaded innocent to all charges.

Boycott Apology

OSLO — Norway's finance minister apologized for calling for a boycott of Israeli exports. Israel's embassy in Oslo said it has received an apology for the widely criticized remarks by Kristin Halvorsen, whose Socialist Left party is part of a coalition government. She made the remarks before Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Jan. 4 stroke.

Boys Attacked

PARIS — Two Jewish boys wearing kippot were attacked in front of a train station in a Paris suburb. The National Bureau of Vigilance Against Anti-Semitism said the 11-year-olds were approached by four or five men of African and Arab origin who hurled racial epithets at them before striking one to the ground and holding the other forcefully. A 22-year-old Jewish man tried to intervene and was hit on the head and chest, and grabbed by the throat. The men fled by bus.

Conference Planned

TEHRAN — An Iranian journalists' association is reportedly planning a conference on the Shoah that will be open to those who question it. The conference, being organized by the Association of Islamic Journalists, comes after Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, recently denied the Holocaust in remarks he later said were aimed at galvanizing Muslim youth. "We will invite those who believe in the imposed version as well as all those who have spent years of their lives in the study of documents related to the Holocaust and have come to the conclusion that the history books in schools and universities do not correspond to the truth," a group spokesperson said.

Anti-Semitic Graffiti Found In Jewish Areas

MONTREAL — The Snowdon area of Montreal has been the target of a rash of anti-Semitic graffiti, some of it apparently intended to spread the views of a neo-Nazi group in Russia, since soon after the new year.

The graffiti include large swastikas and the letters "HCO," which is the Cyrillic acronym for NSO (New Free Society), an ultra-nationalist Russian group. In some cases, the Internet address of NSO was also included. The Russian-language site includes a photo of Adolf Hitler, along with excerpts from his book *Mein Kampf*.

The graffiti were found in seven separate locations by the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada, which has asked police and city officials to investigate.

The seven graffiti were located within a radius of few blocks of Montreal's Jewish Community Campus, and close to synagogues and Jewish schools, B'nai Brith said.

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation 38,949 copies
Total paid circulation 38,099 copies
CCNA verified circulation Sept. 7, 2005

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada $35.95, 1 yr. incl. GST
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Postmaster: Please return 29Bs and changes of address to Toronto office.
Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40016684
Publication Mail Registration #09894
*Under current ownership

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.
Canada

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Millennial generation changing the face of Hillel

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

A Hillel-sponsored study that surveyed more than 600 American Jewish students revealed that Jewish youths, referred to as "millennials," are more likely than their parents' generation to be part of an interfaith family, to have a non-Jewish boyfriend or girlfriend and to identify as ethnically Jewish rather than religiously Jewish.

If Hillel is going to succeed in its mission of enriching the lives of more Jewish students on campuses across the continent, the first step is to better understand them and relate to them on their level, said Zac Kaye, the executive director of Hillel of Greater Toronto.

Kaye said the study's findings, which he believes are consistent with the situation in Toronto, have forced organizations like Hillel to change their approach when reaching out to Jewish youth.

"The study says that there are many people in this community that don't see themselves as a part of what we call a traditional community, nor are they accessing Judaism through the normative channels," he said.

"If they are 'doing Jewish,' they are doing it in their own way and they are not making a big fuss about it. They are not looking to institutionalize their Judaism."

In an attempt to address this problem, Hillel has changed its mission statement from "maximizing the number of Jews doing Jewish with other Jews," to "enriching the lives of Jewish undergraduate and graduate students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world."

Hillel has also laid out a five-year plan to double the number of students who have meaningful Jewish experiences.

But before the Jewish campus group can achieve this goal, it is important for it to understand that what millennials find meaningful may differ from what their parents consider a meaningful Jewish experience.

"[The millennials] are looking for meaning, for a sense of what is right, but in their own way, on their own terms. Their spiritual search is outside of the synagogues, the institutions. For them, how we express ourselves inside our institutions, doesn't resonate," he added.

Susannah Dainow, 25, and a University of Toronto graduate, is one of the young Jews that the study talks about.

Although Dainow herself was involved with Hillel as a student in the arts and culture program, she still considers herself as part of the unaffiliated Jewish group.

She said that as a young Jew, she feels her choices are limited when it comes to participating in Jewish events and would often rather take part in non-Jewish events.

"If the choice is between paying to go to a Shabbat dinner whose Jewish content I don't find meaningful, alongside people who are unfriendly and snobby, or doing something non-Jewish that I enjoy in the company of people who treat me well, the latter is going to win out every time.

"It often seems I'm left with a choice of participating through gritted teeth, or trying to find ways of doing it myself, neither of which is ideal in terms of Jewish observance or identity," she said.

Although the study suggests that some Jewish students will take it upon themselves to organize events that speak to them, Jewish institutions should be more willing to embrace the idea that there is no right or wrong way to express Judaism, and to encourage informal gatherings, Kaye said.

"If they are going to do Jewish, they will do it the way that speaks to them. People want to express themselves in a way that they are comfortable with. And that doesn't necessarily mean that they have to turn up at the synagogue or Hillel to do it," he said.

"They are not looking to follow their parents in terms of the familial affiliation with synagogue and Jewish institutions."

The difference in the attitudes of millennials and their parents' can perhaps be attributed to the freedom that Jews enjoy today, Kaye said.

"The openness of society, the challenge of technology, all of these things, the acceptance of Jews in North America, the comfort level

Continued on page 22

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From the editor's desk

Last year, the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute (JPPI), based in Jerusalem, issued its first annual assessment of the condition of worldwide Jewry. It was called *Between Thriving and Declining*.

The title was a clear statement by the sage compilers of the report that they believe the Jewish People stand at a crossroads in shaping and determining our future. One road leads to thriving; the other to decline. "Present trends," the report states, "have the potential for better and for worse."

The report is an impressive, comprehensive cross-tabulation of the inter-related internal and external factors affecting the future of the Jewish people. To achieve a thriving future, the report maps out a broad strategic agenda that contains 18 specific policy directions. The report identifies one of those 18 policy directions as *counteracting demographic decline*.

Two weeks ago in *The CJN*, Leo Davids, professor emeritus of sociology at York University in Toronto, gave a vivid description of that demographic decline.

"What is the big picture concerning Jewish population in the Diaspora? To be brief about it, the numbers are not very encouraging... The population is either static or shrinking."

Davids went on to explain the reasons for the decline, most of which, as he also pointed out, *CJN* readers already know.

The JPPI authors stated that the "demographic trends seem to indicate an unsavoury future, both for major Jewish communities around the world and for Israel. This is true both in absolute numbers and in relative numbers in comparison to potentially hostile groups..."

To counteract the demographic decline – which, it must be remembered, is merely one of 18 broad directions prescribed to achieve a thriving Jewish future – the compilers of the report point to eight "cardinal" policy initiatives.

The third item on the list of eight is "Facilitating in-marriages and promotion of pro-family measures."

Another way of expressing this item is *helping Jewish singles who wish it to find each other*.

This is a subject whose importance cannot be overstated. It expresses the existential Jewish question that, at one time or another, passes through the minds of most Jewish parents: will our grandchildren be Jewish?

In the GTA alone, are some 56,000 Jewish singles, a large number of whom, if not most, it is safe to say, would prefer not to be single.

Judith Weinroth and Jerry Maser

Two Toronto individuals, Jerry Maser and Judith Weinroth, have proposed an ambitious initiative to try to halt and even reverse the decline in Jewish demographics. It is called the Jewish Singles World.

Last month, on Dec. 8, 2005, they spoke to *The CJN* about their project.

The broad outlines of the proposal are to "develop an environment where Jewish singles can meet... No other way can be as attractive, comfortable or fulfilling as regularly meeting and participating with other singles within your own age group."

The distinguishing feature of Jewish Singles World is that it will deliver its message "to the total community of presently unreachable Jews by a mass media advertising campaign, which will be centred upon a unique secure website.

"This is not a dating service," Maser and Weinroth emphasize in their materials. Rather, "it is a community development outreach program. It is entirely based on the interaction of Jewish singles, for the first time being able to tell us what they want to be part of the Jewish community."

The initiative has been endorsed by a broad swath of religious and community-based authorities. But it requires seed money to become launched. They estimate they need $300,000.

And that is the stumbling block. Maser and Weinroth have been unable to find those funds.

There is no doubt that our organized community leadership recognizes the importance of trying to bring Jewish singles together. In the GTA, for example, UJA Federation already underwrites programs such as the Singles Directory and Singles Hotline. Indeed, Jewish singles programs exist in every large community.

But clearly, these programs are not enough. More must be done. Our community leaders must become more actively engaged in finding fresh, imaginative programming for our Jewish singles. The driving force of Jewish singles programming must not be left to the private sector alone. The issue of Jewish demographic decline is too far-reaching in its implications for community leaders to yield the much-needed transformative programming to the for-profit sector alone.

Perhaps they should meet with Maser and Weinroth to hear their ideas. In helping them, they help us all. They would also steer us more hopefully toward the thriving future that the JPPI authors say is ours to create.

MBD

SeeJN

PRAYERS FOR SHARON: People assemble in the synagogue in the Hadassah - Ein Kerem Hospital in Jerusalem to pray for the health of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. [Isranet photo]

Rabbi looks for ways to build bridges with Muslims

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl says he is convinced that the Jewish community must do all it can to develop a relationship with the Islamic community.

The senior rabbi of Beth Tzedec Congregation, Canada's largest synagogue, spoke last month at a major Islamic conference in Toronto and has since taken part in a live question-and-answer session on an Islamic website (www.islamonline.net).

Imam Hamid Slimi of the Toronto-based International Muslims Organization invited Rabbi Frydman-Kohl, whom he had met at a Canadian Jewish Congress-sponsored interfaith dialogue, to speak at the fourth annual Reviving the Islamic Spirit convention.

More than 12,000 North American Muslims attended the event, held at the National Trade Centre Dec. 23 to 25. Rev. Bruce Gregerson of the United Church of Canada spoke at the same session as Rabbi Frydman-Kohl, which was a benefit concert for victims of the October earthquake in Pakistan.

The rabbi said that, prior to the invitation, he and Imam Slimi had already discussed commonalities between the two religions, including "ways that we acknowledge God when we eat."

Religion often identified as source of division and conflict

At the conference, Rabbi Frydman-Kohl said that religion is often identified as a source of division and conflict.

"Yet our essential message is not one of despair, but of hope. There is much that we can learn from each other."

He cautioned young Muslims to distinguish between aspects of secular culture that are "illusionary and problematic," and those that are "worthwhile and good," such as "technological progress, tolerance for difference and the value of democracy as a way to create a civil society."

Rabbi Frydman-Kohl admits to having had some initial hesitation about participating in the conference as the sole rabbi and only kippah-wearer among more than 12,000 Muslim attendees. At first, he knew nothing about the purpose of the conference or even who was organizing it. "But Imam Slimi assured me it was a friendly invitation," he said.

In an interview following his talk, the rabbi told a representative of the Iranian Quran News Agency that Jews and Muslims should see themselves as children of Abraham. "We should look for ways to overcome our differences while remaining true to who we are."

His said his thoughts on Jewish-Muslim dialogue were influenced by Aviezer Ravitzky, an Israeli professor who spoke at Beth Tzedec a few years ago. "In a seminar, he spoke about how religion can be a bridge between these two groups, and not just a point of division and conflict. He made the point that religion can be used as a way of building some of these bridges, and I've looked for ways to do that."

Since the conference, Rabbi Frydman-Kohl's involvement in Jewish-Muslim dialogue seems to have snowballed. "It's interesting how one thing moves into another," he said.

Recently a Turkish Muslim group invited members of his congregation to participate with other faith groups, including Buddhists and Evangelical Christians, in an interfaith dinner at Toronto's Noor Cultural Centre (a Muslim centre located at the former Japanese Cultural Centre).

Feedback from the rabbi's congregants on his recent outreach efforts have tended to be positive, he said. "Congregants have generally been pleased, I think surprised and intrigued [albeit] a little nervous."

Likewise, at the conference, "there was a positive response. People thanked me for coming, and said they appreciated what I had to say."

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, right, shared a podium with Imam Hamid Slimi, centre, and Rev. Bruce Gregerson at the Reviving the Islamic Spirit convention in Toronto last month.

Jewish museum in Poland set to open in 2008

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

In the first project of its kind in Poland, a museum of Polish Jewry will be built in Warsaw, on the site of the Nazi wartime ghetto.

The Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which will be a cultural centre as well, will be opened in the second half of 2008, said Ewa Junczyk-Ziomecka, the deputy director.

In Toronto recently to publicize what she described as the biggest museum project in Europe today, she said it will celebrate the millennium-long Jewish presence in Poland.

Scheduled to be constructed on 13,000 square metres of land adjacent to Warsaw's Holocaust monument, it will offer a multimedia narrative of 1,000 years of Jewish history in Poland.

The museum will be housed in nine galleries, and the newest exhibition technologies will be used to engage visitors. It is expected to draw up to 500,000 visitors annually.

"This is not a Holocaust museum, but a museum of life," said Junczyk-Ziomecka, a 55-year-old former journalist, in an interview.

"It will be a significant statement about the importance of Jews in Poland yesterday and today," noted Peter Jassem, the president of the Polish Jewish Heritage Foundation, which sponsored her presentation at the University of Toronto's Wolfond Centre.

The museum may well alter popular perceptions of Poland. "For many Jews, Poland is a giant cemetery," Junczyk-Ziomecka admitted, referring to the virtual decimation of Polish Jewry during the Nazi occupation.

She understands why most Jews regard Poland as little more than a vast graveyard. "The Germans picked Poland to build most of their concentration camps."

From her perspective, however, Poland's enduring image as a Jewish killing ground is unfair and in need of revision because Poland was a safe haven for Jews for centuries.

"We owe so much to Jews, who participated in the culture, economy and science of Poland. There is no history of Poland without Jews."

Ewa Junczyk-Ziomecka

Jews in prewar Poland comprised 10 per cent of its overall population. The comparable figures in France, Holland and the former Soviet Union were 0.8 per cent, 1.7 per cent and 1.6 per cent, respectively. Apart from Jews, Ukrainians and Germans also formed important minorities in Poland.

Yet until the collapse of the Communist regime in 1990, the rich symbiotic relationship between Jews and Poles was all but unknown and the multicultural nature of Polish society was buried under layers of Polish nationalism.

"There is a lack of knowledge," said Junczyk-Ziomecka, a former Solidarity movement activist who temporarily settled in the United States upon leaving Poland in 1982 after being forbidden to practise journalism. "It would not have been possible to build a museum like this during the Communist period."

Taking the story of Polish Jewry up to the year 2000, the museum will, among other things, electronically reproduce the interior of a synagogue in Pinczow, part of a "Jewish" street in interwar Warsaw and a fragment of a shtetl in the countryside.

A separate gallery will deal with the Holocaust. Nor will the museum shy away from unpleasant aspects of the encounter between Poles and Jews, said Junczyk-Ziomecka.

"It will tell the truth, and anti-Semitism is part of the truth," she acknowledged. "We are not afraid of the truth. We will also cover the dark side."

Hewing to this balanced approach, exhibits will document the 1946 Kielce pogrom, the 1968 state-sponsored anti-Semitic campaign and the emigration of Jews in the aftermath of these events.

On a positive level, the museum will chart the post-Communist revival of Poland's Jewish community, whose current size is estimated to run from 10,000 to 30,000.

Asked whether she agrees with the thesis that Jews and Poles have had a contentious relationship, she replied, "There was not that much love or hate. There was coexistence for 900 years, until the 1930s, when a big wave of anti-Semitism covered Europe."

In her view, anti-Semitism is a problem that transcends Poland's borders. "We hope our museum will explode stereotypes about Jews."

The brainchild of the Jewish Historical Institute Association in Warsaw, the museum was designed by the Finnish firm of Lahdelma & Mahlamaki Architects.

The winning design was drawn from 11 shortlisted entries, including one submitted by Daniel Libeskind, the designer of Berlin's newly inaugurated Holocaust memorial.

The cost of building the museum is expected to be around the $52 to $55 million (US) mark.

The Polish government and the municipality of Warsaw have donated half of the required funds, $26 million. Poland's former president, Aleksander Kwasniewski, was very supportive, she said.

Jewish philanthropists from Poland, Belgium, France and the United States have pledged $7 million. Germany has promised to send additional funds.

"We need at least $17 million to complete the project," she said. "We'd like the Canadian Jewish community to participate."

Asked whether the museum may fall short of its fundraising target, she said, "I can't imagine that." But she conceded that many potential donors have rejected her overtures for assistance.

In the meantime, the museum is looking for Jewish artifacts to register and post on its database. So far, 60,000 artifacts have been registered and posted.

Junczyk-Ziomecka joined the museum as director of development in 2000. Before returning to Poland 13 years ago, she worked for Polish-language newspapers in the United States.

She learned a lot about Polish Jews while living in Detroit and New York. During her sojourn in America, she was a member of Dialog, a group that fosters good relations between Poles, Jews and Ukrainians.

KORN/FERRY INTERNATIONAL

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT (CEO)
Toronto, Ontario

UIA Federations Canada
מועצת הפדרציות היהודיות בקנדה

UIAFC (www.jewishcanada.org) is the national organization of Canadian Jewry, serving as the umbrella body of Canadian Jewish Federations (UJA/CJA) and regional communities for four decades. The Executive Vice President (CEO) is responsible for overseeing all operations and functions of the organization. The CEO reports to a voluntary National Board of Directors, through the lay President.

THE ORGANIZATION
UIAFC is a dynamic and developing organization that serves as the primary bridge for Canadian Jewry's fundraising and charitable activity in Israel and for Jews in need around the world. UIAFC also works to strengthen Canadian Jewish communities; advocates on behalf of Canadian Jews on Israel and other issues of community concern; and develops and enhances Jewish identity, especially among young Jewish Canadians, through Israel-based educational programs such as *birthright israel*.

THE POSITION
The CEO is responsible for planning and strategic development; working closely with Canadian Jewish Federations and regional communities; supporting the organization's lay leadership; promoting fundraising, in support of UIAFC's financial commitment to Israel; managing activities of the professional and support staff in Canada as well as (through the Israel Office Director General) in Israel; maintaining effective relationships with UIAFC's national and international agents and affiliates, and communicating the mission, mandates, and achievements of the organization to Canadian Jews.

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A strong commitment to the mission of the organization as well as an understanding of Jewish communities is required. The candidate requires at least five years' experience at a high level of management in a complex organization, preferably with some time spent as the CEO. The individual ideally will have some combination of business experience and exposure to or working within a not-for-profit organization in a lay or professional role. The individual should be dynamic, innovative, energetic, sociable and well-organized to effectively manage relations with different stakeholder groups. A strong knowledge of Israeli society and the ability to travel domestically and overseas is required.

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Anti-freedom forces must not win

The Canadian flag flew at half mast on Sunday at the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. It is a time-honoured, understated, yet powerfully depictive manner of announcing national mourning. The country had suffered loss. And we had all to notice and pay tribute.

Foreign Affairs officer, Glyn Berry, 59, was killed and three Canadian soldiers were wounded on Sunday when the armoured convoy in which they were riding near Kandahar in Afghanistan was rammed by a car driven by a suicide bomber.

The attacker followed typical suicide bombing protocol: he targeted a crowd of civilians at a bus stop. As the convoy approached, he struck.

Glyn was part of a 250-person reconstruction team that was engaged in humanitarian work around Kandahar. He had dedicated himself, simply, to trying to help ordinary Afghanis restore their lives and rebuild their country. He believed in the importance of his work. He believed in the mission in which Canadians and others are participating in Afghanistan. At least two Afghan civilians were also killed in the attack and 10 other Afghans wounded.

Someone speaking in the name of the Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack, threatening that "these attacks will continue for a long time."

Sunday's incident was the 25th such suicide attack in the past four months in Afghanistan. It suggests a new, worrisome pattern of "fighting" by the anti-coalition forces there. Some experts now fear that the murderous methods and anarchical purposes of the anti-government forces in Iraq will be imported to Afghanistan. However, that should not be surprising since the suicide bombers in Afghanistan and Iraq – and in Gaza and the West Bank for that matter – share the same anti-humanitarian, anti-freedom ideology.

In Iraq, the media has inappropriately called them insurgents. "Insurgents," however, implies that, as individuals opposed to the new civic authority, they would direct their campaign against the new government. But the planners and perpetrators of the suicide attacks in Iraq aim most of their murder at other Iraqis, such as the hundreds of non-military, unarmed civilians, who were attending a funeral last week.

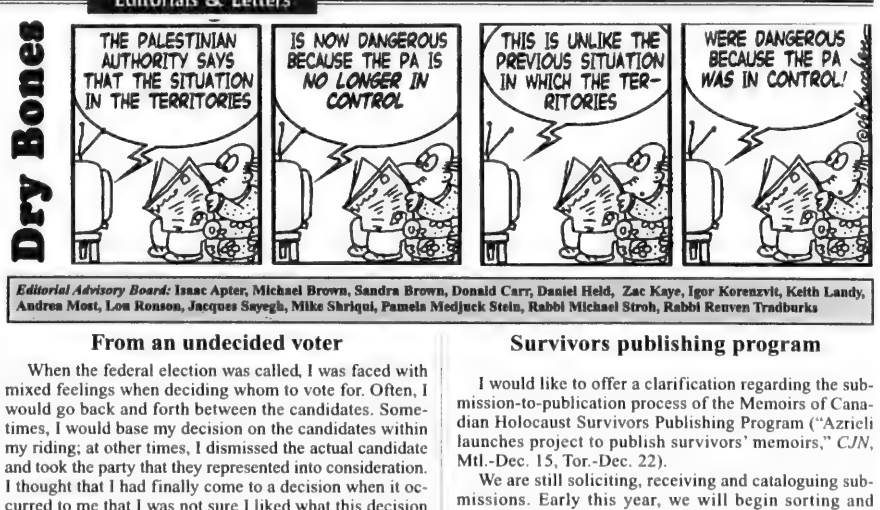
There are some 650 Canadian troops in Afghanistan. Plans are underway to increase the force by more than 1,000 additional soldiers next month. The government announced that the attack on Sunday will not affect its plan to augment the Canadian military presence in Afghanistan.

Nine Canadians have been killed in Afghanistan since 2002. We hope and pray none more, whether Canadians or others helping to build democracy, will lose their lives there. The determination of the government not to yield to the forces opposed to freedom and democracy is commendable.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• The editor of the *United Church Observer* apologized to the Jewish community for printing what he called a "vicious and untrue" letter that was "blatantly anti-Semitic." He cited a "breakdown in communications" as the reason it was published.

Editorials & Letters


Dry Bones
THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY SAYS THAT THE SITUATION IN THE TERRITORIES
IS NOW DANGEROUS BECAUSE THE PA IS NO LONGER IN CONTROL
THIS IS UNLIKE THE PREVIOUS SITUATION IN WHICH THE TERRITORIES
WERE DANGEROUS BECAUSE THE PA WAS IN CONTROL!
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From an undecided voter

When the federal election was called, I was faced with mixed feelings when deciding whom to vote for. Often, I would go back and forth between the candidates. Sometimes, I would base my decision on the candidates within my riding; at other times, I dismissed the actual candidate and took the party that they represented into consideration. I thought that I had finally come to a decision when it occurred to me that I was not sure I liked what this decision was based on. With the onslaught of the attack campaigns in the media, it occurred to me what was bothering me – I was just choosing the least of three evils.

It concerns me that the purpose of campaigning in this election has become solely to try to make the other party look bad. What seems to have been lost in this bickering and schoolyard bullying is what each party will give to Canada. And so I ask the candidates, what will change over the next few years if you are elected? Why should I vote for you? But here's the catch: you have to let the electorate know this, without bashing the other parties. I want to be able to say I voted for a candidate because his or her platform coincided with my view of how Canada should be, and not because I think the candidate will do the least amount of damage while in office.

Rebecca Woods Baum
Toronto

* * *

Raoul Wallenberg Day

Raoul Wallenberg has a special place in the history of the struggle for human rights. During World War II, he left Sweden and went to one of the bloodiest places of the war, to Budapest, Hungary, to save people of different religion, ethnicity and traditions. And he prevailed: as a diplomat in Budapest, he saved 100,000 Jewish lives.

Wallenberg became a symbol of justice and humanity. Raoul Wallenberg Commemorative Day is held annually on Jan. 17. On that day in 1945, he was arrested by agents of the former Soviet Union and disappeared.

In 1956, the Russians stated in the so-called Gromyko memorandum that Wallenberg died in Moscow prison in 1947, of a heart attack. In 2000, they said he had been shot. In a report, the Swedish section of the Swedish-Russian Working Group stated that "the Russian announcement of Raoul Wallenberg's death could only be accepted if it were confirmed beyond any reasonable doubt."

The search for the truth about Wallenberg's fate continues.

Vera Parnes
President
The Raoul Wallenberg International Movement for Humanity
Montreal

* * *

Survivors publishing program

I would like to offer a clarification regarding the submission-to-publication process of the Memoirs of Canadian Holocaust Survivors Publishing Program ("Azrieli launches project to publish survivors' memoirs," *CJN*, Mtl.-Dec. 15, Tor.-Dec. 22).

We are still soliciting, receiving and cataloguing submissions. Early this year, we will begin sorting and reading the submissions we have received and, if necessary, sending them for translation, typing, etc. On the signing of a release form, issued to authors (or their heirs), we will begin the process of light editing and rigorous fact-checking. The critical step of fact-checking will be undertaken by postgraduate academic specialists in the field and is intended, for example, to ensure that historical references are accurately identified.

Following the first round of edits, the manuscripts will be sent for review by the senior editorial team, which includes Concordia University professors Mervin Butovsky, Kurt Jonassohn and Norman Ravvin. Once the final edits have been made, the manuscripts will be sent to the authors (or their heirs) for sign-off with a final release form. Authors or their heirs will be kept abreast of each stage as regularly as possible.

A public launch will be scheduled for each series of volumes published, to which authors and/or their heirs will be invited.

Tamarah Feder
Program Manager
Memoirs of Canadian Holocaust Survivors Publishing Program
The Azrieli Foundation
416-322-5928, e-mail memoirs@azrielifoundation.org

* * *

We should pray for Sharon's health

I have read your various articles regarding Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's health issues. Lately, I have been hearing controversial discussion on whether or not to say tehillim for Sharon. I feel that this matter shouldn't even be thought over. The Torah stresses the idea to not stand by when your fellow Jew is in trouble. Regardless of what people may think of Sharon's actions in Gaza, it is our duty, the duty of the Jewish people, to pray for his health. It is our obligation to embrace the mitzvah of "*al ta'amod al dam reicha*." It is our care for one another that has kept us a strong nation for thousands of years.

Orlee Philips
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Perspectives

How Sharon's successor could succeed

By YOSSI KLEIN HALEVI

When Ehud Olmert was a teenage leader of the right-wing Betar youth movement in the 1950s, he would mark May Day by tearing down the red flag that hung over the trade union building in his northern village of Binyamina. For Olmert and his friends, that flag symbolized what they referred to as "the Vichy government" of Labor Zionism, which had betrayed the land of Israel by twice accepting its partition – first in 1923, when the British created Transjordan, and then in 1947, when the United Nations divided what was left of historic Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. Betar's fantasy map of a once-and-future Israel – incorporating the West Bank and the Kingdom of Jordan – hung on the walls of the clubhouse where Olmert served as "commander," and it was imprinted on the patch of his military-style uniform. At meetings, he would lead his scouts in singing, "Both banks of the Jordan [River], this one is ours and that one too."

While Olmert eventually accepted the loss of Transjordan, he devoted his political career to maintaining Israeli control over the territory won in the 1967 Six Day War. As a Likud Knesset member, he voted against then prime minister Menachem Begin's decision to cede Sinai to Egypt in exchange for peace. And, as mayor of Jerusalem beginning in 1993, he defended Israel's right to govern the united city. His campaign posters invoked the nightmare image of PLO flags hanging from the Old City walls. Asked by a journalist in the 1980s to describe the most important public post he had held, he answered without hesitation, "Commander of the Binyamina branch of Betar."

Yet Olmert, acting prime minister and heir to Ariel Sharon as head of the new centrist Kadima Party, could now become the Israeli leader who presides over the partition of greater Israel – and even of united Jerusalem, an act he would have once considered treason. In the absence of a credible Palestinian partner for peace, Olmert supports unilateral withdrawal from the West Bank. Indeed, he publicly endorsed unilateralism even before Sharon did.

The question Israelis are asking, though, is whether Olmert can handle it. After all, uprooting tens of thousands of ideologically committed settlers from the biblical heartland is likely to be far more politically traumatic than the withdrawal from Gaza. The conventional wisdom here is that, without Sharon, no further unilateral withdrawals are possible. Only Sharon and his military credentials, goes the argument, could have convinced the public to withdraw from most of the West Bank, despite the threat of Palestinian missiles falling on greater Tel Aviv. Olmert, by contrast, enjoys no such credibility: His career in uniform was mostly spent as a reporter for the army newspaper. But Olmert's ideological background affords him advantages that could well make the new leader of Kadima a more effective proponent of withdrawal than skeptics will admit.

For one thing, Olmert – with roots in Revisionist Zionism, the movement that spawned Betar and eventually the Likud – has right-wing *bona fides* that Sharon lacked. Sharon grew up in the Labor movement and related to the territories in pragmatic security terms. For Olmert, though, settling the territories was an historical imperative. "The ideological transformation that Ehud and I and others have made is far more painful than Sharon's," asserts Moshe Amirav, an Olmert friend from his Betar days who was expelled from the Likud for meeting with PLO leaders in the late 1980s. "For us, separating from greater Israel meant losing our dream."

Those ideological credentials give Olmert the self-confidence to confront the settlers and their supporters without the unease that Sharon at times revealed, as when he initially avoided meeting with Gaza settlers to explain his about-face and then failed to defend himself vigorously against settler attacks. Olmert, by contrast, relishes a fight with opponents of withdrawal. Last August, on the first day of the Gaza pullout, Olmert represented the government at a ceremony at Ben-Gurion Airport to welcome 250 new American immigrants, most of them Orthodox and opponents of withdrawal. They were joined by several hundred Israeli family and friends, who were warned by organizers to keep politics out of the event. Yet it was Olmert who turned the event political. Goading his audience, he announced that the Gaza withdrawal was the beginning of a new era for Israel. When the crowd inevitably responded with boos and shouts of "traitor," Olmert smiled and taunted them back. Referring to Israel's demographic crisis, he said, "Maybe if you or a few million of you had come earlier, we wouldn't have had to leave Gaza."

Ehud Olmert

That feistiness is a trait he acquired in Betar. To be a Betar member in 1950s Israel meant being the ultimate iconoclast. In a pioneering society that equated socialism with Zionism, capitalist Betar championed an alternative Zionist history whose heroes were Revisionists and villains were Laborites. Denouncing Israeli relations with Germany as a betrayal of the Jews who died in the Holocaust, Olmert and his friends picketed movie theatres that screened German films and refused to ride in Mercedes taxis. Even their uniforms marked them as anachronisms: Betar leaders wore light-blue ties on their dark blue uniforms – this, in a country whose prime minister went tieless. "We were considered strange, even lunatics, but we were proud of being outcasts," recalls Amirav.

Olmert has always been an in-your-face politician. He began his career in national politics by demanding that Begin resign as head of Herut, the precursor of the Likud, because of his electoral failures – an unprecedented attack on Begin's stature within the party. As the Knesset's youngest member at age 28, he joined with another junior member of parliament, left-wing provocateur Yossi Sarid, to challenge organized crime in soccer. (Olmert himself would later be investigated, and acquitted, on charges of campaign financing irregularities.) Olmert never managed to build a wide political base, notes one Likud activist, because of his patronizing attitude: "Bibi [Benjamin Netanyahu] will agree with whatever you say and then go ahead and do the opposite, but Olmert wants you to know you're wrong."

Speculation about why Olmert changed his lifelong political commitment ranges from family pressures – his wife is a supporter of the left-wing Meretz party, and a daughter is active in a group monitoring Israeli checkpoints in the territories – to his tenure as Jerusalem's mayor. Miki Cohen, one of Olmert's mayoral aides, suggests that Olmert was transformed by his repeated exposure to terrorist attacks. "He went to every terror site as soon as the attack happened and saw the most terrible things," says Cohen. "He also went to most of the funerals, and then visited the families. Over the years, I often heard Revisionist ideas from him. But my sense is that those experiences convinced him that we had to try a different way."

Amirav, who teaches public policy, also sees Olmert's tenure as mayor of Jerusalem as a turning point: "He realized that maintaining control over 200,000 Palestinians endangers Israeli rule in the city. I once asked him if he had a solution for Jerusalem. He said he did, but he wouldn't tell me, because he's afraid to tell himself." Olmert, who, as mayor, supported Jewish settlements in the Jerusalem Arab neighbourhood of Silwan, has gone on record as supporting Israeli withdrawal from Jerusalem's outer Arab neighbourhoods, but not from the Old City. Still, he will allow east Jerusalem Palestinians to vote in the upcoming Palestinian elections, a move opposed by the right as opening the way for repartitioning the city.

Some old comrades are enraged at Olmert for what they perceive as an even greater betrayal of the Revisionist legacy than his support for partition. In a speech last summer to a dovish American group, the Israel Policy Forum, Olmert claimed that Israelis long for peace because "we are tired of fighting, we are tired of being courageous, we are tired of winning, we are tired of defeating our enemies." Notes Yisrael Medad of Jerusalem's Menachem Begin Heritage Center: "It's one thing to endorse partition because of demographic reasons. But to play the defeatist in the middle of a war is a repudiation of everything Revisionist Zionism always stood for."

Indeed, that kind of "defeatist" rhetoric will play into the hands of Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, who, with Sharon's departure, has emerged as Kadima's most formidable rival. Labor's Amir Peretz is a lightweight with no security experience – hardly the man to reassure an anxious nation facing missile attacks from Gaza, periodic shelling from Hezbollah, an unstable West Bank, and an Iranian atomic bomb. In a recent poll, only 9 per cent of Sephardim said they would vote for the Moroccan-born Peretz, Israel's first Sephardi candidate for prime minister.

Netanyahu, a former prime minister, will remind Israelis that, under his tenure, terrorism reached its lowest point over the last decade. And he'll also remind them that he warned the Gaza withdrawal would result in Qassam rockets falling on the coastal city of Ashkelon. At the time, he was mocked by the press as an alarmist. Now, though, rockets have hit the outskirts of Ashkelon. And, if those rocket attacks intensify, Netanyahu's warnings against further unilateral withdrawals will gain even more credibility. Olmert's advantage is that he is the designated heir of one of Israel's most beloved prime ministers. By contrast, Netanyahu is widely resented, even among Likud voters, both for undermining Sharon's authority within the party and for his welfare cutbacks as finance minister. And the backing he has received from the settlers' umbrella group, the Yesha Council, has reinforced his inflexible image.

Still, Olmert faces several challenges. The first is to keep Kadima's politicians from bickering over power and policies, and destroying the party in its infancy. So far, Kadima's leaders are acting with a sense of national responsibility that's rare in Israel's daily politics but typical in times of crisis. Though several Kadima figures see themselves as potential party heads, they've all accepted Olmert's leadership. Shimon Peres, the only Kadima politician who initially wavered in backing Olmert, was shamed by the Israeli press into belatedly endorsing him and has been appointed to the party's second slot.

Olmert's second challenge is to clarify what Kadima stands for. Despite his support for unilateral withdrawal, some Kadima figures, like former Shin Bet head Avi Dichter, openly oppose it. Under Sharon, the party's platform was essentially, "Trust me." Olmert won't be able to get away with Sharon's deliberate ambiguity.

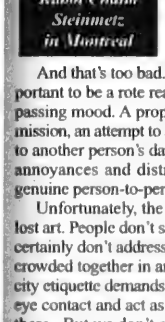
Most of all, Olmert must convince the electorate that he's a hawkish dove – that is, not just flexible on territory but hardline on security. In conveying that message, Olmert will be bolstered by several ex-Revisionists who, like him, have made the journey from right to centre. His most important ally will be Kadima's candidate for foreign minister, Justice Minister Tzipi Livni, who grew up in Betar and comes from a family steeped in Revisionist pathos: engraved on the tombstone of her father – a hero of the pre-state Irgun underground – is the old Revisionist map, including both banks of the Jordan River. The more Olmert can remind Israelis of where he comes from, the more they will trust him when he tries to pry Israel from its bank on the Jordan.

Yossi Klein Halevi is a senior fellow of the Shalem Center in Jerusalem. This article first appeared in The New Republic.

The lost art of hello

It should be easy. The Mishnah says that "one should greet everyone with a pleasant face." At first glance, this seems redundant. Doesn't everyone say hello?

Actually, saying hello is not so simple. We imagine that we greet others properly, but in reality, life can get in the way. When we're rushed or stressed or haven't had our first cup of coffee (my personal weakness), the greeting we give is often meagre and grumpy. Without a good mood, it's hard to give a truly welcoming hello.



Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

And that's too bad. A greeting is too important to be a rote reaction dependent on a passing mood. A proper greeting is a minimission, an attempt to add warmth and cheer to another person's day. You must block out annoyances and distractions, and offer a genuine person-to-person welcome.

Unfortunately, the welcoming hello is a lost art. People don't say hello anymore. We certainly don't address strangers, even when crowded together in an elevator. In fact, big city etiquette demands that we avoid making eye contact and act as if other people aren't there. But we don't only ignore strangers. Even with acquaintances, our greetings are designed to offer a minimum of friendship with a maximum of time efficiency.

Even worse is how we treat proper greetings with contempt. People who offer greetings are often held at a distance, as if they are some sort of threat. I am particularly shocked how people in the service field are often abused. We turn our heads away from Wal-Mart greeters and shout complaints at the secretary before she has a chance to say good morning. Their welcoming hellos are usually ignored.

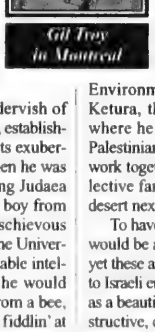
Small towns do things differently. As the sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies noted, big cities develop because they serve the economic and political interests of those who live there. By contrast, in small towns, the community is an end in itself. People are there because they want to live in a community. That's why strangers will receive far more hellos in Thunder Bay than they will in downtown Manhattan. Small towns know what community is all about.

It's time to bring that small-town spirit into our communities, large and small. Isn't it distressing that on Shabbat, in Montreal or Brooklyn or Miami, people don't automatically say "Good Shabbos" to each other in the street? Isn't it wrong for a visitor to enter a synagogue without even one person offering a hello?

I am proud that in my synagogue there is a small cadre of people who perform the lost art of hello. When someone enters, they greet them and make them feel at home. With a few words of conversation, they keep the spirit of community alive. Their mission is simple, yet holy: "Greet everyone with a pleasant face."

Defining the Jewish future on our own terms

On Jan. 10, a ceremony in Jerusalem eloquently repudiated the cartoonish, cops-and-robbers, amoral evenhandedness of Steven Spielberg's *Munich*, while offering a redeeming response to the anti-Zionist epidemic that Palestinian terrorism unleashed: Israeli environmental activist Alon Tal received the $100,000 Charles Bronfman Prize for humanitarian work by a person under 50 that has "contributed significantly to the betterment of the world."



Gil Troy in Montreal

In a nihilistic sea of negativity, the happy alliance of these two visionaries, Alon Tal and Charles Bronfman, demonstrates that Zionist dreams still can come true, elevating the Jewish people and the rest of humanity – just as Theodor Herzl hoped.

Prof. Alon Tal, 45, is a whirling dervish of social action – jump-starting initiatives, establishing institutes and plunging into projects exuberantly. I first met him 30 years ago, when he was the national programmer for the Young Judaea Zionist youth movement. A good old boy from North Carolina, he combined the mischievous charm of the fraternity king he was at the University of North Carolina with the formidable intellect of the Harvard University PhD he would become. He could sweet talk honey from a bee, dazzle drunken louts with his energetic fiddlin' at Rohman's Inn in Shohola, Penn., and generate enough energy to illuminate a city.

In the late 1980s, during our weekly tennis games at Harvard, Alon, fresh from Israeli army heroics and legal studies at Hebrew University, dreamed of creating an Israeli environmentalist infrastructure as sophisticated as America's. Israel had one environmental lawyer. Alon wanted to be the second, buttressed by a science background from Harvard's School of Public Health. In true Herzlian style, Alon returned to Israel and fulfilled his dream. The organization he founded in 1990, when he was 29, Adam Teva V'din, Israel Union for Environmental Defence, has become Israel's premier environmentalist NGO and has inspired many imitators.

Alon's vision was doubly bold. His Zionist dream focused on quality of life, not simply survival. Moreover, he believed pollution, which respects no boundaries, could scare warring neighbours into co-operating. In 1996, Alon founded the Arava Institute for Environmental Studies (AIES) on Kibbutz Ketura, the Young Judaea-affiliated kibbutz where he lived. The AIES invited Jordanians, Palestinians, Israelis and Americans to study and work together on one of the last functioning collective farms, which was making Israel's stark desert next to Jordan bloom.

To have established either of these institutions would be a lifetime achievement for mortal folk, yet these are but two of Alon's many contributions to Israeli environmentalism that showcase Zionism as a beautiful, liberal, unifying, humanizing, constructive, creative force in the Middle East – and the world.

Bronfman's children established a prize in his name to honour their father's 70th birthday. He is another hero with a roster of superhuman achievements. Had he "only" co-founded birthright israel, which just welcomed its 100,000th visitor to Israel on a free 10-day trip for 18- to 26-year-olds – *dayeinu*, that would have been enough. Had he "only" been the mensch that he is, inspiring so many of us with his personal warmth and passionate devotion to the common good that, too, would have been enough.

But birthright israel is one of many Bronfman initiatives that are revolutionizing the modern Jewish conversation about Israel, identity-building, education and youth culture by focusing on effective, life-transforming, values-oriented Jewish journeys without guilt or schmaltz. Unlike other philanthropists, Bronfman likes building pride, not buildings. That his children recognize his investments in a flourishing, affirmative, broad-minded Jewish future and are perpetuating it with the prize – and especially with this year's recipient – demonstrates the vision's infectious timelessness and timeliness.

All this makes the timing of Alon's award so delicious. Lost in the debate over Spielberg's softheadedness on terrorism is the filmmaker's broader disservice to the Jewish people. Spielberg and his screenwriter Tony Kushner only see Jewish death, not Jewish life. *Munich* and *Schindler's List* together define Judaism and Zionism by violence and victimization, without splendour or serenity. Reducing our magnificent, multi-dimensional, life-affirming civilization to surviving the Holocaust and fighting terrorism lets Nazis and Palestinians, not Jews, define Judaism.

I'll take the humanistic values, Zionist dreams, Jewish romanticism, faith in the future, appreciation for the day-to-day beauty of Israeli life, and the impressive nation-building and world-transforming accomplishments of Alon Tal and Charles Bronfman any day.

The politics of Spielberg's *Munich*

Unlike *Schindler's List*, in which Steven Spielberg took great pains to recreate historically accurate sets shot in black and white to mimic documentary footage, his recent film *Munich* makes a point of announcing itself as "inspired" by history rather than true to fact. That effectively shields it from criticism about the veracity of what it portrays. But its fictional construct invites us to ask – as we would of any fictional account – what the structuring of plot and characters convey.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Despite the violent attack that sets it off, *Munich* is not really concerned with Palestinian terrorism, nor with probing the motivation, consequences, and moral implications of terror as tactic. As such, the contention that *Munich* posits moral equivalence between Israel and Palestine is off the mark. Israel is *Munich's* sole focus, and the film, scripted by Tony Kushner, reveals a deep ambivalence.

The ghastly murder of Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games provides the pretext for *Munich* to follow an imagined group of amateurish assassins, secretly charged by the Mossad with avenging the murdered athletes by hunting down and killing the massacre's masterminds. The film depicts former Israeli prime minister Golda Meir's agonized decision to launch the assassination mission as a moral compromise, one she believes necessary to ensure Israel's future by demonstrating the futility of terrorism.

However, although the mission is first framed in terms of deterrence, the line between defence and revenge quickly blurs. Moreover, as the filmmaker and the audience now know, tracking down the Munich terrorists did not bankrupt terrorism as a policy. Indeed, with massive terrorist destruction in major world cities, the reality of suicide bombers as a deliberate tactic provides an ironic comment on Golda's directive. Today, terror not only continues, but has escalated, its tactics increasingly brutal, its scale increasingly massive.

Munich present's Golda's gambit as a moral compromise that costs Israel its soul. Spielberg's assassination team is not based on real people, nor do their intelligence sources and methods conform to the historical record, despite a few enticing details that gesture toward history (such as former prime minister Ehud Barak in drag). Nor are these five imagined assassins fleshed out as real characters. Only the head of the team, Avner, is given a back-story. The other four are merely types – flat, one-dimensional figures intended allegorically.

When we first meet Avner, he is presented as solidly Zionist, unquestioning of his leaders. The film traces the gradual formulation of painful and difficult questions – about the rightness of his mission, the justifiability of violence, and ultimately moral fibre of the country. The other four team members represent different levels of certainly and doubt, stages that Avner passes through or rejects.

When the team first meet, he and Efraim seem well matched. Both feel sure of the purposefulness of their mission. One by one, each of the other men raises moral doubts. Can they be certain they have targeted the right people? Can they justify digressing from their list to kill other purveyors of terror? Can they justify going after the paid female assassin who seduces and murders one of the team? One by one, Spielberg kills off these bearers of moral qualms, implying that Israel has become a country with no place for such men and their humanistic worries. Finally, only Avner and Efraim remain.

Avner, who has argued with his comrades in arms, eventually comes around to their doubts. Only Efraim remains adamant in his belief in violent retribution. Further, of the five assassins, only Efraim is blond and blue-eyed, visually linked with the Aryan ideal, and suggesting that Israel has been so traumatized by the Shoah that it has absorbed something of the perpetrator. Efraim returns to Israel, re-absorbed into its population. By contrast, Avner, tormented by visions of violence, by things he has done and things he fears, takes up permanent residence with his family in Brooklyn, implying that Israel is no place for a man of conscience.

In recent years, a number of Israeli films struggle with the toll of ongoing terror and counterterror on the Israeli psyche. Such films as *Walk on Water* function as cultural vehicles by which a society examines its most compelling and disturbing issues. But *Munich* strikes me differently. There is ultimately something facile about an American Jewish director and American Jewish scriptwriter positing an American city as the only place for Jewish moral thinking.

The Kirshner File

France improves relations with Israel

In what is widely regarded as a significant diplomatic development, France has improved its mercurial relationship with Israel. The shift in French foreign policy can be attributed to several factors: the death of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat in November 2004; Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip in the summer of 2005; the sharp decline of anti-Semitic incidents in France in the past year; and a convergence of interests between Israel and France over Iran's nuclear program, Syria's interference in Lebanon's affairs and Hezbollah's refusal to disarm.

Sheldon Kirshner in Paris

Alluding to these developments on a fence-mending mission to Paris last July, Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said, "Our relations with France are strengthening at every level."

Sharon's upbeat statement was nothing short of remarkable, for he had previously referred to the attacks against French Jews as "the wildest anti-Semitism" and had urged them to immigrate to Israel. Not amused by his comments and unsolicited advice, France declared him *persona non grata*.

In light of these events, Israeli diplomats in Paris agree that a new, hopeful era is now at hand."Relations have hugely improved," said David Kornbluth, the charge d'affaires and acting ambassador at the Israeli embassy. "We're definitely in a different world. It's not the same France. It's much more friendly. We have a better dialogue." His colleague, Barnea Hassid, the press attache, concurred. "France developed ties with the Arab world at Israel's expense. France realizes it was a mistake, and today, it has a balanced approach."

Jacques Huntzinger, France's ambassador to Israel from 2000 to 2003, pointed out that Sharon's meeting with French President Jacques Chirac was definitely a watershed: "They both realized it was in their respective interests to improve relations." To that end, Chirac and Sharon established a joint commission to promote better bilateral relations. Huntzinger, currently an ambassador-at-large, heads the commission.

Israel's unilateral pullout from Gaza, completed this past September, certainly had a positive impact on French perceptions of Israel."Sharon's policy of disengagement made a difference," Kornbluth said. "The French attitude to Sharon just changed. He had been satanized by the media. But now they see that Israel was not just talking about peace. France was astonished."

Jacques Chirac

Huntzinger, who served in Israel during the darkest days of the second Palestinian uprising, said that Sharon's acceptance of a two-state solution left a favourable impression. "After I met Sharon for the first time, I was convinced he had changed."

The passing of Arafat from the scene was also an important indicator. Arafat, who received emergency medical treatment in France after falling seriously ill in Ramallah, was a bone of contention between the two countries. France considered him a pragmatic, though weak, leader who sought an accommodation with Israel. But to Sharon, Arafat was a schemer who fuelled the embers of the intifadah and sought Israel's destruction through demographic means. Commenting on this divergence of views, Huntzinger said that the Palestinians could not publicly disavow the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their former homes, but that the "right of return" was nevertheless an unattainable fantasy.

On the issue of anti-Semitism, Sharon praised France for cracking down on anti-Semitic violence. Kornbluth reiterated that these measures impressed Israel.

He added that Israel appreciates France's efforts, in league with Britain and Germany, to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions and France's denunciation of the Iranian president's recent declarations that Israel should be wiped off the map and that the Holocaust is a myth.

Israel, as well, applauded France's support of United Nations resolution 1559, passed unanimously after the assassination of Lebanon's former prime minister, Rafik Hariri, in February 2005. The resolution, which demands a complete Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon and Hezbollah's disarmament, has yet to be fully implemented. Syria has pulled out its troops and intelligence agents, but Hezbollah, backed by Iran and Syria, refuses to disarm.

France also dealt Hezbollah a blow when its highest administrative court, the Council of State, ordered the operators of a French satellite station to stop broadcasting Hezbollah's television channel, Al-Manar. The court ruled that Al-Manar had violated French laws on racial incitement by broadcasting patently anti-Semitic content.

France and Israel, however, are still at odds over some key issues."We want France to exert more pressure on the Palestinian Authority to dismantle the terrorist infrastructure in the West Bank and Gaza," said Hassid, who was once posted to Israel's consulate in Montreal.

For its part, France has urged Israel to start fulfilling its obligations under the internationally sponsored "road map" peace plan, but Sharon will not do so until the Palestinian leadership deals effectively with terrorism. In addition, France deplores the route of Israel's controversial security barrier, which snakes through the West Bank, and considers Israel's settlements in the territories to be an obstacle to peace. In this connection, Huntzinger said France opposes Israeli unilateral moves. France, too, believes that Israel's retaliation policy is counter-productive.

Huntzinger describes France's historic relationship with Israel in topographical terms. "There have been peaks and valleys – peaks in the 1950s and 1960s and valleys in the 1970s and 1980s."

A colonial power in the Mideast with geopolitical and economic interests in Lebanon, Syria and North Africa, France supported the United Nations 1947 Palestine partition plan.

During the 1950s, as it struggled to shore up its faltering position in Algeria and tried to topple Egypt's Abdel Gamel Nasser, France formed a strategic alliance with Israel. Israel's best friend during the 1950s and early 1960s, France sold weaponry – notably fighter aircraft, helicopters and missiles – to the Jewish state. France also supplied Israel with nuclear technology, while French technicians helped Israel build the Dimona reactor. In 1956, France and Britain colluded with Israel in the invasion of Egypt.

The honeymoon ended abruptly with the eruption of the 1967 Six Day War. Charles de Gaulle, the French president, had warned Israel not to resort to military means to deal with Egypt's sabre-rattling. When Israel attacked Egypt after weeks of hesitation, de Gaulle was furious, and in a major speech, he described Jews as an "elite people, sure of themselves and domineering." He then informed Israel that 50 Mirage jets and a handful of missile boats it had ordered and paid for would not be delivered after all.

David Kornbluth

Spurned by France, Israel embraced the United States as an arms supplier and ally. But during this period, much to France's indignation, Israel smuggled Mirage blueprints and five missile boats out of France. Nor did Israel endear itself to France by blowing up commercial aircraft in Beirut airport in a reprisal raid in December 1969.

France began to reassess its special relations with Israel in the wake of Algeria's independence in 1962. "De Gaulle wanted France to find its traditional place in the Arab world," explained Huntzinger.

De Gaulle's successors, Georges Pompidou and Valery Giscard d'Estaing, continued to distance France from Israel. "The presidency of d'Estaing was probably the most difficult time," Huntzinger acknowledged. "We looked at the Arab world as a source of oil. It was the moment when France took the European leadership on the Palestinian issue. French diplomacy showed no interest in engaging Israel."

France assisted Iraq in building a nuclear reactor and sold the Iraqis Mirage fighters. At the United Nations, France joined the Arab bloc in voting for anti-Israel resolutions. François Mitterrand, elected in 1981, was the first French president to pay an official visit to Israel. But he angered Menachem Begin, the Likud prime minister, by endorsing the concept of Palestinian statehood and by subsequently condemning Israel's 1982 invasion of Lebanon. Chirac, who became president in 1995, irritated Israel by demanding a larger European role in Mideast peacemaking.

Israel's relations with France took a turn for the better during the Oslo peace process, but deteriorated again with the start of the intifadah. In a sign of the times, France's ambassador to Britain, Daniel Bernard, while attending a dinner party, defamed Israel as a "shitty little country." Three years later, the French ambassador to Israel, Gerard Araud, charged that Israelis love to hate France.

Of late, there has been a refreshing absence of polemics as Israel and France have work harder to manage their often contentious relationship and strive to upgrade their $2 billion (US) annual volume of trade.

"We're in a process of reconciliation after years of differences," said Hassid, pithily summing up the current situation.

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Community responds to campaign's focus on young people

UJA Federation Campaign 2006 expected to raise $58 million

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

UJA Federation cites the community's concern for children as one of the major reasons why the recently completed Campaign 2006 was so successful.

Chaired by Honey Sherman and Warren Kimel, with Linda Frum Sokolowski guiding Women's Campaign & Advocacy, Campaign 2006 is on pace to raise a final total of $58 million - an increase of $3 million over last year.

Toronto's UJA Federation campaign ranks as the third largest in North America behind only New York and Chicago.

According to Kimel, the pillars of Campaign 2006 - social justice, rebuilding Israeli lives, and connecting Jewish youth to Jewish life, clearly hit a nerve with donors.

"From the very start of the campaign - when Honey and I would canvass people - they knew that Jewish children were at the core, and they responded with warmth, understanding and compassion from the get-go. Knowing that our Campaign 2006 will alter the course of Jewish lives everywhere, and is contributing to a world of good, gives me a tremendous sense of fulfillment."

"As is often the case in many volunteer-driven organizations - with UJA Federation being no exception - none of us would have been as successful achieving our goals without the seamless dedication and support of the staff of UJA Federation," said Sherman. "What a fulfilling feeling it has been for me to chair Campaign 2006. I am truly the recipient of an indescribable experience."

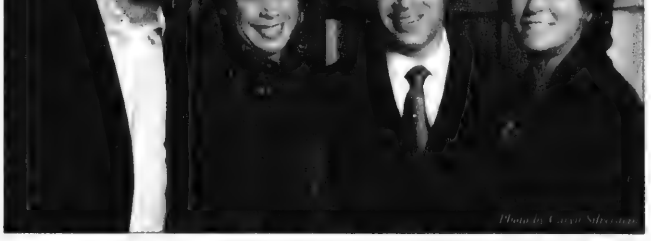
UJA Federation's Women's Campaign & Advocacy reached record results by raising more than $7.7 million through a variety of innovative programs and committed volunteers.

"We had an active, dedicated executive team," says Frum Sokolowski. "Each member came forward with great ideas and input. Our special *Ofek L'Bagrut* program to help the students of Kiryat Moshe (a neighbourhood of Rehovot) touched the hearts of all who heard about their situation. It was exciting to know that there was actually something we could do to help them."

Ofek L'Bagrut was initiated two years ago with funding from UJA Federation to provide private tutorials and hot meals to Ethiopian high school students so they could pass their high school matriculation exams, known in Hebrew as *bagrut*.

"This program inspired women to dig even deeper into their resources to help them out. I myself cry every time I think about the difference Campaign 2006 will make in the lives of these worthy young people," adds Frum Sokolowski.

Campaign 2007 will be chaired by Ariella Rohringer and Fred Waks, with Judith Finer-Freedman as the chair of Women's Campaign & Advocacy.



(l-r) Celebrating at the recent official closing of Campaign 2006 are, Warren Kimel, Chair; Linda Frum Sokolowski, Chair Women's Campaign & Advocacy; Brad Fox, Vice Chair; and Honey Sherman, Chair.

Israel Mission's a Family Affair

Seventy-five Torontonians made their way to Israel recently aboard the 10 day UJA Federation Winter Family Mission. Highlights of the mission included an emotional bar/bat mitzvah program where five children celebrated these milestones atop Masada. (Pictured) Mission participants joined grade two students at the Hadarim School Learning Centre in Kiryat Moshe, where they prepared latkes for Chanukah.

Photo by Michelle Golfman

Ground broken at CHAT's new northern branch

By YONI GOLDSTEIN
UJA Federation

The sound of shovels recently breaking ground at the Lebovic Campus site of the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) ushered in what promises to be a new and exciting era in Jewish education.

The new home of CHAT, located in what will be the Kimel Family Education Building on the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus at Bathurst and Weldrick (north of Rutherford) in the city of Vaughan, is expected to be open for business for the 2007 school year.

The new community campus is an initiative of UJA Federation's Tomorrow Campaign, chaired by Gerald Schwartz and Larry Tanenbaum.

The two-storey CHAT building, which will sit on approximately 158,000 square feet of land, will feature among other facilities 25 classrooms, four science laboratories, a new library and an internal courtyard for school assemblies. At capacity, the site will be able to hold 900 students.

The school and the campus will meet the needs of Canada's fastest growing Jewish population. More than 60,000 Jews currently live in York Region and, according to a study commissioned by UJA Federation, nearly 100,000 Jews will live in the area within 10 years. In addition, the presence of day schools in Jewish neighbourhoods has become an increasingly powerful incentive for parents to select a day school education for their children.

CHAT's new Kimel Family Education Centre, part of the Joseph & Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan, is expected to be ready for the 2007 school year.

"CHAT gives every student an opportunity to do well in his or her own right," says Zev Steinfeld, a Judaic Studies teacher at the school's current Richmond Hill campus. "Whatever a student's skill set, there is a way to be successful at our institution."

A major part of CHAT students' success, according to Steinfeld, is the school's wealth of extra-curricular activities and clubs.

"Our student programs - be they sports teams, charity initiatives or student-organized clubs - help to train our kids to be the next generation of conscious and responsible community leaders. There's always a positive attitude in the air at school, as I'm sure there will be on the Lebovic campus. It makes CHAT the kind of place that people want to be around."

"CHAT is the backbone of Jewish education in our city," says Paul Shaviv, CHAT's Director of Education. "Ultimately, we believe the Lebovic Campus will be an extraordinary centre of Jewish life," he adds. "We believe it will become the most intensive Jewish educational centre in North America."

"All signs suggest that Vaughan and York Region are the areas where the future growth will be for Toronto's Jewish community," explains Miguel Singer, chair of CHAT and UJA's Joint-Management Committee. "This new CHAT campus represents the anchor tenancy for the Tomorrow Campaign initiative. Our partnership with UJA has been the critical link in bringing CHAT's Lebovic Campus project forward. UJA Federation officials recognize the importance of Jewish education and how critical it is to the strength of our Jewish community."

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Ariel Sharon: passionate about the Diaspora

Israeli PM values link with Toronto Jewish community

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

In his political career, and while he was healthy enough to govern the State of Israel, Ariel Sharon was known as a leader who not only understood the importance of a strong relationship with the Diaspora, but did everything he could to achieve that bond.

"The future of the Jewish people and the State of Israel depend on cooperating and tightening links with world Jewish communities. Each one of us shares in the responsibility for the future of the Jewish people," he once said.

Sharon, who has visited Toronto in the past, was sorry that he was unable to come to the city last November for the annual United Jewish Communities General Assembly (GA).

"He apologized to me when he realized he wouldn't be able to attend the GA when I last met with him in October," recalls Julia Koschitzky, the GA's International Chair. "He really wanted to make it; he was very aware of the importance of Toronto's Jewish community and how strong we are in the context of world Jewry. Mr. Sharon has always spoken of the importance of the Diaspora, and, no matter where you came from when he met with you, he would always make you feel as important as an Israeli citizen. He always made the time to meet with Diaspora leaders, no matter what."

Ariel Sharon

"There wasn't a single gathering with the Diaspora's leaders, philanthropists, families and children, where Prime Minister Sharon didn't begin his remarks with the words, 'I'm a Jew,'" says Zeev Bielski, Chairman of the Executive, The Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), UJA Federation's overseas partner.

"He has always been a visionary leader who has devoted his whole life to building the country and protecting it, and sees the young generation as the most important asset and the main resource for the future of the Jewish people and the State of Israel."

In fact, Sharon has long been a passionate supporter of several Jewish Federation-backed initiatives, such as *birthright israel*, MASA and the aliyah of the Falas Mura.

Yossi Tanuri at work with Prime Minister Sharon

Sharon rarely missed a birthright israel mega-event and loved speaking with *birthright* participants from all over the world.

The vision of MASA, Hebrew for *Journey*, is that every year more and more young Jews from around the world will start their lives with a semester or a year in Israel, exploring the land, experiencing its culture while gaining a sense of belonging to Jewish life.

"I have a dream that every Jew will visit Jerusalem at least once," said Sharon. "I believe we must set a goal that every young Jew will live here at least one year during their lifetime."

The aliyah of the Falas Mura is another passion of Sharon's, made possible through the generosity of the Diaspora. The Falas Mura are Ethiopian Jews who converted to Christianity under threat or force. Over the past 10 years, at least 25,000 Falas Mura have immigrated to Israel and, at Sharon's urging, Israel will be bringing 20,000 more to the country by 2007. North American Jewish Federations will be raising $160 million over three years for this initiative.

"I met with Ariel Sharon on more than one occasion and, I must say, each time was a wonderful experience. He was a man of such vision, who was always aware of the importance of a strong bond between Israel and the Diaspora," says Leslie Gales, Past Chair of the Board, UJA Federation. "In fact, he called on the Diaspora to support Israel in whatever way we could after the start of the intifadah in 2001. He lived and breathed Israel; it was as if it was his child."

"Ariel Sharon is among the most beloved prime ministers in the history of the State of Israel and I am fortunate enough to say that he is a dear friend of mine," says Yossi Tanuri, Director General of the UIA Federations Canada Israel Office.

Leslie Gales, Past Chair of the Board, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto recently met with PM Sharon in Israel.

Painful and difficult days

In a recent letter sent to Diaspora leaders, Zeev Bielski, Chairman of the Executive, The Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), offered these insights into Prime Minister Ariel Sharon

Dear Friends and Partners,

In these painful and difficult hours for the State of Israel, the Jewish people in Israel and in Jewish communities throughout the world are united in their prayers for Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's well being, and pray for his speedy recovery.

These hours are difficult and painful for us in the Jewish Agency, as we benefited from a Prime Minister who devoted all his might to the welfare of the Jewish people, who believed in a shared destiny and gave us the support and strength to fulfill our goals.

Many of you were privileged to meet the Prime Minister and came to know the depth of his commitment to the Jewish people and to all Jewish communities. There wasn't a single gathering with the Diaspora's leaders, philanthropists, families with children, where he didn't begin his remarks with the words, "I'm a Jew," and presented his vision for strengthening the Jewish people's ties to the State of Israel and for expanding the common denominator which has bound us together for thousand of years.

Zeev Bielski

During the week of Chanukah, I met the Prime Minister three times. We lit Chanukah candles with MASA youth participants, with EYALIM representatives, pioneer students, who are fulfilling the dream of settling the Negev, and with the youth of ATIDIM, a program for promoting youth in the periphery towards academic studies and towards their integration into the IDF and into Israel society.

It is not a coincidence that these were our meetings with the Prime Minister, a visionary leader, who has devoted his whole life to building the country and protecting it, and sees the young generation as the most important asset and the main resource for the future of the Jewish people and the prosperity of the State of Israel.

The Prime Minister is personally an inspiring figure, who strengthens my faith and my ability to face the challenges confronting the Jewish Agency, and serves as a bridge between the State of Israel, the Israeli Government and the Jewish people in the Diaspora.

Ariel Sharon personifies the generation who fought to establish the State of Israel; Ariel Sharon, who worked to achieve a new dawn of peace, who created new challenges in building the country, developing the Galilee and the Negev, integrating youth into the mission at the center of our country's national agenda and strengthening the ties which bind us to our brethren throughout the world. On behalf of the Jewish people in all of Israel communities, and on behalf of all the warm, wonderful people who wrote us, we pray for the Prime Minister's recovery.

Send your Best Wishes to Prime Minister Sharon

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Greater Toronto Area

Kadis seeks re-election in largest Jewish riding

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

In Canada's most Jewish riding, two of the three major candidates say domestic issues such as gun violence and health care are taking precedence over Canada-Israel relations.

Election 2006

Roughly 42 per cent of the 117,000 residents of Thornhill are Jewish, and there are significant Orthodox pockets in and around the Spring Farm community.

The riding is home to five Jewish day schools, a yeshiva and at least a half-dozen synagogues, with a strong presence from Chabad.

Created in 1996, Thornhill is bounded by Highway 404 in the east, Highway 400 in the west, Steeles Avenue in the south and Rutherford Road and Highway 7 in the north.

Manufacturing and retail are the main employers. Average family income is nearly $80,000 and unemployment is 4.9 per cent.

The incumbent, Liberal Susan Kadis, was one of five Jewish MPs in the last House of Commons. A former public school trustee and City of Vaughan councillor, she won the riding in the June, 2004 election by more than 10,000 votes over Conservative Josh Cooper, who is now executive director of the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee. But Cooper polled more votes (18,125) than the combined totals for the Canadian Alliance and Progressive Conservative candidates in the 2000 election (nearly 13,000).

This time, Kadis, 53, is running against Anthony Reale, a real estate and development consultant who's carrying the Conservative banner; the NDP's Simon Strelchik, a community activist; Green Party hopeful Lloyd Helferty, who polled 1,622 votes in 2004; and student Mark Abramowitz of the Progressive Canadian Party, which stresses fiscal conservatism and progressive social policies.

Kadis says health care and urban violence are issues she hears about from voters. She adds that as chair of the standing committee on the status of women and as associate member of the standing committee on health, human resources and skills development, she's attuned to health and social issues.

In October 2004, Kadis was elected chair of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) Liberal Caucus, and notes that she is playing a strong role in the development of a comprehensive urban strategy to contain violence.

But on Israel, Kadis says she "hasn't encountered too much" concern.

"Most people are aware that I've been a strong voice" on Israel. "I have represented those issues. I said I would stand up and speak out on issues of importance to the Thornhill community and I have. I do what I said I was going to do," she told *The CJN*.

"Not only am I a Jewish Canadian, I also represent a riding with the highest percentage of Jewish people in Canada."

Kadis said she asked Prime Minister Paul Martin "directly" for funds to combat racism and anti-Semitism. The result was an anti-racism program announced last fall that is slated to receive $56 million over five years.

Kadis is certain of where Martin stands on Israel.

Susan Kadis

"I know that our prime minister and our government [are] a friend of Israel. One-hundred percent. There is no doubt in my mind. And I've been working there on the inside. So I've had a unique opportunity to see first-hand what is actually going on."

She also says she was "instrumental" in influencing the recent shift of some of Canada's votes at the United Nations to a more pro-Israel position.

Kadis also cites the Liberals' promises on social programs.

"We have established some groundbreaking partnerships in the area of health care, child care and a new deal for cities. They are unprecedented and bode well for the future."

Anthony Reale

Reale, 59, has also served as a Vaughan city councillor, from 1984 to 1988 and ran unsuccessfully for mayor in 1988. Asked why he wants to return to politics, he doesn't hesitate.

"The Liberal Party and Susan Kadis got me back into this... When I see the things going on in Parliament, I just could not sit there and accept the fact that in a democratic nation like Canada, the incumbent would have the arrogance of feeling such entitlement, without any red face or any shame, to come back and say 'I want you to re-elect me.'

"We cannot send a message that we reward that kind of attitude. Plus, I think that the Conservative Party has a great platform."

Simon Strelchik

Reale says that in about 80 per cent of the riding's Jewish neighbourhoods, Israel is the top issue.

Local Jews "are very upset at the Liberals making these off-the-cuff remarks and suggesting that, 'Yes we're friends of Israel,' but really acting completely differently. It a very strong issue."

The Tories, he says, have a solid record on Israel, and the "political will to affect change" on Canada's Mideast policy.

"I am surely an advocate of that and motivated to see that happen."

Continued on page 15

Reale favours revisiting same-sex marriage issue

Continued from page 14

Reale says same-sex marriage comes up in Orthodox areas of the riding. He supports revisiting the issue, even though it's the law of the land, and he would vote against allowing gays to marry.

"I would not come to your home and say, 'You have a traditional of lighting your menorah on Chanukah and I want you to stop.' It's not right.

"Marriage has been a tradition both in religious circles and in people's lives for generations. If marriage is so important for so many members of our society, let's not undermine it for them."

NDP candidate has long list of community involvement

Strelchik, who's studying politics at Ryerson University, tallies a long list of community involvement. At 13, he was a founding member of Free the Children, the child advocacy group made famous by Craig Kielburger.

Strelchik is also a past chair of the York Region Health Services Youth Advisory Board, and past member of Vaughan council's Youth Advisory Committee. He's been a vocal anti-smoking activist and was chief organizer for three years at his school of the 30 Hour Famine, which raised money for impoverished children.

He's noticed a lot of interest in the riding in child care and curbing hand guns.

"The Liberals have underfunded the police" he says, "but we can't ignore the social context of gun crime. We need more funding for local youth programs."

He says he hasn't encountered too much discussion about Israel.

"Things have settled down a bit for both sides. This is one of the first elections [in which] Israel is not on people's minds."

And he defends his party's policies on the Middle East.

"The NDP is not anything but pro-Israel. We are pro-Israel and pro-peace."

COMING TO THEIR SENSES: Grade 1 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School enjoyed learning about the senses during their "5 Senses Discovery" unit. The students rotated between stations, each based on a different sense. Exploring the "touch" bin, are, from left, Samantha Beallor, Joelle Weinerman and Megan Hoffer.

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Jewish Life

Names and the essence of identity

By RACHAEL TURKIENICZ

Midrashic Moments

The book of Exodus is so named because it depicts Israel's exodus from Egypt. The English names for the books of the Torah relate to the main contents of the book. However, in Hebrew, the books of the Torah are not named based on their content. Rather, the first word of the text designates the name. Shmot (Names), is the first word of the book of Exodus, thus the name of the book in Hebrew is Shmot.

Genesis shows us the importance of names. The first activity that God and Adam do together is name all the creatures. Names complete the being and speak of the essence and destiny of the person. Traditionally, we are very careful about the names we give our children, since the name, the essence and the destiny will combine to form the identity of the child. With all this said, it is not inconsequential that the Hebrew title of the second book of the Torah translates as "Names."

The book begins by stating: "These are the names of the children of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob." The text then lists the names of Jacob's sons. However, we knew this list of names from the end of Genesis. Jacob's entire family has been living in Egypt for some time before Genesis ends. The list of names is not giving us new information, but it is introducing a new message. When we entered Egypt, we had a clear sense of identity. Our names were clearly known.

As the Torah narrative continues, we are told that a new Pharaoh arose in Egypt who did not know Joseph. If Joseph was the second-in-command in Egypt, a man of significant station, how could a new Pharaoh not be aware of him? The midrash and commentaries offer many possible explanations. The Torah continues with a description of the enslavement of the Israelites and the birth of Moses.

What is most interesting about these texts is that no one involved in the story is referred to by name. Moses' parents are identified as a man from Levi and a daughter of Levi. Miriam is referred to as the sister. Moses' adopted mother is referred to as Pharaoh's daughter. The absence of any name is quite striking to the reader and only gets resolved when Moses is named.

The message of the text begins with the list of Jacob's sons and continues through to the birth of Moses. The list of names at the beginning of the book reminds us that when Jacob's children went to Egypt, they had a clear sense of identity. By the time Israel is enslaved, there are no names – there is no clear identity. How did the Israelites get this way? The key lies with Joseph.

Genesis describes the moment of Joseph's promotion from a slave to an Egyptian government official. The promotion included a name change, in which Pharaoh gives Joseph an Egyptian name. It's likely that from then onward, Joseph is referred to in Egypt by his Egyptian name alone. The new Pharaoh who arose in Egypt and did not know Joseph probably knew Joseph the man but not Joseph the name. The new Pharaoh would only have known Joseph, the Egyptian official, by his Egyptian name.

Joseph, the first Jew forced into exile, introduces the dual identity that reflects the Jewish exile reality. Having gone to Egypt with a clear sense of identity, we watch as an element of confusion is introduced that ultimately results in a lack of names – a lost identity.

When Moses is born, and subsequently named, the Torah tells us that the issue will find resolution through this man. Moses will bring the Torah to the Jews, and it is that document that moulds our identity for all time.

The importance of sticking together

By JAY SOLOMON

Guest Voice

Admittedly, I am not the most religious young man the Jewish faith has ever produced.

I don't attend synagogue regularly; typically only going on the High Holy Days. I do not keep kosher, I don't wear a kippah outside of shul, and I always feel a little bit guilty when I drive down the street and see religious Jews walking to services for a holiday.

Despite this, however, I am a vocal supporter of Israel who has published countless articles defending our homeland from the kind of vicious attacks that have become politically correct these days. I am a supporter of many Jewish community organizations, and even sit on the board of directors of Hillel of Greater Toronto.

Though I may not be overly religious, I do feel intrinsically tied to the Jewish community. As such, I never thought I would ever date someone outside my religion. With the Jewish population on the decline globally, the rising anti-Semitism both at home and abroad, and the growing threat our very existence continues to face, I have long felt that interfaith dating was not something our community should promote. Thus, over the years, I have made it my policy not to date non-Jewish women. Yet, this past summer, I found myself doing just that.

If there is one thing about love that I know for sure, it is that love has a way of clouding your thinking; a way of making black and white into grey and right and wrong into "acceptable." As a strong believer in black and white, and right and wrong, this grey area made me uncomfortable. As the relationship progressed, I began to remember why I didn't want to date outside the Jewish religion. Of course, part of the reason was religious differences, like celebrating Chanukah instead of Christmas, and going to shul instead of church. But, for me, the most important reason had more to do with social and cultural differences than anything else.

By that, I do not intend to suggest that the Jewish faith is intolerant of other cultures; certainly it is not. In fact, Israel is the only country in the Middle East that actively supports a plurality of religious and cultural practices. But people who have grown up in the Jewish community understand the challenges our people face, and the norms of our culture, in a way that non-Jews cannot. Jewish people understand what it feels like to have national leaders such as Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad stand up and state that Israel should be "wiped off the map."

Jewish students understand what it feels like when tenured university professors stand behind a podium and claim that Israel is no better than Al Qaeda. Jewish grandchildren, whose grandparents or great-grandparents were incinerated in the Nazi death chambers, understand what genocide is all about. Jewish children, who have to practise terrorism drills at school, understand what it feels like to be afraid. Jews, the world over, understand the occasional placing of a Yiddish word in a sentence that really could have been uttered solely in English.

As Jews, we know our mothers are overprotective; we know chicken soup is not complete without matzah balls; we know Christmas Eve is the best time to go to a movie theater; we know family get-togethers will always produce leftovers; and we know that pronouncing words that begin with "ch" will inevitably result in a certain amount of spitting.

As members of the Jewish community, we are tied together in socially, politically and religiously significant ways. We face the same dangers, celebrate the same joys, mourn the same sorrows and dream the same dreams. This "connection" unites us with a sense of belonging that is irreplaceable.

My friends, who travelled in Europe last summer, tell a story of how they were walking around and happened to come across a community where its inhabitants were having a Shabbat meal. The locals invited my friends off the street to join them for lunch and engage in conversation. It is this kind of connection – a sense that we are all Jews – that reminds me of the importance of sticking together.

Jay Solomon is a respected motivational speaker and freelance writer. In his early 20s, he studies education and political science at York University in Toronto. His website address is www.jaysolomon.ca.

Jewish Life

Movin' on up to the Holy Land

Guest Voice

By ALISON EPSTEIN

The theme song from the 1970s TV show *The Jeffersons* has been playing in the background of my life for weeks. In quiet moments – which are rare in a home shared with a three-year-old and a five-year-old – I hear the words: "Well, we're movin' on up…"

But instead of the Jeffersons, who went "to the East Side, to a deee-luxe apartment in the sky," the Epsteins have moved to a small rental house in Yatzitz, a moshav that is also Israel's UFO capital. (Google it to see what I mean.)

Still, we're movin' on up. That's what aliyah is all about. Not that I expect our standard of living to improve, by any stretch of the imagination. Rather, I expect that life will be much tougher in Israel than it was in polite and prosperous Canada.

The curious – Jew and non-Jew, alike – ask: Why have we done this?

The pioneers' descendant that I am would like to answer: Why not?

I've always been a wandering sort, up for adventure, having moved from Texas to Missouri to Ohio to New York to Canada.

But thrill-seeking and a change of scenery are not the reasons for this move. For starters, I'm not the only one involved. Unlike my previous moves, I have a husband and children now. Secondly, "thrill" is a relative term, especially when you're 43, not 23.

Was it the weather?

No. Frankly, I was relieved to leave the heat and humidity behind in Texas.

So, nu? Why?

It comes down to a belief that Israel is our Jewish home. Furthermore, my husband Stephen and I believe that the most complete expression of Jewish life can only occur while residing in the Land of Israel. Hence, we're movin' on up to a deeper expression and understanding of Judaism.

After so many centuries of hoping for a return to Israel, and davening for it daily, Jews can finally come home. And Jews worldwide should take Hashem up on His promise to give this land to His people.

That's what we did. As we were making the important decision about whether to make aliyah now, I prayed that if Hashem wanted us in Israel, He would make it happen.

Door after door opened for us: as we took action toward making aliyah, our anticipated obstacles failed to live up to our expectations. Our motto became: "You have to put your toe in the water before the sea will part."

No doubt, there will be times when it will feel like the water is up to our nostrils. At those times, we will have hold onto the rope of certainty – that Hashem wants us there – long enough to see the waters part.

And they will.

We hope many others will follow us, in the same way that we followed those who have already moved on up.

Indeed, now is a good time for Jews in Toronto to make aliyah. Despite the valiant efforts of those who battle for equity in education, I doubt Ontario will ever fund non-Catholic religious education – certainly not to the satisfaction of the already-squeezed middle-class.

And now is a good time for Jews in the United States and elsewhere in Canada to make aliyah. Never in history have so many Jews had the ability to run to a place – rather than run from a place – with more than the shirts on their backs.

It's a glory age that will one day end.

History will repeat itself, as it always does. I wish it weren't so, but the signs are already there: in France, in Iran (witness the laughable rhetoric coming from that country's president – laughable, that is, until you remember he leads a country with nuclear ambitions), in Argentina, and even in Montreal.

Anti-Semitism is on the rise again, as if it ever really went away. Though brave people attempt to beat it back, hatred always lurks in darkened corners. Waiting.

I don't know if we'll see horrors like those of the past in our lifetimes, but it's very possible my children and grandchildren will. May their strength be found with Hashem and with our numbers in Israel.

We hope you'll be joining us very soon.

Alison Epstein boarded a Nefesh b'Nefesh flight to Israel on Dec. 27 with husband Stephen and daughters Zoe Noa and Maayan Chana.

Israeli podcasts, Part 1

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Every few weeks, I like to catch up with my friends, a couple of American olim named Harry and Ziva, to find out what life really is like in Israel. Not just politics but maybe Ziva mouthing off about wild Israeli drivers or Harry salivating over which Israeli chocolate bars are best. That's when I feel I'm getting the real pulse of the country.

The funny thing is that although I know all about them, I've never met Ziva or Harry. And they have no idea who I am. The couple runs a podcast from their home in Modin and have developed a following of hundreds (thousands?) of listeners worldwide.

Harry and Ziva produce the View from Here, one of the many podcasts that have sprung up over the past year or so. If you've never listened to a podcast, think of it as a free radio show that you can download and listen to on your computer or an a portable MP3 player such as an iPod. And if you really enjoy a podcast, you can subscribe to it.

As for the quality of podcasts, they can rival the best documentaries you'll hear anywhere. Or they can sound like they were recorded on a kitchen table (because many are.) Today, I'm going to suggest *which* podcasts are worth listening to. As to *how* to listen to them, there are many good sites that will walk you through the process such as wikiHow **[http://tinyurl.com/b2918]**, ilounge **[http://tinyurl.com/79cad]** and Wikipedia. **[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Podcast]**

And now back to my friends Harry and Ziva: They are completely relaxed in front of the microphone. Completely. And that means they don't censor what they say. I find the language always engaging but it certainly is explicit. As they say on their site, "It's a comedy show and is not intended for children, the easily offended or self-hating Jews. Except Woody Allen. He's funny. In an endearing self-deprecating 'I hate my Jewish self' kind of way." **[http://feeds.feedburner.com/TheViewFromHere]**

You won't hear such language uttered by Carol and Charley. They're another American couple who made aliyah but their Israelisms Podcast travels at a more leisurely pace. When I last listened in, they delivered the weather in rhyming verse and then talked at length about the political landscape of Israel after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's stroke. Carol and Charley's tone is gentle, but that doesn't mean they don't award a regular Moron of the Week. Current winner: Rev. Pat Robertson. **[http://www.israelisms.com/]** Every so often, Israelisms goes on the road and broadcast from sites such as the Kotel, Machane Yehuda market or in search of Ramle's best hummus.

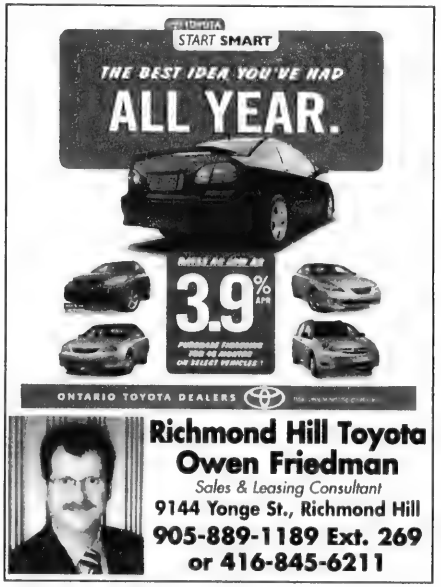
The Lironcast Podcast is light on politics and heavy on tech news, pop culture and science. Liron says, "I'm 23 years old and am podcasting from a small suburb of Tel Aviv… I work in print and fashion design and am an ex-soldier for the Israeli military, with all the good and bad that goes with it. I'm a geek, a nerd, a four-eyes, I like to talk about things like operating systems, comic books, gadgets, science fiction, digital art and sex (occasionally)." Liron is fast talking. She does get her point across, but my head is still spinning. **[http://www.lironbot.com/podcast/]**

If you'd like to practise your Hebrew listening skills, then you can subscribe to Tcast – the Hebrew Technology Podcast. **[http://tcast.blogspot.com/]** Meanwhile, popular culture, music and comics come under the scrutiny of Kitaro's Sideshow. **[http://sideshow.libsyn.com/]**

Want less popular culture and more politics? You'll get plenty from these two podcasts. At Israellycool, Dave tells you what's "inside the mind of an Ozrieli." **[http://www.israellycool.com/blog/Podcasts]** And the Marty Roberts Show starts with politics but can head off in almost any direction, including topics such as anti-Semitism, kashrut and why levels of Jewish tourism to Israel are too low. **[http://tinyurl.com/dydk4]** With five podcasts per week, Marty never seems to be at a loss for words. But to tell you the truth, there really aren't enough hours in the day to listen regularly to all the podcasts I've mentioned. After you sample a few of them, you'll find yourself gravitating to the ones that are original and stimulating – and the others will probably fall by the wayside.

Next time, the best podcasts for listening to Jewish music and learning a bit of Torah.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.



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Assistant Professor, Department of English, University of Toronto, brings her unique perspective to this book review.

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New egalitarian minyan aimed at young Jews

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Kehilat Or Hadash, a new egalitarian minyan based in Toronto, is helping young Jews reconnect with their community, said Daniel Held, one of the organizers.

"People who haven't been engaged in tfillah in a long time are becoming involved again," said Held, 23, who graduated six months ago from York University's Jewish education program and is currently the co-director of student activities at Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Richmond Hill campus.

"People who haven't thought about how they want to do Shabbat, and how they want to be involved in the Jewish community, are doing that again and that is really positive."

Michelle Landy, a 22-year-old law student at Osgood Hall at York, Aaron Kasman, 24, a software developer who graduated from the University of Toronto two years ago, and Held were inspired to start a minyan for young Jews because they wanted to create a community where everyone could feel comfortable.

"I want it to be a comfortable place for those who come in every way we can. Everyone has had experiences where we've been made to feel uncomfortable in minyans in the city," Landy said.

"I think being told the proper way to dress [can make someone uncomfortable]. 'Your skirt's too short, your sleeves are too big,' or the opposite, 'Why are you dressed like such a frummy?' I've gotten both."

While Kasman agreed that making people comfortable is important, he also hoped that other young Jews, who like himself, are looking for ways to do Jewish on their own terms, will be inspired by the minyan.

"I grew up with my family going to Adath Israel [Congregation], and I really had a sense of frustration there, when I grew up with the institution, with the services," he said.

"I really wanted to be part of a community with people who are happy where they are davening and be inspired by their davening and be involved in their davening, and [where they] have a say in their religious community."

Held hopes the minyan will serve as an example to other young Jews that it is important to create your own outlets.

"If we can start with the idea that we can create our own Jewish communities and we can think about how we're going to do Shabbat and how we are going to do Tfillah… that's valuable."

"At some point, we need to mature and to figure out what we want and make our own Jewish experiences," Held said.

"I mean, you can't rely on your mother to make chicken soup every week. At some point, you need to make your own chicken soup."

The next minyan, scheduled for Jan. 28 at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life at U of T, is only the fourth one, but Landy said they've enjoyed an impressive turnout since their first minyan last October.

"We've had over 50 people for every minyan. Anywhere from about 55 to 80 every single time," she said, adding that they do everything they can to make sleeping arrangements for all who want to participate.

"I've had mothers come up to me and say, 'I'm so happy you guys are doing this.'"

While the purpose of Kehilat Or Hadash (congregation of new light) is meant to give people more options when in comes to "doing Jewish," Held said that the minyan isn't about working against shuls, but trying to work with them.

"One of the things that has been really great is that a lot of shuls in the past couple months have spoken to us about what we're doing, why we're doing it and how we get young people engaged in tfillah.

"We learn a lot from the big shuls and the big shuls learn a lot from us, both in terms of what we do do and in terms of what we don't do," he added.

"We make sure that there aren't those people sitting in the back row, telling you what to wear, what to do, how to daven," Landy said.

"If you want to daven at your own pace, there is a comfortable place to do that."

Landy said that the community has been so supportive of the minyan, that people have been donating money to their "kiddush fund," while others have even offered their homes as a place to meet, and Hillel of Greater Toronto has been "bending over backward" to accommodate them in any way they can.

While the response has been very positive, from Jews young and old, Landy said that most important thing is that they are contributing to their community.

"It's a really great feeling to see that we are building our own future, that we are adding something to our community," Landy said.

For more information, e-mail torontominyan@gmail.com.

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Toronto couple celebrates 72 years of marriage

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

In 1934, Sam Kalchman promised his future mother-in-law that he would care for her daughter, Toby, forever.

The couple wed on Jan. 7, 1934, and after 72 years of marriage Sam, 92, has more than fulfilled his promise.

"He has been taking care of me since the day we met. He still does the grocery shopping for me," said Toby, 90.

At 19, Sam knew that the 17-year-old brown-eyed beauty would become his life partner. He first laid eyes on her at his brother's wedding and immediately began courting her.

"I went to the wedding and Sam didn't let go of me. He wouldn't let me spend time with my friends," recalled Toby.

Sam and Toby Kalchman today and, inset, in the mid-1960s. [Kyle Gordon photo]

After the wedding, Toby returned to her small town in Poland, but Sam's persistence did not falter. "He sent me letters every day asking me to live with him. Oy, did he send letters," she said.

Eventually, Toby agreed to move in with Sam and his family. "We fell in love, so we married – why not?" said Toby.

The details of the wedding are still fresh in her mind. Toby vividly remembers the old rabbi holding the marriage licence that her uncle brought to the wedding. "He was the oldest man I had ever seen. He looked 100 years old," said Toby.

"He probably was," Sam added.

The rabbi blessed the newly married couple and said, "I wish that you live as long as I live."

Toby and Sam smiled as they recalled the rabbi's sentiments. "Now, we are almost the same age as the rabbi," Sam said to Toby, chuckling. "But you are still the same beauty that I married."

In November 1948, following Rosh Hashanah, Sam and Toby fled Russia, – where they had lived after leaving Poland – with their two young daughters, Eva and Helen. They moved to Canada and stayed with Toby's sister, Silvia. Sam started pressing dresses in a little shop on Spadina Avenue.

"I was a hard worker. Nothing was too much for me," said Sam.

"It's true," Toby chimed in. "He always worked very hard."

Toby and Sam opened a little grocery store in the east end of Toronto. Toby worked as the cashier and Sam purchased the produce.

"We always worked together, in life and in the store. No one ever gave us anything, so we had to work hard to give our children an education," said Sam.

Then they took a moment to look around the dining room of their Thornhill condo, at the family photos on the walls. "We have come a long way from the time when we only had a little steel bed and a table," said Toby.

They feel fortunate to have three children, six grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. They are proud of their family and eager to boast about their children's academic achievements, reminisce about their grandchildren's weddings, and describe the precious details of the day-to-day life of their great- grandchildren.

'They are real characters'

But their family feels equally blessed to have them. "They are loving parents. The children have always been the number 1 priority," said Marvin Kalchman, Toby and Sam's son.

"They are real characters. My children love spending time with them," said Murray Nightingale, Sam and Toby's grandson.

"My grandfather has never been one to sit around. I am so impressed by his youthfulness," he said.

A few years ago, Nightingale returned home from work to find the family sukkah in pieces. He asked his wife how this happened and she told him that Sam came by to help them collapse the sukkah.

"My grandfather has such incredible strength. At 89, he was taking down a heavy sukkah" said Nightingale. "He's amazing."

Sam and Toby continue to stay active. Toby plays cards with a group of women in the condo and Sam just renewed his diver's licence for another two years.

Harsh realities forced Sharon's hand

According to Reports
By PAUL MICHAELS

Following Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's severe stroke on Jan. 4, a flood of media analysis sought to answer one question: What does Sharon's illness and possible death mean for "the peace process"?

Although Sharon spoke of the hope for eventual peaceful relations with the Palestinians, he was not involved in a peace process for the simple reason that such a process no longer exists. The bilateral negotiations as envisioned in UN Security Council Resolution 242 ("land for peace") collapsed due to the late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's rejection of the Camp David/Taba proposals and the subsequent war of terror against Israelis. The moribund "road map" peace plan has failed to provide a viable alternative.

Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, Arafat's successor, has spoken about his commitment to peace with Israel – even communicating this message in Arabic to his own people, unlike his predecessor. But Abbas has proven to be a totally ineffective leader, too weak to check the chaos and violence roiling within the PA.

Israelis are understandably skeptical that Abbas can be a reliable partner to deliver the peace and security that are the counterpart to Israel's significant territorial concessions. Thus Sharon felt compelled to act alone, to do what was necessary to preserve Israel as both Jewish and democratic while trying to manage the conflict with the Palestinians by reducing points of friction as much as possible. This was the rationale behind Israel's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and parts of the northern West Bank this past summer.

So rather than a "peace process," Sharon was, of necessity, involved in a stabilizing process – conflict management, rather than conflict resolution. This reflects an important strategic shift, which has been acknowledged in some media commentaries.

In "Sharon's departure will change very little" (*Globe and Mail*, Jan. 7) Edward Luttwak, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies, wrote that while negotiations are preferable to unilateral actions, "so long as the President of the Palestinian Authority, Mahmoud Abbas, and his government do not enforce the monopoly of force that any state must have, they cannot be negotiating partners… Mr. Abbas keeps saying that he refuses to risk starting a Palestinian civil war – yet, without one, there can be no real Palestinian state.

"But there can still be further [unilateral] Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank with or without Mr. Sharon because that is what the decisive majority of Israelis demand."

In "What do Israelis do now?" (*Globe and Mail*, Jan. 6) Shira Herzog wrote: "Mr. Sharon both formed and reflected the twin planks of the 'post-Oslo, post-intifadah' Israeli consensus: first, Israel has to significantly reduce the number of Palestinians it controls… and second, because it has no trustworthy Palestinian partners for negotiations to resolve the conflict, Israel must act alone to protect its interests and reduce friction."

In a *New York Times* article ("In the Shadow of Sharon," Jan. 6), Israeli historian Benny Morris wrote: "Many expected, and some feared, that Mr. Sharon would continue with… unilateral steps to separate the two peoples and physically consolidate two separate states. Unilateral, because he believed (as I do) that there was and is no viable Palestinian peace partner. The Palestinian national movement, he believed, still in its deepest, immutable recesses of its heart, aspires to Israel's destruction and replacement by an Arab-majority state, a 'one-state solution.'"

The possibility that Hamas, dedicated to Israel's destruction, could grab a large share of power in the upcoming Palestinian elections only adds to Morris's pessimistic assessment.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Since election 2004, at the United Nations, Canada:

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II. Helped withdraw a seventh resolution from consideration in 2005.

III. Co-sponsored Israel's Nov. 21, 2005 GA resolution to establish an International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.

IV. Focused international attention on human rights violations in Iran through yearly GA resolutions.

V. Called for the replacement of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, which unfairly chastises Israel while overlooking serious human rights violators like Iran, with a Human Rights Council comprised of responsible nations.

Building Regional Ties

Minister Cotler established the *Middle East* - 4, bringing together for the first time the Justice Ministers from Egypt, Israel, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority for an Annual Dialogue on Justice, hosted by Canada.

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- Minister Dryden is currently negotiating an agreement on pensions with Israel.

Canada Helps Palestinians to Help Themselves:

Canada recognizes that peace cannot be achieved without a credible Palestinian partner. That is why in 2005, Prime Minister Martin pledged $36.7 million to the PA to help build their capacity to govern, assist their people and implement their commitments. Israel has welcomed Canada's increased assistance to the Palestinians.

"Israel's Values are Canada's Values"

On November 13th 2005, Prime Minister Paul Martin addressed the General Assembly of Jewish Leaders in Toronto. The following are excerpts from his speech:

...all of us have been alarmed with the number of antisemitic outbursts and outbreaks in our cemeteries, in our synagogues, in our schools. Let me just tell you that when a synagogue, a school, or a cemetery is attacked in Canada, that is an attack on every single one of us.

... increasingly the global community is coming to recognize, each in its own way, what we have understood in Canada for some time now – that Israel's values are Canada's values; shared values of democracy, the rule of law and the protection of human rights.

And these same values are reflected in Israel's understanding of the obligations nations have to one another. Canada has for many years supported Israel's rightful place in the international community, including at the United Nations, and we will continue to press for the kinds of reforms that will eliminate the politicization of the United Nations and its agencies, and in particular the annual, ritual of politicized, anti-Israel resolutions...

Just as we are vigilant within our nations, among them we must stand united against antisemitism in all its forms. When you attack the State of Israel, you attack, what is for so many, the soul of the Jewish people.

For this reason we spoke out immediately, and I do so again here in this room, as I did in the Parliament of Canada, against the reprehensible posturing of the President of Iran. Canada will not stand for such hateful speech, or its implications. Let me be very clear. This threat to Israel's existence; this call for genocide, coupled with Iran's obvious nuclear ambitions is a matter that the world cannot ignore. And Iran must know, in no uncertain terms, that the free nations of the world will not tolerate its intransigence. ..."

Authorized by the official agents for Carolyn Bennett, Maurizio Bevilacqua, Irwin Cotler, Ken Dryden, Raymonde Folco, Marlene Jennings, Susan Kadis, Anita Neville, Stephen Owen, Jim Peterson, Russ Powers, Lucienne Robillard, Mario Silva, Joe Volpe

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On Campus

Hillel-sponsored study looks at 'millennials'

Continued from page 3

that Jews have – all of these factors play into a greater assimilation."

By understanding how the millennial generation is thinking, Jewish institutions can cater to them rather than try to get young Jews to participate on their terms.

Dainow agreed that the institutions should be more open to the non-traditional ways that young Jews are involving themselves in the community.

"The unwillingness of 'establishment Judaism' to include young questioning Jews – or just questioning Jews generally – in its mandates and worldview [is a problem]," she said.

"This unwillingness becomes particularly problematic in terms of early Jewish education and its availability outside of expensive Jewish day schools," she said, adding that information about different Jewish options is not easily accessible.

"I think when people who otherwise would observe in some way don't, it's often because they don't think they have any options outside of standard synagogue or student-group environments that don't work for them. Things like progressive chavurahs and vegan potluck Shabbat groups can be hard to find, and even harder to start up if you don't have the base of interested Jewish friends in the first place," she said.

But Kaye, along with the Hillel houses on campuses all over North America, are dedicated to addressing this issue as best they can.

"The idea is to get people to express themselves Jewishly in whatever way they feel comfortable," Kaye said.

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On Campus

Lewis urges Jews to help tackle crises in Africa

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

Jews and other Canadians should take a leading role in mobilizing the United Nations to act on the various crises in Africa, Stephen Lewis, the UN's special envoy on HIV/AIDS in Africa, told a hushed audience at the University of Toronto last week.

"Africa continues to be betrayed by the international community. This pattern of betrayal has not stopped," said Lewis, whose Jan. 10 talk at U of T's Isabel Bader Theatre was part of Focus Africa, a day-long event organized by Hillel of Greater Toronto in partnership with other campus groups.

[File photo]
Stephen Lewis

He noted that in 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted the UN Millennium Declaration, which outlined global goals to be reached by 2015. They included reducing maternal mortality by 75 per cent, decreasing the mortality rate of children under five by 66 per cent, and beginning to reverse the spread of AIDS and to provide special assistance to children orphaned by the disease.

"None of these things will be achieved on the African continent," Lewis said. "There is rapid and precipitous decline in Africa."

He said that each night in the Gulu district of northern Uganda, 44,000 rural children, known as night commuters, flee their homes and walk eight to 10 kilometres to hide from the Lord's Resistance Army, a rebel group that has already abducted some 20,000 children.

"This is a complete desecration of children. The situation is so appallingly terrible," Lewis said.

The crisis in Uganda has parallels with Rwanda, he said. "It is almost beyond comprehension that Rwanda is being repeated again in Darfur [Sudan] and Uganda."

Lewis then turned his attention to the HIV/AIDS in Africa. "The reality of death in the continent is overwhelming," he said.

Lewis, who visits Africa frequently, recalled moments when the continent felt like a morgue and its hospitals like a version of Dante's hell.

"Africa is in a perilous situation and none of it is necessary," he said, noting there is enough anti-AIDS medication available to help people and there is no reason Africans with HIV/AIDS can't live longer, he added.

A few months ago, Lewis visited a clinic in Rwanda where hundreds of people were receiving treatment.

"Treatment can be done. We know how to do it. We are allowing the continent to die. It is absolutely heartbreaking," he said.

Africa's HIV/AIDS epidemic is taking lives, but it's also creating millions of orphans, and grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings and even children are forced to care for them, Lewis said.

"You can not believe the heroic nature of these people."

Lewis said spending hundreds of billions on war when there is a continent that can be saved for far less is not right.

"We are not responding. I beg you to turn this around," he urged.

Jonathan Laski, media relations director of the Canadian group Students Taking Action Now Darfur (STAND), spoke after Lewis and encouraged the audience to contact candidates in the upcoming federal election and demand action on the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, Sudan, where thousands have been killed and more than two million driven from their homes since a revolt began in early 2003 by non-Arab villagers who accused the Khartoum government of neglect and repression.

"Darfur is an opportunity to heal the world," said Laski, referring to the mitzvah of tikkun olam, the theme of the Focus Africa event.

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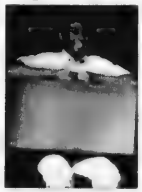

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On Campus

Hotel Rwanda hero calls for action on Darfur

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Repeating the words "never again" is not enough when it comes to preventing genocides like the one now taking place in the Darfur region of Sudan, says the man who inspired the film *Hotel Rwanda*.

"Raise awareness. Write petitions and sign them. Go to the streets and demonstrate," said Paul Rusesabagina, 51, who saved 1,200 Tutsis and moderate Hutus from being slaughtered by Hutu extremists in Rwanda in 1994.

As part of a program organized by Hillel of Greater Toronto called Focus Africa, some 300 people gathered at York University's Founders Assembly Hall last week to hear Rusesabagina speak about his ordeal during the 100-day Rwandan genocide that claimed the lives of more than 800,000 people.

Among the many memories he shared, Rusesabagina recalled the day he, his family and hundreds more sought refuge from the daily massacres by staying at the Mille Collines Hotel in Kigali after most of the United Nations' 2,500 peacekeeping troops in the country had left.

"The international community... had decided to turn their backs and run away. Many people, who had trusted in the United Nations, the international community, had gathered in churches and schools."

He said people were begging the UN peacekeeping troops to take them with them, telling the troops they would be murdered if they were left behind.

For 76 days, Rusesabagina bribed and negotiated with Hutu generals and militants to keep them from murdering the refugees in the Belgian-owned hotel where he was assistant manager.

Paul Rusesabagina

Although Rusesabagina, a Hutu, was given the opportunity to flee the hotel to safety as part of a partial evacuation, he declined, opting to protect those who were forced to stay behind.

He recalled what happened when he heard the news that the 150 refugees at the church just 500 metres from the hotel were all slaughtered.

Rusesabagina said he knew the extremists were going to kill the people in the hotel next if he didn't do something.

With nothing to lose, he confronted Hutu Gen. Augustin Bizimungu as his men approached the hotel and told him to think about the way he wanted to be remembered in the history books.

As the men began charging the hotel, the general told them he would personally kill anyone who murdered a guest of the hotel.

"That day, the general saved our lives," said Rusesabagina, who also spoke last week under Hillel auspices at Concordia University in Montreal, in Vancouver at the University of British Columbia, and in Winnipeg at the University of Manitoba.

Although the Rwandan genocide ended more than 11 years ago, Rusesabagina urged the audience not to ignore the fact that bloodshed in Africa continues to this day.

"Even today people are butchering people [in Africa] and the world stands by, watches, and doesn't do anything," he said.

He noted that "1.8 million people are displaced in Northern Uganda and taken as hostages within their own country and no one talks about that.

"Just recently, I went to Darfur to see what was going on and what I saw in Darfur is exactly what I was seeing in Rwanda between 1990 and 1994. We saw two million people displaced within Darfur, in their own country."

He said entire villages have been destroyed, people are being murdered and wells are being intentionally poisoned to ensure that villagers won't have access to clean water.

"Have we learned from history?" he asked.

He recalled watching news reports of world leaders gathering last January at Auschwitz to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the death camp's liberation, with each speaker uttering the phrase, "Never again."

But the words are meaningless without action, he said.

"There are so many voices calling for help, calling for you. Please, do something."

Correction

In the article "Mae Waese fought for changes in education," (CJN, Jan. 12), a number of names were inadvertently cut off. Waese is survived by her husband, Lou; children Heather and Arnon Glatter, Bradley and Karen Waese, James Waese and Matt; five grandchildren; and sisters and brothers-in-law Marcia Lightman, Barbara and Gerry Raber and Ronnie and Sam Hoffer. She was pre-deceased by brother-in-law Sigmund Lightman. The CJN regrets the error.

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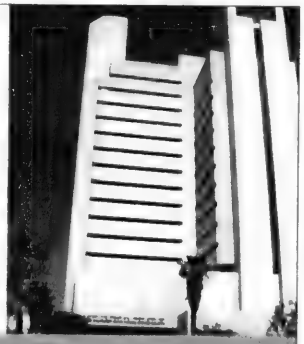

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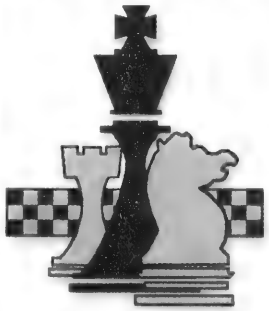

The Canadian Jewish news

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Registration: 12:00-12:45 PM

Entry Fee: $10 Pre-registered, $15 At the Door

Light refreshments provided for participants (nominal charge for spectators)

REGISTRATION FORM FOR CJN CHESS CHALLENGE

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Family Moments

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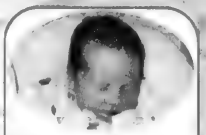
Mazel Tov to...

Mazel tov to Joanne Aronovitz and Jeremy Frank on their recent engagement. With love from the Aronovitz and Frank families.

Jan & Alan Levine, Sharon & Irving Knopman are excited to announce the engagement of Hailey & Kevin. Grandparents Miriam & Shep Gangbar and Lilly Tepperman.

Congratulations Laurie Pila of Toronto, and Howie Horowitz of New York City on their recent engagement.

Mazel tov to Sylvia & Irving Ungerman on your 60th wedding anniversary on Jan. 6. Wishing you good health and much love. Your children and grandchildren.



Granatstein-Szalavetz

Phoebe is proud to announce the arrival of her new baby sister,

Lainey Chelsea

Lainey was born at 6:30 pm on December 20th weighing a healthy 7 lbs., 10 oz. She is warmly welcomed by her parents, Deborah and Howard, her grandparents Enid & Art Sanders of Toronto, Marcia & Dave Szalavetz of Montreal and Susan & Donald Granatstein of Orlando, as well as her many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Lainey, you warm our hearts and we love you.

Mazel tov to Jeff Rubin & Gaylene Solfer who were married in Edmonton on Nov. 19, 2005.

Have a wonderful new year to Lori, Jordy and Harpo Winch! Love Karen and Ziggy Dubin.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos (25 words or less) and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Send all your photos to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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JEWISH MATCH INTERACTIVE DATING

What's New deadlines: Monday, Jan. 23, is the deadline for the Feb. 2 issue and Monday, Feb. 6, is the deadline for the Feb. 16 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com. This week's What's New was done by Carolyn Blackman.

Friday, Jan. 20

ROCKING

Beth Shalom Synagogue presents Rocking, a unique participatory Friday night service with dinner following. Adult members, $30, non-members $36; teens 13-18 $20, children 3-12, $15, under 3 free. Dinner reservations a must. 416-783-6103.

Saturday, Jan. 21

CHILDREN'S READING

Kathy Kacer reads from her book, *Margit: Home Free*, 6:30-8:30, Beth Tzedec Congregation. *Havdalah*, dinner and presentation, $18. Reservations required, 416-781-3514, ext. 31.

ROLE OF THE TORAH

Nishma presents a panel discussion of "The Role of the Torah in the Public Sphere: Contrasting Views on How Torah Should Inform One's Political Outlook," 8 p.m., Barbara Frum Library, 20 Covington Rd. Cost, $10. Call 416-630-0588.

MISSISSAUGA SERVICE

B'nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel, an egalitarian Conservative synagogue, is holding its monthly Shabbat service and kiddush, 10.a.m. Call 905-469-4344.

TORAH LECTURE

David Nitkin gives a Torah lecture on Parshah Shmot, Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 9:30 a.m.

Sunday, Jan. 22

BAGELS & BANTER

The Winchevsky Centre's Bagels & Banter series continues with "Albert Einstein – Insight to the Future," 10:30 a.m., 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Admission, $7. Call 416-789-5502.

BBYO

BBYO is going snow-tubing at Snow Valley Resort. Call 416-398-2004 to register and for information.

WALKING THE BIBLE

Join **Baruch Sienna** for a free lecture exploring the connection between the Bible and the nature of the Land of Israel, 7:30 p.m., Kolel, 151 Eglinton Ave. W. Call 416-485-7007, ext. 321, www.kolel.org.

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Walk and Talk Etc. for singles 50+ is meeting at the information desk at the Great Hall of Union Station, 9:30 a.m. Optional brunch afterward. Arrive early to register, $30 fee semi-annually. To pre-register, e-mail walkandtalketc@ hotmail.com

BIOETHICS

Norma Baumel Joseph, Concordia University, speaks on "Life an Death – the Bioethics of **Rabbi Moshe Feinstein**," 8 p.m., Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, 416-789-3213, www.shomayim.org. Members $10, non-members $15.

Monday, Jan. 23

A BUDDHIST JEW

Rabbi Akiva Tatz and **David Gottlieb** discuss their book *Letters to a Buddhist Jew*, 8 p.m., Minsker Shul, 10 St. Andrew St. Presented by Jews for Judaism, admission free. Call 905-761-0040.

ADHD ASSESSMENT

A clinical psychologist talks about issues related to attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in children and adolescents, 7-8:30 p.m., CCAS, 30 Drewry Ave. To register and for information, call 416-229-1680.

Tuesday, Jan. 24

KAFKA

Holy Blossom Temple presents a lecture by **Ralph Wintrob** on "Kafka: A Life in Trial," 7:30 p.m. Call **Anne**, 416-789-3291, ext. 235.

Continued on page 27

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MUSICA BETH TIKVAH
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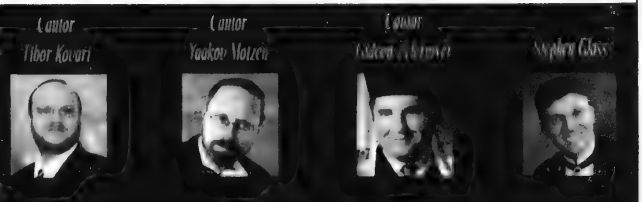
Wednesday, February 15, 2006 at 8:00pm



An unforgettable evening of cantorial excellence featuring a star-studded line-up.

Beth Tikvah's gifted tenor **Cantor Tibor Kovari**, internationally acclaimed **Cantor Yaakov Motzen**, and rising star **Cantor Gideon Zelermyer** of Montreal's Shaar Hashomayim. Accompaniment by celebrated conductor and pianist **Stephen Glass**.

TICKETS & INFORMATION: (416) 221-3433 ext. 354
Reserved Seating $50 / General Admission $35 / Senior $30 / Student $20

2006 Prestige Concert Series

What's New

Continued from page 26

THE EQ EDGE

Steven J. Stein, co-author of *The EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and Your Success*, speaks at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 8 p.m. No charge.

YOUTH GROUP

The Winchevsky Centre is launching its 2006 youth-group season with a hands-on workshop on activism, "Getting Active," 7 p.m., at the centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Admission, $5, includes pizza and pop. RSVP **Jesslyn Bartman** at jesslyn2@hotmail.com or call 416-987-0375.

WHICH HALF IS JEWISH?

Free introductory evening for children with one Jewish and one non-Jewish parent explores issues of identity, community and family, 7:30-9:30 p.m., U of T Hillel: The Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. Call Kolel, 416-485-7007, ext. 0, or www.kolel.org.

REVIEW SERIES

Adath Israel Sisterhood's book- and film-review series continues with a review of the book *Small Island* by **Andrea Levy**, 8 p.m.

Wednesday, Jan. 25

VOLUNTEER IN ISRAEL

Find out about volunteering with Sar-El on an Israeli army supply base, 7:30 p.m., 788 Marlee Ave. Call 416-781-6089 or www. serve.com/CVI.

PEACE AND SECURITY

Canada-Israel Committee and UIA Federations Canada present **Isabel Kershner**, senior editor, the *Jerusalem Report*, who will talk on "Drawing the Borders of Peace and Security," 8 p.m. Call 416-489-8889.

PROSTATE CANCER

Irene Lange-Mechlen, a radiation therapist at Toronto-Sunnybrook Regional Cancer Centre, speaks on the topic "Prostate Cancer Is Not Just a Man's Disease, 7 p.m., Toronto Botanical Garden (Floral Hall), 777 Lawrence Ave. E. at Leslie. Call 416-932-8820.

BOOK REVIEW

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation adult education presents a book review of *In the Image* by **Gita Rotenberg**, 7:30 p.m. Location to be announced. 416-789-3213 or www.shomayim.org.

JWI MEETING

Jewish Women International, Markham-Unionville chapter, is holding its monthly meeting. New members welcome. Call **Gail**, 905-294-9706.

Thursday, Jan. 26

LEARNING DISABILITIES

Register for a session to learn about students with learning disabilities applying to university, 7-9 p,m., North York Civic Centre, 5100 Yonge St., Committee Room 2. Call Learning Disabilities Association, 416-229-1680.

OTHER NEWS

SUPPORT GROUP

Support group at Baycrest Centre for those caring for a spouse with dementia. Six weekly sessions, Tuesdays, 10-11:30 a.m. beginning Feb. 7. No cost to join. Call **Bev Adler**, 416-785-2500, ext. 2308, or **Arlene Consky**, ext. 3199.

FRIENDLY VISITING

Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living's Friendly Visiting Program requires female volunteers to visit isolated seniors in the Bathurst/Steeles area. A commitment of one to two hours weekly or every two weeks required. Call **Isabelle**, 416-225-2112, ext. 134.

NCJW PROGRAMS

National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section, presents "Infant Massage," which benefits heart rate, breathing and digestion. Sessions held on Wednesdays, 10-11 a.m. beginning February, Council House. Cost, $90.

Join a group of volunteers who are quilting for people touched by cancer, Thursday evenings 7-9 p.m. Quilting experience not necessary. For information on both programs, call 416-633-5100.

DARCHEI NOAM

Two evenings of teaching on the deeper meanings in Shabbat liturgy that will enhance your Shabbat experience, Jan. 22 and Jan. 29, 15 Hove St. Free, and open to the public. Call 416-638-4783.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service, 4600 Bathurst St, 416-638-7800. Contact **Diane** at ext. 246 to inquire about the following programs:

Parenting Children With Challenging Behaviour: A six-week group for parents of children who frequently demonstrate difficult behaviours such as temper tantrums, talking back, not following rules and poor emotional control. Mondays, begins Jan 30, 6:30 p.m. 4600 Bathurst.

PALS Social Skills Groups: Eight-week groups for children who have difficulty making or keeping friends. Children will develop skills and enjoy a positive social experience. Parent group will focus on understanding and enhancing social skills. Ages 6-8, begins Tuesdays, Feb. 14. Ages 9-11, begins Thursdays, Feb. 9.

Adolescent Social Skills Groups: These eight-week groups provide teens an opportunity to develop and enhance social skills, increase self- esteem and make new friends. Ages 12-14, Tuesdays, begins Feb 21. Ages 14-17, Wednesdays, begins Feb 15.

FOR SENIORS

The Association of Jewish Seniors general meeting takes place on Thursday, Jan. 26, 1:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. **Robyn Young** speaks on "Active Living for Older Adults." Call **Tammy Parker**, 416-635-2860.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Beginners Hebrew, Wednesdays 12-1:30 p.m. $25/month; bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Call 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. Jan. 19, sing-along. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Spend Thursday, Jan. 19, at the Betel Centre with "Stories from the Heart," 12-1 p.m.; "Fun with Yiddish," 1-2:30 p.m.; and "Nafty Naftolin's Komedy Kabaret," 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Special Computer Event, Wednesday, Jan. 25, 9-11 a.m. For info and registration on courses and labs, call ext 128.

Winter festival, Wednesday, Jan. 25, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Inter-generational event. Includes vendors and entertainment. Free.

Cherry Blossom Festival trip. Plan for spring in Washington, D.C. March 26-29. Members $500, non-members $600.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

"Secrets to Youthful Aging," an eight-week series with **Phil Feilds**. Mondays, 10-11:30 a.m., beginning Jan. 16.

Next meeting of Wagman advisory group will be held in the Wolfe Boardroom, Jan. 30, noon-1:30 p.m. Includes lunch. RSVP at service desk or call **Mara**.

The Terraces/Wagman Choir meets Thursdays, 1:15– 2:15 p.m., for those who love to sing. Enquires can be "voiced" to **Mara**.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

BJCC fitness and recreation gift cards now available. Call ext. 291.

The aquatic department offers private swim lessons – $125 for five 30-minute lessons. One-on-one attention. Call ext. 252.

Registration open for September 2006 for school and day care. We offer a full-day program for children 18 months through five years and a morning preschool for children 2-5. New this year – we now help with morning drop-off. You drive through the circle, drop your child off and we take your child to their classroom. Call ext. 248.

Centre Camp's early bird deadline is Jan. 27. We have many new additions, including towel service. Register at ext. 378. For information, go to www.centrecamp.ca.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or www.milesnadaljcc.ca

Toronto Jewish Film Society presents *The Heartbreak Kid*, Jan. 22, 4 p.m. and 7 p.m., Al Green Theatre. MNjcc members, $12, non-members $15.

Correction

The photo caption in "What's New" (*CJN*, Jan. 12) was incorrect. Seen in the picture are Robert Heller, chair of the board of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), and Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the URJ, not Morris Cooper and Jeff Dermer as stated. All four, along with Paul Leszner of Temple Emanu-El in Toronto, are new members of the URJ board of trustees. *The CJN* regrets the error.

MEETING CHALLENGES: Canadian Seaway Branch of Women's League for Conservative Judaism (WLCJ) held a meeting recently to address the topic "Meeting New Challenges." Guest speaker was Gloria Cohen, WLCJ international president. From left are Cory Schneider, Torah fund vice-president; Cohen; Miriam Suchoff, membership vice-president; and Trudy Sassoon, vice-president. [Mollie Rothman photo]

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Pauline (Polly) Robins	**Dec 29/05**	**2045 Finch Avenue W.**
Elena Teachman	**Dec 29/05**	**10 Fernwood Road**
Jeanette Kock	**Dec 30/05**	**3179 Yonge St.**
Bryna Freeman	**Dec 31/05**	**15 Shalmar Blvd**
Arnold Polan	**Dec 31/05**	**58 Timberlane Dr.**
Helen Mosten-Growe	**Jan 1/06**	**3560 Bathurst St.**
Stephen Turack	**Jan 1/06**	**New Westminister BC**
Helen Kirsh	**Jan 3/06**	**100 Antibes Drive**
Suzanne J. Levy	**Jan 3/06**	**356 Old Orchard Grove**
Ethel Sherwin	**Jan 4/06**	**62 Tanbark Crescent**
Mae Waese	**Jan 4/06**	**232 Combe Avenue**
Erzsebet Szabo	**Jan 6/06**	**3560 Bathurst Street**

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Rabbi Philip Kaplan 1918 - 2006 ז"ל

Rabbi Philip Kaplan, a resident of Providence, Rhode Island, passed away on January 2, 2006 after a long illness at the age of 87. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Esther Koffler Kaplan, two children, Andrea D. Lieberman of Bellmore, Long Island and Dr Allan S. Kaplan of Toronto, as well as 6 grandchildren and 5 great grand children.

Rabbi Kaplan attended Yeshiva University (YU) in New York City and received rabbinical ordination from the esteemed Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveichik at YU in 1942. He served as a pulpit Rabbi for 36 years, including in Sarnia, Ontario from 1954 -1960. In 1959 he and his wife were presented to Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip on their visit to Sarnia. He was a member of the Rabbinical Council of New England in Boston for 40 years, and served as its President for 8 years. He was a Chaplain for 20 years at the Rhode Island Veterans Administration.

Contributions in Rabbi Kaplan's memory can be made to the Rabbi Philip Kaplan Memorial Scholarship Fund, c/o Canadian Friends of Yeshiva University, 4950 Queen Marry Road, Suite 365 Montreal, Quebec, H3W-1X3. **Attention: Dr. Herbert Dobrinsky**

Coast to Coast

'Extremist' minority behind boycott call: Saada

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

Jacques Saada, the cabinet minister seeking re-election in a riding on Montreal's South Shore, is confident that a call from one of his constituents for Muslims not to vote for him because of his Zionism does not represent the views of that community.

Under the heading "Don't Vote [for] Jacques Saada," Ammar Khan on Jan. 5 posted on the website Montreal Muslim News the message: "Many Muslims in Montreal vote Liberal by default, which means that in Brossard-La Prairie, Muslims vote 'en masse' for Jacques Saada, a former Israeli soldier and Zionist zealot," providing a link to an article in *The CJN*.

Saada, who is Jewish, was first elected in Brossard-La Prairie in 1997, and is the minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the regions of Quebec and minister responsible for the Francophonie.

In an interview with *CJN*, Saada said his relations with the Muslim community in his riding are very good and, in fact, three of its leaders are on his campaign team. "They are shocked by this," he said.

His rapport with Muslims has developed despite his having always been clear about his strong support for Israel, where he lived briefly, he said. "Zionism is part of who I am. I'm extremely proud of it. I've never hidden it."

He is also a supporter of an independent Palestinian state, alongside Israel.

"Of course, there are some people who are extremist and want to import problems to Canada rather than export Canadian values. Some people try to create division where there is none. But they are a very small minority," he said.

Saada said about 1,000 people came out when he accompanied Prime Minister Paul Martin on a campaign stop at a mosque under construction in Brossard at the end of December. Members of both the Muslim and the small Jewish community "stood side by side" at Saada's campaign launch. "This is a very special riding. Muslims and Jews work hand in hand here," he said.

Saada has not experienced the defacing of his campaign posters with swastikas and stars of David as he did in the 2004 and 2000 campaigns, he said.

According to Statistics Canada, 3,830 Muslims live in the riding, based on the 2001 census, representing 3.8 per cent of the population. Saada is in a tight race with the Bloc Québécois's Marcel Lussier. The riding has only 245 Jews, whose main organization has officially endorsed Saada.

Khan, in his Montreal Muslim News posting, writes that Saada received a "failing grade of F" in the Canadian Islamic Congress's grading of candidates across the country in this election, providing a link to that report. (The Kitchener, Ont.-based congress has given Saada's Bloc rival, Lussier, a top-rank "A.")

"All Muslims should try their best to be informed about who they are voting for," Khan concluded. At the end of last week, the posting was still on the website.

Khan declined to be interviewed by *CJN*, but in an e-mail exchange, he wrote: "I want to make it 100 per cent clear that I do not think that being critical of Zionism has anything to do with criticizing Judaism or the Jewish people. I find it highly offensive that the criticism of Zionism (a secular ideology) is often misrepresented as being anti-Semitic."

Khan referred to the vehement opposition to Zionism among the chassidic Satmar and Neturei Karta Jews as evidence that Zionism is incompatible with Judaism's primary religious texts. He points to articles on the Neturei Karta-associated website www.jewsnotzionists.org that "paint an image of Zionists as morally bankrupt fanatics and zealots" who cruelly oppress the Palestinians.

"Based on their well-argued criticism of Zionism, I would not vote for Jacques Saada who served in a Zionist organization and volunteered to serve in the Israeli army," which he adds is "an army of occupation and has been accused of numerous human rights violations."

Khan emphasized that he does not represent Montreal Muslim News in any capacity, but its editor, Yahya Adbul Rahman, echoed Khan's views in a letter to the pro-Israel website Judeoscope.

"The opposition to Jacques Saada has absolutely nothing to do with him being Jewish and [it] is rather devious and dishonest of you to imply that Muslims oppose him because he is Jewish. This is just the kind of rubbish that breeds further resentment because it is so absurd and yet defended by you so vigorously. In fact, he is being opposed for his politics and not his ethnicity. But, of course, you would be unable to make that distinction and use the anti-Semitic card instead."

Saada clarified for *CJN* that he served only in a civilian capacity.

Saada is a member of Liberal Parliamentarians for Israel, which wants Canada to take a more pro-Israel stance. He was among the MPs opposing the granting of a broadcast license in Canada to the Arab television network Al-Jazeera because of its anti-Israel content.

This past year, he spearheaded an effort to have Israel and the Palestinian Authority admitted to the Francophonie, as means of promoting peace.

Salam Elmenyawi, president of the Muslim Council of Montreal, said Khan's views are not endorsed by his organization.

Elmenyawi said Muslims should not reject any candidate because he or she is a Zionist, but assess each according to the same criteria as anyone else. "This kind of generalization is unacceptable," he said.

He said Montreal Muslim News is editorially independent, but that he had spoken to Rahman about the importance of avoiding causing "dissension between the Muslim and Jewish community, or even the perception of it."

Nevertheless, the council gives the site the freedom to post opinions it does not necessarily endorse because it wants to allow open discussion.

Elmenyawi also met with Saada to reassure him. "He is a friend of the Muslim community and respected in the Jewish community, which puts him in a unique position to strengthen the bridges between us."

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

ייִדיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פון: אַלעק סילווער

די פּעדעראַלע וואַלן בייַ אונדז אין קאַנאַדע

פון אַלעק סילווער

נו, געבליבן בלויז פינף טעג צו די וואַלן פֿאַר א נייער פעדעראַלער רעגירונג בייַ אונדז אין לאַנד. איך האָף, אז אין דער דאָזיקער שפּעטער שעה האָט איר שוין באַשלאָסן פֿאַר וועמען אָפּצוגעבן אייער שטים. און אפשר נישט. איך ווייס, אז עס זיינען דאָ בירגער, וואָס ווארטן כּמעט ביז דער לעצטער מינוט און טוישן זייער מיינונג עטלעכע מאָל. דאָס איז זייער רעכט. די סיבות פֿאַר ווארטן און טוישן זיינען פֿאַראַן און די מענטשן האָבן א רעכט דאָס צו נוצן. אפשר ווארטן זיי אויף מער אויסטייטשונגען און צוזאָגן פון די פֿאַרטייען אדער פון די קאַנדידאַטן. אפשר ווארטן זיי צו הערן פֿאַר וועמען זייערע פּריינד שטימען. אפשר ווארטן זיי, אז די „באַבע יאכנע" זאָל זיי קומען צו הלום און גיבן אַן עצה וועמען אויסצוקלייבן. ווי שוין געזאָגט, דאָס איז זייער רעכט.

איך גלויב, אז עס איז אייך שוין געווי באַקאַנט דאָס צעטל פון די פֿאַרטייען און פון די קאַנדידאַטן, וואָס „לויפֿן" און „שלאָגן" זיך צו באַקומען אייער שטים. איך בין אויך זיכער, אז איר האָט געלייענט אין דער פּרעסע, געזען אויפֿן טעלעוויזיאָר אדער געהערט פון דער ראַדיאָ וועגן די „גאַלדענע גליקן", וואָס מען האָט אייך צוגעזאָגט. עס איז אויך מעגלעך, אז ס'איז אייך שוין נימאס דער גאנצער שפּיל. אבער פֿאַרליירט נישט דעם מוט. בלויז געבליבן פינף טעג צום סוף.

אויף דער ליסטע זיינען דאָ א צאָל פֿאַרטייען — קלענערע און גרעסערע. דער „גיינג" איז אבער צווישן די פיר הויפּט פֿאַרטייען: „בלאָק קעבעקואַ", די „נייע דעמאָקראַטישע פֿאַרטיי", די „קאַנסערוואַטיווע פֿאַרטיי" און די „ליבעראַלע פֿאַרטיי". די פּירערס פון די פיר פֿאַרטייען וויל אויפֿוויזן, אז יעדער איינער פון זיי פֿאַרדינט צו ווערן אויסגעווייולט ווי דער פּרעמיער־מיניסטער פון לאַנד. דערבייַ באַשמוצן זיי איינער דעם אַנדערן און באַשמוצן אויך די פֿאַרטייען, וואָס ווערן אונגעפירט פון די דאָזיקע „נישט־פֿאַראַנטוואָרטלעכע" מַנהיגים. דאָס ברענגט א סך מאָל אַרויס א דערווידער צווישן די ווייַלער.

עס ווערט אויסגעטייטשט, אז דער „בלאָק קעבעקואַ" האָט אין זינען, אז אריב איר פֿאַרטיי וועט געווינען א גרעסערע צאָל פֿאַרלאַמענט־מיטגלידער וועט זי קענען אַרויסגעבן א רעפֿערענדום צווישן אירע בירגער אַרויסצוטעמען די קויבעק פּראָווינץ פון דער קאַנאַדער פּעדעראַציע. די „נייע דעמאָקראַטישע פֿאַרטיי" איז מער סאָציאַליסטיש געשטימט און וויל אַרײַנברענגען בעסערע לעבנס־באַדינגונגען פֿאַר די עלטערע בירגערס און פֿאַר די אַרבעטער אין לאַנד.

דער גרעסטער קאָמף גייט אַן צווישן די „קאַנסערוואַטיוון" און די „ליבעראַלן", וויייל איינע פון זיי וועט זיכער קומען צו דער מאַכט. אויב זי וועט נישט האָבן קיין מערהייט דעפֿוטאַטן, ווערט זי מרזן נעמען צו הילף אַן אַנדערע פֿאַרטי. דאָס ווערט אויסגעטייטשט אויף צווויי אופֿנים. טייל זאָגן, אז עס איז א גוטע זאַך און טייל זאָגן, אז עס איז א שלעכטע זאַך. די לעצטע רעגירונג פון די ליבעראַלן איז געווען א מיצאַריטעט רעגירונג און איז געפֿאַלן בלויז נאָך 17 חדשים רעגירן.

נישטאָ קיין גרויסער אונטערשייד צווישן ביידע פֿאַרטייען. ווי פֿלעגט מען זאָגן אין דער אַלטער היימ... „די זעלבע יענטע, נאָר אַנדערש געשליירט". עס ווענדט זיך א סך אין די וויילערס פון לאַנד. דערבייַ מאכט זיכער אַרויסצוגיין און נוצן אייער וואָל־רעכט.

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UJA FEDERATION Live generously

Hamilton agency helps fight poverty in the city

By ABIGAIL CUKIER
Special to the News

HAMILTON — More than one in five Jewish children in Hamilton live below the poverty line.

In fact, according to the 2001 national census, 795 of Hamilton's 4,675 Jews are poor. This represents 17 per cent of the city's Jews, while the national poverty average for Jews is about 13 per cent.

It's a crisis that not a lot of people are aware of, said Carol Krames, director of Jewish Social Services of Hamilton (JSSH), whose organization is charged with helping the 575 Jewish households that have been identified as poor by UJA Federation of Hamilton.

"There is no picture of what a poor person is. Some are the ones you sit next to in shul, but others can't even afford to be part of the community," she said.

Krames said JSSH is fortunate to have federation's support. Its 2006 campaign aims to raise $1.1 million, which is a 10 per cent increase over 2005's record-setting $1-million total.

As well as supporting JSSH, funds from the campaign go to Israel, as well as to Hamilton's Jewish Community Centre, the city's Jewish day schools, the Midrasha High School, the McMaster Jewish Students Association and the *Hamilton Jewish News*.

Started in 1932, JSSH is the oldest Jewish organization in Hamilton.

In the 1950s, it helped Jews settle in Hamilton after the Hungarian Revolution. In the 1970s, Jews from the Soviet Union needed help to settle in the community.

"Gradually, the need has changed," said Krames, who has been with the organization for 30 years.

These days, she said, much of the JSSH's assistance goes to single-parent families, seniors or people who have been laid off from work.

Krames also noted that many people move to Hamilton to find cheaper housing, but have trouble finding a job.

"They could be on disability pension or Ontario Works or have a drug problem. They could have a nice car and a huge mortgage, and then get laid off," she said.

"We also help clients from Toronto because [that city's Jewish Family & Child Service has] such a big caseload. There needs to be help outside the area, because Jewish people are Jewish people."

Krames also noted that when JSSH opened its kosher food bank 13 years ago, it was intended to be a temporary measure.

Continued on page 31

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CHAT STUDENTS RECOGNIZED: From left, Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto Richmond Hill campus students Rachael Stone and Dani Greenwald, seen with Debbie Kornhauser and Morley Wolfe of Toronto Residents in Partnership (TRIP), receive third-place awards at the organization's third annual Anti-Racism Youth Book Competition awards dinner. The Grade 12 students' entry, *The Perfect Picnic*, was one of more than 130 teen-written children's books aimed at teaching respect and understanding. Lisa Herberman and Emily Palley-Sampson, also students at CHAT Richmond Hill, received one of three honourable mentions. TRIP is a not-for-profit corporation whose goal is to foster harmony and understanding in the GTA. The award was renamed this year for Wolfe, a founding member of B'nai Brith Canada's League for Human Rights and TRIP's outgoing president. Kornhauser co-chaired the evening.

Use of food bank has increased

Continued from page 30

But since April 2004, the number of families it serves has jumped from 10 to 35.

"We may also help with a bat mitzvah, like sponsoring a modest kiddush, because that's an important part of being in the community, or we may pay for someone to go to a Chanukah party, so people go and feel good about themselves," Krames said.

As well, the organization offers counselling, home and hospital visits, English as a second language classes, and a choir and theatre club for adults.

"As a Jewish community, we have to think of what are the rights of the poor," Krames said.

"In the Torah, I know it says we are responsible to help a person to receive their needs. Sometimes it's impossible, but we try."

To contact Jewish Social Services of Hamilton, call 905-648-0605, ext. 325.

On January 23 Re-elect

Ken Dryden

in York Centre

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Regarding Canada and Israel:

- as Minister, my first overseas trip was to Israel where I brought to life long-hoped for negotiations on pension payments for Canadians living in Israel and Israelis living in Canada
- as Minister, I concluded an agreement between Social Development Canada and Palestinian Ministry of Social Affairs to help them create the structure and governance needed to deliver social services more effectively
- as a Government, we made six important vote changes on UN Resolutions.

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6:00 – 6:15	Family Snack

5:30 – 11:00 FOR THOSE AGED 12 TO 120

5:30 – 6:30	Youth Song Session	8:00 – 8:30	Snack, Shmooze
6:30 – 7:00	Adult and Youth Seudah, Shmooze	8:30 – 9:30	Extremely Musical Shabbat Service
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Food, Scrumptious Food

Vegan cookies go kosher

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Have a new kind of kosher cookie. Try a crunchy, surprise-filled treat from Toronto's trendy New Moon Kitchen – cookies with names like Bite Me and Chocolate Mo'Mints. And as of a few days before Yom Kippur 2005, all of New Moon's products are kosher, certified by Kosher Supervision of America (KSA).

"[Going kosher] was easy because we're a vegan establishment," says New Moon president Eden Hertzog.

Most vegans avoid all animal products, including dairy, eggs, honey and yeast – all staples of mainstream bakeries. So Hertzog, 28, shares her motivation for starting New Moon eight years ago. "I like desserts. I wanted to create desserts that were really good."

New Moon's entire line is vegan and pareve, with no preservatives, dairy, wheat (organic spelt, a related grain, is used instead) or nuts. If cookies aren't your style, try a loaf – like Bunny, loaded with carrots, or Nana Bread, rich with sweet ripe bananas and Belgian chocolate chips, a top seller.

Inspired by her great-grandmother, Bubbie Goldie, who baked for her nine children daily and who, in her late 80s, still sold her renowned banana bread to Just Desserts, Hertzog began baking for a vegetarian restaurant part time during high school. Later, she branched out on her own, selling sweets for extra money.

She launched New Moon with friend and business partner, Shoshanna Gehring, who has since left the company. New Moon moved to its current Toronto location – a large loft near Ossington Avenue and Dupont Street– in 2000, and recently expanded into a second loft for extra space. Now, Hertzog, who had no formal business training, reels off the numbers: New Moon produces 2,500 loaves a month, 4,000 bags of cookies. But she's still guided by her personal ethic – it's never just about the numbers. "I like to grow, but… I have to be happy in my life while I do it."

She wants her workers – five full-time employees and a driver – to be happy as well. "It's a low-stress environment."

Becoming kosher was simple, Hertzog says, since she keeps the bakery "clean, efficient, sparkly." After an initial inspection, KSA informed Hertzog that she'd have to replace the baking pans and sheets. They also checked the sources of all ingredients to verify their kosher certification.

One ingredient, jaggery (also known as gur or panela), a natural cane sugar, needed extra research. Because this molasses-like sweetener is made in India, the rabbis had to investigate it before determining that it's a pure, raw sugar product, which is fine in a kosher facility.

Being unrefined, jaggery is rich in iron and other nutrients. That doesn't mean they can overdo it in the chocolate cake or Mokas cookies, made with fair-trade espresso, but the use of healthier ingredients reflects Hertzog's commitment to quality even as her business expands. "I want to keep the products as homemade as possible."

She and Gehring always envisioned someday becoming kosher. "It's dear to us because of our Jewish backgrounds," she says. New Moon also no longer bakes on Saturdays, who says it was the right thing to do.

Doing the right thing matters to Hertzog in other ways, too. She is a rising star in the Toronto food world who recently participated in Eat to the Beat, a breast cancer fundraiser, and who was scheduled to speak at the Women's Health Matters Forum last weekend. Her topic? "Everyone deserves cookies: cooking for special diets."

But there are more than spiritual advantages to kashrut for New Moon and others, like ShaSha Bread, a local sourdough bread bakery that also came under the KSA recently. "It opens up a lot in the United States," Hertzog says.

She also feels "the kosher market is growing pretty rapidly," as non-Jews look to kosher symbols as a guarantee of products free of specific dairy or meat ingredients.

Because New Moon is using up its old packaging, there is no symbol currently on products in stores. This will change as the packages are replaced by new labels featuring the KSA symbol. A list of stores carrying New Moon's products is available at http://www.newmoonkitchen.com.

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Hamas's rising popularity worries Fatah leaders

By KHALED ABU TOAMEH
Jerusalem Post

RAMALLAH — Representatives of the ruling Fatah party on Sunday expressed concern about Hamas's rising popularity, accusing the Islamic movement of exploiting the plight of the Palestinians for political gain in upcoming Palestinian parliamentary elections.

"The situation doesn't look good for Fatah," a top Palestinian Authority official here told the *Jerusalem Post*. "If I were in [PA President Mahmoud Abbas's] place, I would find a way to postpone the election."

A public opinion poll published over the weekend by the Development Studies Program at Bir Zeit University indicated Hamas could win up to 30 per cent of the vote, as opposed to 35 per cent for Fatah.

Another poll, conducted by *Al-Quds*, the largest Palestinian newspaper, gave Hamas 24 per cent, while Fatah got only 21 per cent.

Ismail Haniyeh, head of Hamas's list for the Jan. 25 election, revealed on Sunday that a leading European country was holding contacts with his movement. He did not name the country, but said it was one of the founders of the European Union.

Haniyeh said the European country made it clear it would deal with Hamas if it formed the next PA cabinet. He said several other European countries had dispatched envoys to meet Hamas leaders in Gaza, but he refused to elaborate.

"Some Americans are also talking to Hamas," he added.

Said Siam, a Hamas political leader who is running in the election, said he is in charge of holding talks with diplomats based in Ramallah and Gaza City.

"We have contacts with foreign embassies," he said. "We also have contacts with international organizations such as the United Nations and the International Committee of the Red Cross."

Former PA minister Muhammad Dahlan, who is running as a Fatah candidate, launched a scathing attack on Hamas and accused it of making concessions on the issue of Jerusalem. He said Hamas was prepared to take part in the vote even if Israel barred Arab residents of Jerusalem from casting ballots.

"I was shocked by what I heard from Hamas over the past week," he told reporters. "How can a party give up its principles so easily and quickly?"

Dahlan, one of the most feared security commanders under former PA president Yasser Arafat, said Hamas would restrict freedom of speech if it took over the PA.

"The Palestinians can't rely on those who exploit religion for private and factional interests," he said.

Dahlan scoffed at Hamas's claim that it wouldn't negotiate with Israel in the future.

"I have statements from Hamas leaders suggesting that they are prepared to talk to Israel," he said.

Partial feasibility enough for Iran strike: study

By ARIEH O'SULLIVAN
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — A recent research project by the Israeli Air Force has determined that in the summer of 1981, Israel didn't have a clear picture of the impact a strike on Iraq's nuclear reactor would have, but it chose to attack anyway.

Then prime minister Menachem Begin ordered the bombing, condemned by the world at the time, thus inaugurating what became known as the "Begin Doctrine," Israel's policy of launching a pre-emptive strike to prevent any of its enemies acquiring nuclear weapons.

The Begin Doctrine has been repeatedly invoked lately regarding Iran and Israel's response to its suspected efforts to produce nuclear weapons.

The internal IAF research paper shows that the feasibility of a successful military operation need not be total in order for Israeli leaders to order such a strike. This appears to contradict a recent U.S. army report that claims Israel has no viable military option against Iranian nuclear weapons.

According to a senior Air Force officer who was privy to the IAF paper, the intelligence available at the time of the June 1981 strike on the Iraqi reactor at Osirak was only partial and it was unclear whether the planned air raid would be effective.

"At the time, there was no firm information on either the extent of the damage that the strike could cause or whether it would have a fatal impact on the Iraqi nuclear program. The information [Begin] had was very partial, even to the extent of the physical damage we could do to the target and how much it would delay the Iraqi program," the senior officer said.

But that was history and today it is Iran and its nuclear program that weighs heavily on the minds of Israeli officials.

The IAF officer said Iran is increasingly fearful of attack. "But they are limited in their ability to create an effective air defence," he said.

According to intelligence, Iran has beefed up its air defences around various nuclear sites as a precaution against a possible pre-emptive strike by U.S. or Israeli forces. The source described the present Iranian air defences as "good." It's known that Iran has deployed Soviet-origin anti-aircraft systems around the 1,000-megawatt Bushehr nuclear reactor.

Iran's air defence contains Russian SA-2, SA-5, SA-6 as well as shoulder-launched SA-7 missiles, according to the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies. Iran also has aged U.S.-made Hawk missiles and has been seeking to purchase the sophisticated S-300P from Russia.

One war-game scenario played out by the IAF was a U.S. attack on Iranian nuclear sites. In this case, it was believed the United States would give Israel a prior warning of "perhaps a day, nothing significant."

"There is no way the Iranians would believe that it was the Americans and [they] will seek to retaliate against Israel," a senior officer said.

The officer declined to say whether there were key targets in Iran that, if destroyed, would seriously set back Iran's nuclear program.

Israel threatened by Iran: Bush

Continued from page 1

Bush was careful not to specify what moves he expected the Security Council to take against Iran, leaving that decision to the members themselves. "I'm not going to prejudge what the United Nations Security Council should do," Bush said, "but I recognize that it's logical that a country which has rejected diplomatic entreaties be sent to the United Nations Security Council."

Over the past week, the U.S. has been conducting intense diplomatic negotiations with its European allies, mapping out the possible scenarios for a Security Council discussion on Iran. It is clear to the U.S. that the initial stage will include a call to resume inspections, but will probably fall short of mentioning sanctions. These may only be introduced in a second round, after Iran is given time to respond to the demands it was presented with.

Meanwhile, Ahmadinejad, on Saturday, shrugged off threats of UN sanctions from Washington and its European allies, saying he would not be bullied because there was no legal basis to forbid Tehran from conducting nuclear research.

In a ringing defence of Iran's resumption last week of research at its nuclear enrichment facility at Natanz, Ahmadinejad said Tehran had not violated the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), which he said allowed signatories to produce nuclear fuel. The move drew fierce international condemnation and threats to seek UN sanctions.

"The time of using language of bullying and coercion… is over," Ahmadinejad told a packed news conference in the capital. "There is no evidence to prove Iran's diversion [toward nuclear weapons]."

What's more, Ahmadinejad said, Iran has no use for nuclear weapons. "You can use nuclear technology in several ways, and we want to do so peacefully," he said, claiming that such weaponry violated the tenets of Islam.

Iran insists its program is intended only for electricity generation; the U.S. and other countries fear the explanation is a cover for building a nuclear bomb.

The news conference marked the second day of a tough public relations offensive by Tehran. On Friday, Iran threatened to end surprise inspections by and co-operation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN nuclear watchdog, if it is referred to the Security Council for possible imposition of sanctions.

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Ashkenazi Jewish population has often been studied

Continued from page 1

Researchers from universities in Italy, Estonia, Portugal, France, the United States and Russia contributed to the latest study, which has been published online by the prestigious *American Journal of Human Genetics* and will appear in print in March.

The Technion team's discoveries have significant implications beyond their inherent interest and relevance to human history; they are vital to understanding the mechanisms of genetic health and disease in human populations.

The researchers' conclusions are based on detailed comparative analysis of DNA sequence variation in the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) region of the human genome. This type of DNA is transmitted to descendants solely by the mother.

The researchers found that the mtDNA of some 3.5 million of the eight million Ashkenazi Jews currently living throughout the world can be traced back to only four women carrying distinct mtDNA of a type virtually absent in other populations. Non-Ashkenazi Jews also carry low frequencies of these distinct mtDNA types, thus providing evidence of shared maternal ancestry of Ashkenazi and non-Ashkenazi Jews.

This is consistent with previous findings based on studies of the Y-chromosome, pointing to a similar pattern of shared paternal ancestry of global Jewish populations, originating in the Middle East.

The researchers concluded that the four founding mtDNA – likely of Middle Eastern origin – underwent a major overall expansion in Europe during the last millennium.

The Ashkenazi Jewish population has often been studied by experts in human genetics because of the accumulation of some 20 recessive hereditary disorders that are concentrated in this population, the study's authors wrote.

The worldwide Human Genome Project for mapping human DNA sequence variation has not only made it possible to predict certain genetic diseases, but also to identify family and genealogical relationships (shared ancestries) among individuals.

JANUARY 2006

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If you haven't received this card, you are probably not on the voters list. To be able to vote, all you have to do is go to your polling station on election day, January 23, and present an official document that includes your name, address and signature. If you do not have such a document, you will be given the opportunity to swear that you are eligible to vote at the polling station you are in, as long as you are accompanied by a voter registered in the same polling division who can vouch for your identity.

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New foreign minister

Justice Minister Tzipi Livni was to assume her duties as foreign minister on Sunday, following the resignation of all Likud ministers from cabinet. Livni becomes the first woman in Israel to hold the post since Golda Meir. Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, who holds 15 portfolios as a result of the Likud resignations, is set to appoint six Kadima ministers to fill the vacancies, but said he would remain finance minister. Likud ministers Silvan Shalom, Limor Livnat, Yisrael Katz and Dan Naveh reluctantly followed an order from Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu to resign.

Israeli Arab arrested as spy

An Israeli Arab was charged with spying for Iran. Jaris Jaris was indicted by Haifa District Court for contact with foreign agents and conspiring to give information to the enemy. He was arrested Dec. 12. In a related story, Iran said it had arrested an Israeli agent in Tehran. Israeli officials did not respond to that report.

Israel shuns Robertson

Israel said U.S. evangelical leader Pat Robertson would not be allowed to take part in a planned $48 million (US) Christian Heritage Center on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. A spokesperson for Tourism Minister Abraham Hirchson said Israel would include other Christian groups in the 125-acre project, which is to be complete by the end of the decade. Robertson recently suggested that Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's Jan. 4 stroke was divine punishment for last summer's Gaza pullout. Last week, he apologized, calling his remarks "insensitive."

'Passover massacre' mastermind sentenced

The mastermind of the 2002 "Passover massacre" has received 35 life sentences. Abbas Al-Sayed received the jail time for his role in the bombing of Netanya's Park Hotel in March 2002, which killed 30 people. Sayed, a Hamas chief in the West Bank city of Tulkarm, was also found guilty of planning an attack in Netanya in 2001 that killed five people.

Israeli wins speaking contest

An Israeli won an international speech award. Haifa University philosophy student Anat Gilboa took first place at this month's world rhetorical championships in Dublin. Gilboa, 25, has said she had to overcome intense stage fright to become an accomplished public speaker. The competition was conducted in English. Among Gilboa's assigned subjects were Pakistan, animal rights and nuclear energy.

Olive tree vandals sought

The army plans to begin setting ambushes in West Bank olive groves to try to nab the people behind the uprooting of thousands of Palestinian olive trees. The defence establishment's main concern, one security official said, was that people sneaking into olive groves could run into Palestinian harvesters and gun battles could ensue.

With files from JTA

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Israel & the Jewish World

Senator attends conference for Jewish parliamentarians

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

JERUSALEM — Canadian Liberal Senator Jerry Grafstein was among more than 60 Jewish legislators from 28 countries who gathered in Jerusalem last week for the International Council of Jewish Parliamentarians (ICJP).

The only Canadian in attendance due to the upcoming federal election, Grafstein, who was nominated by his peers to be first vice-president of the ICJP Assembly Council, said the Jan. 8-10 conference at the David Citadel Hotel was one of the most useful he's ever attended.

"We have had three excellent days of discussions," said Grafstein, who belongs to inter-parliamentary associations in Europe, Asia and Latin America, and has a reputation for raising awareness about anti-Semitism and the Holocaust. "It was an invaluable experience to connect with Jewish parliamentarians from around the globe."

Jerry Grafstein

That was the primary objective of the conference, which brought together representatives from countries such as Hungary, Ukraine, Costa Rica, South Africa, France, Argentina, the United States and the Dominican Republic.

"Through this unique platform of extensive networking, Jewish leaders from around the world can help further humanitarian and Jewish causes in a most influential and effective way," said Bobby Brown, director of international affairs and the Israel office of the World Jewish Congress (WJC), which organized the event along with the Knesset, the Israeli ministries of foreign affairs and tourism, and the Israel Forum.

"The overwhelming feeling we got from attendees is that there is a lot of benefit to be derived from being in contact with one another. It was almost like we put water before a bunch of thirsty people!"

This contact is especially important in cases where there is only one Jewish member of the national parliament in a country's government, since whether he has the knowledge or not, he or she will be called on to speak on behalf of the Jewish community, Brown said.

This is one example of how the ICJP – which gives parliamentarians the opportunity to pool their collective experience to come up with policy ideas – can be a critical resource.

The group was founded in 2002 to link Jewish lawmakers from around the world with Israel and the Diaspora on matters of human rights, anti-Semitism, restitution of Holocaust-era assets, relations with the developing world, interfaith dialogue and international ethical issues.

"It's sort of modelled after black or Hispanic caucuses," Brown said.

But he added that the ICJP's mandate is not exclusively Jewish.

"Jewish issues don't function in isolation," he said, offering the example of anti-Semitism, which is part of the problem of xenophobia and racism.

"The problems facing the Jewish world are the same ones facing humanity as a whole. Since the problems of the Jewish people are global in nature, there is a big benefit in working together on a global solution."

Grafstein concurred. "Our common interest is to promote democracy and the rule of law," he said. "And when you are promoting democracy, you are promoting Israel. There is no inconsistency there."

In addition to hearing from Dr. Shlomo Mor-Yosef, director general of the Hadassah Medical Organization, on the health of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon (who was originally scheduled to address the conference), attendees heard from Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres, President Moshe Katsav, Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and Zeev Bielski, chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, on issues facing Israel and the Jewish world.

The parliamentarians also met for sessions on electronic anti-Semitism, interfaith relations, and Jewish contributions to relief and tikkun olam efforts.

Grafstein chaired the session on electronic anti-Semitism and noted that there are currently 4,000 to 5,000 anti-Semitic websites on the Internet, the majority of which emanate from North America.

"Quite a number of these were generated in Canada," he said, adding that governments worldwide should be urged to monitor the electronic dissemination of anti-Semitic material.

"Who is going to deal with this on a worldwide basis? Anti-Semitism is expanding, and our counter-measures need to be as organized, rigorous and as global as those who create the propaganda."

On the interfaith dialogue front, Grafstein co-founded the International Council of Political Coexistence, to be headquartered in the United Kingdom, which aims to foster communication between Jewish and Muslim parliamentarians in participating countries' governments.

Grafstein also invited the mayor of Manchester, Mohammed Afzal Khan, to visit Canada.

"[Khan] has made a big contribution to interfaith dialogue," said Grafstein, who added that while Canada's interfaith talks are an example to other countries, Canada falls short when it comes to actual interfaith exchanges.

He said he hopes Canada can "learn some successful techniques" from the Pakistani-born Khan, who was a founding member in 2004 of Manchester's Muslim-Jewish Forum.

Grafstein, who is involved in trade issues between Israel and Canada, and in facilitating free trade between North America, Europe, Israel and Arab states, said the session on tikkun olam – which addressed challenges that Israel faces when it tries to give aid to foreign countries that refuse to co-operate with the Jewish state– was of particular interest.

"Most people don't realize that per capita, Israel helped tsunami victims more than anyone else in the world," he said.

But Grafstein said networking outside the sessions gave him the most gratification, which is why he helped create a website for participants to continue to share experiences and best practices after the conference.

"My approach to life is very simple. I think the glass is half full," he said. "But let's fill up the rest of the glass!"

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Arts & Travel

History Television premieres six-part series on Auschwitz

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Jan. 27 is the first International Day of Commemoration to Honour Holocaust Victims, and to mark the event, History Television is premiering the BBC series *Auschwitz: The Nazis & The Final Solution.*

The six-part series traces the history of Auschwitz from its beginnings as a camp for Polish political prisoners to its liberation by the forces of the Soviet Union. Russian prisoners were early victims of brutal Nazi extermination experiments in the camp, where more than one million people were killed.

Auschwitz is unique among the many documentaries on this death camp, situated in southwest Poland. Rather than relying on old black and white footage and voiceovers, writer Laurence Rees dramatizes many key events.

In the first two episodes, for instance, we see dramatizations of the infamous Wannsee Conference – when senior Nazis mapped out their plan to kill Europe's Jews – and SS head Heinrich Himmler's visit to the USSR in 1941 to witness the execution of Jewish civilians. It was during this trip that Himmler realized firing squads were inefficient for the mass genocide he had in mind, and that he had to find a "better way of killing."

This series is also unique in that it draws upon recently released archival documents from eastern Europe, such as Himmler's journal – which was captured by the Soviets – and rare footage of a Nazi-sponsored pogrom in occupied Ukraine.

More than 100 people were interviewed for the series, including survivors and their oppressors. One former SS guard tells his interviewer he has no feelings at all when he recalls his role in the firing squads in 1941.

Another man, a former member of the Hlinka (the Slovakian version of the SS) laughs when he talks about looting clothes from the Jews selected for deportation from Bratislava. "We, the guards, were doing quite well!" he said.

History Television airs two episodes back to back nightly from Jan. 25 to 27, beginning at 8 p.m.

Auschwitz: The Nazis & The Final Solution **uses both dramatization, such as this scene of Heinrich Himmler discussing plans for Auschwitz with the camp's commandant Rudolf Hoess, top, as well as black and white archival footage.**

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Eye on Arts

By BILL GLADSTONE

YOUNG PRODUCER PRESENTS THIRD THEATRICAL PREMIERE

Mitchell Marcus, the 23-year-old producer and founder of *Acting Up Stage*, which has presented two fresh productions in as many years, continues the momentum with a local production of *john & jen*, the hit off-Broadway musical about the family ties that bind, sometimes too tightly.

Mitchell Marcus

A graduate of the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, Marcus says he was won over by *john & jen*, which he describes as "a gem of a musical brimming with intelligence, wit and beautiful melodies." The music is by New York-based award-winning composer **Andrew Lippa**, who is a cantor for the High Holy Days at Congregation Beth Tikvah in Richmond, B.C. The lyricist is **Tom Greenwald**, who collaborated with Lippa on the theatrical book.

At the Walmer Centre Theatre, 188 Lowther Rd. at Walmer. $30-$27; limited rush seats available. Jan 26 to Feb. 11. 416-927-7880, www.johnandjen.ca

* * *

Neil Simon's Best: Encore Entertainment presents *Lost in Yonkers*, the Pulitzer prize-winning comedy by **Neil Simon** that producer **Merle Garbe** calls "a simple, truthful story about relationships [and] about the skeletons in the closet that all families have."

The comedy, which also won four Tony awards, centres on two young brothers who go to live with their steel-hearted grandmother in Yonkers after their mother's death in 1942. The brothers are played by 15-year-old **David Melamed** and 12-year-old **Michael Rausch**. The grandmother is portrayed by Encore stalwart **Marion Hirschberg**.

At the Toronto Centre for the Arts (Studio Theatre), 5040 Yonge St. $26.50-$25. Feb. 2 to 12. 416-733-0558.

* * *

Names in the News: The Winterfolk Blues & Roots Festival (www.winterfolk.com) has released its roster of about 80 performers who will perform at five area venues in the Broadview-Danforth neighbourhood next month. The list includes the **Sisters of Sheynville**; the high-energy sextet of Yiddish swing and klezmer, as well as **Brian Gladstone**, festival organizer, guitarist-composer and this columnist's brother. The fourth annual fest takes place Feb. 3 through 5.

• Toronto yiddishist **Michael Wex**, together with his new book, *Born to Kvetch: Yiddish Language and Culture in All of Its Moods*, was the subject of the erudite and popular "On Language" column by **Philologis** in a recent issue of the New York-based *Forward*. In a column titled "Et tu, Wex?" Phil waxed eloquent on Wex and praised his book (published by St. Martin's Press) as the best of its genre, but still lamented – kvetched, really – that Wex fell into the odious trap of characterizing Yiddish as "an intrinsically cute or hilarious language" and presenting a "caricatured picture" of Jewish life in eastern Europe and America. "A Jewish joke is a Jewish joke, but do we really have to turn an entire civilization into one?" Phil cavilled, calling Wex's tome "in some ways the best and in others the most aggravating of them all."

* * *

Arts in Brief

• The Koffler School of Music presents a "piano nobile" concert with acclaimed guitarist **Daniel Bolshoy**. Dessert reception $50 in the lobby of the Leah Posluns Theatre, Thursday, Jan. 19, 7:30 p.m. For reservations, call Adrienne Cohen, 416-636-1880, ext. 228.

• **KlezFactor**, the klezmer-rock-jazz ensemble whose recent debut CD is titled *The Golem of Bathurst Manor*, performs at the Tranzac Club on Brunswick near Bloor, Thursday, Jan. 19, 8 p.m. (PWYC). The band also has upcoming dates at the Horseshoe Tavern on Feb. 13 and at the Free Times Café on March 5. www.klezfactor.com

• Conductor **Ivan Fischer** leads his celebrated **Budapest Festival Orchestra** with a program of Romantic masterpieces by **Wagner, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky** and others. $49.50 to $149.50. Roy Thomson Hall, Sunday, Jan. 22, 8 p.m. 416-872-4255.

• **Sisters of Sheynville**, the all-female swing-klez sextet, perform at the Rex Hotel and Jazz Bar, 194 Queen St. W., Sunday Jan. 22, 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.

• The Books & Bagels literary series presents **Howard Akler**, reading from *The City Man* (Coach House Books), a novel set in Toronto during the great Depression. $8, members $5. Nadal JCC, Bloor and Spadina. Sunday Jan. 22, 11 a.m. 416-924-6211.

Chai Tea with the TJFF

The Toronto Jewish Film Festival presents a screening of *Va, Vis Et Deviens (Live and Become)* as part of its "Chai" Tea and Movie series.

Va, Vis Et Deviens is the story of a young Ethiopian boy who survives by posing as one of the Ethiopian Jews secretly air lifted to Israel during "Operation Moses" from a refugee camp in the Sudan.

Jan. 22 at 4 p.m ("Chai" Tea) followed by the screening at 5 p.m. Cineplex Odeon The Grande, Sheppard Centre. Tickets $15 at the door. Call 416-324-9121. www.tjff.com

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Travel Talk

By Bill Gladstone

Life and art of Sarah Bernhardt on view at New York museum

Currently on view at the Jewish Museum of New York is "Sarah Bernhardt: The Art of High Drama," focusing on the legendary French actress (1844-1923) who styled herself as "the Divine Sarah" and was the Madonna or Elizabeth Taylor of her day.

The great tragedienne was as canny as Madonna in her use of the media. She pioneered the use of photography to disseminate her image, was the first major actress to perform in films, and visited the studio of inventor Thomas Edison in Menlo Park, N.J., so she could record her famous "golden voice" for all time.

During her 60-year career, she premiered many theatrical roles that flowed from the pens of Victor Hugo, Edmond Rostand, Alexandre Dumas and other renowned playwrights. Unafraid of crossing boundaries, she exhibited paintings from her own brush and played an exemplary Hamlet late in her career. Fascinating to her contemporaries, this extremely thin, frizzy-haired *belle juive* sat for many fashionable artists, attached her name to products ranging from hair curlers to liqueurs, and was perhaps the most photographed woman in the world.

Sarah Bernhardt

An embodiment of the Belle Époque, Bernhardt's life and art are illuminated in this first major museum exhibition through more than 250 spectacular and rarely seen objects, including personal effects, jewelry, furniture, letters, painting, sculpture, films, costumes, posters and stage designs. Vintage photographs show her in such famous roles as Hamlet, Camille, Cleopatra and Joan of Arc.

The daughter and niece of Jewish courtesans, Bernhardt was baptized a Catholic but was mercilessly attacked by the popular press for her supposedly Jewish features and affinities. She was a staunch defender of Alfred Dreyfus and wrote a letter (on view in the exhibition) in support of Emile Zola's publication of *J'Accuse*. At the same time, she was a revered national figure, patriotically serving France during the Franco-Prussian War and World War I.

Interestingly, one of Bernhardt's most influential role models was another Jewish actress – the legendary Rachel, who was famous enough to have been known only by her first name, and whose sun was setting just as Bernhardt's was beginning to rise.

"Sarah Bernhardt: The Art of High Drama" continues at the New York Museum, 1109 Fifth Ave., until April 2.

* * *

Israel Mission: Rabbi Joseph Kelman, emeritus of Beth Emeth Synagogue of Toronto, is teaming with Rev. Dean Bye, of Return Ministry near London, Ont., to offer a third Jewish-Christian mission to Israel, with an optional pre-tour in Prague. The Prague component departs Toronto on April 24, the Israel-only component on April 27, and the group is scheduled to return from Israel on May 8.

B'nai Brith Canada invited Kelman on the first joint trip. "I could not imagine that it would be as exciting and meaningful as the last two trips have been," he said.

Since then, he has spoken several times to the strongly Zionist Christian group, which is headquartered in the small town of Centralia. ("Notice the last part of this name is aliyah," he observed.) A group of more than 60 people from Return Ministry also visited him at Beth Emeth last year to learn about Torah and how Jewish services are conducted.

For details on the mission, contact Ari Bauer at Peerless Travel, 7117 Bathurst St., Suite 200, Thornhill. 905-886-5610, ext. 415.

* * *

Museums and Galleries

• England's oldest public art gallery, Dulwich Picture Gallery in southeast London, plans to mark the 400th anniversary of the birth of Rembrandt with a special exhibit of 19 paintings by the Dutch Master. "Rembrandt & Co.: Art and Business in the Uylenburgh Studio" is slated to be on view June 7 to Sept. 3.

• "Weapons of Mass Dissemination: The Propaganda of War" shows how propaganda has been used as a weapon of war. Continues at the Canadian War Museum, Ottawa, until April 30.

• "A Caring Profession: Centuries of Nursing in Canada" examines the impact of nursing on the lives of Canadians. Continues at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, until Sept. 4.

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KlezFactor takes klezmer music in a new direction

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

KlezFactor is on the verge of making an impact on the Toronto music scene with the recent release of their much-anticipated debut album, *The Golem of Bathurst Manor*.

"The CD is an amalgamation of pretty much everything I have learned in music, composition, arranging and playing," said bandleader Mike Anklewicz.

Anklewicz, who plays saxophone and clarinet, put together the six-member band in November 2004, with the intention of taking klezmer music in a new direction. "I wanted to create a different sound, music with a twist," he said.

The Golem of Bathurst Manor is a blend of klezmer, contemporary jazz and rock 'n' roll. It features six original compositions by Anklewicz and four interpretations of traditional klezmer songs.

"When you try and do something a little bit different, you have an uneasy feeling about whether or not people will get it," said Anklewicz. "I hope they do."

During the 15th century, Jewish musicians, know as *klezmorim*, established the tradition of klezmer music by trading songs with local travelling musicians. It quickly became a hybrid form of music, with influences from Russia, Ukraine, Hungary and Turkey. Klezmer was originally played at weddings and other simchahs.

KlezFactor's album features the well-known *Fun Tashlich*. In KlezFactor's interpretation, the traditional tune is transformed into a rock song with a driving beat and a guitar solo.

Anklewicz's favourite song on the CD is the title track, *The Golem of Bathurst Manor*. "It's the most interesting track off the album because it rewards multiple listening," said Anklewicz. It also highlights the band's improvisational skills and their high level of musicianship.

Ali Berkok on piano and melodica, Gregg Brennan on drums and percussion, Jennifer Burford on violin, Steve Gotlib on bass and Mark Pellizzer on guitar, with Anklewicz, create the unique sound of KlezFactor.

"Everybody in the band is awesome. The group dynamic is a really big part of the album. It's a special feeling when you go into the studio and things happen that you never expected," said Anklewicz.

For Berkok, creating the album has been an exciting experience. "I'm very happy and very proud of what I've been able to be a part of. This is my first album," he said.

Berkok credits the success of the band to the leadership of Anklewicz and the strong musical background of all the band members. "We all come from a jazz background, so we have a lot of listening skills. We bring a lot to the table as improvisers, which makes it easier to perform klezmer music," said Berkok.

The band has performed at the Renaissance Café, the Free Times Café: Bella, did ya eat? Brunch, and the Markham Theatre, to a sold-out audience of more than 500 people.

KlezFactor plays at the Tranzac Club on Jan. 19, the Horseshoe Tavern on Feb. 13 and returns to the Free Times Café: Bella, Did ya eat? Brunch on March 5.

CHAVA ALBERSTEIN: The Ashkenaz Foundation presents Israel's legendary political singer Chava Alberstein and France's Jewish-Gypsy ensemble Les Yeux Noirs on Jan. 21, 7:30 p.m. at the George Weston Recital Hall, Toronto Centre For The Arts. (5040 Yonge St.). Tickets ($25 to $75) available from Ticketmaster outlets (416-872-1111) or from the box office. Patron tickets (from $250, includes gala reception) available by calling 416-979-9901. Visit www.ashkenazfestival.com

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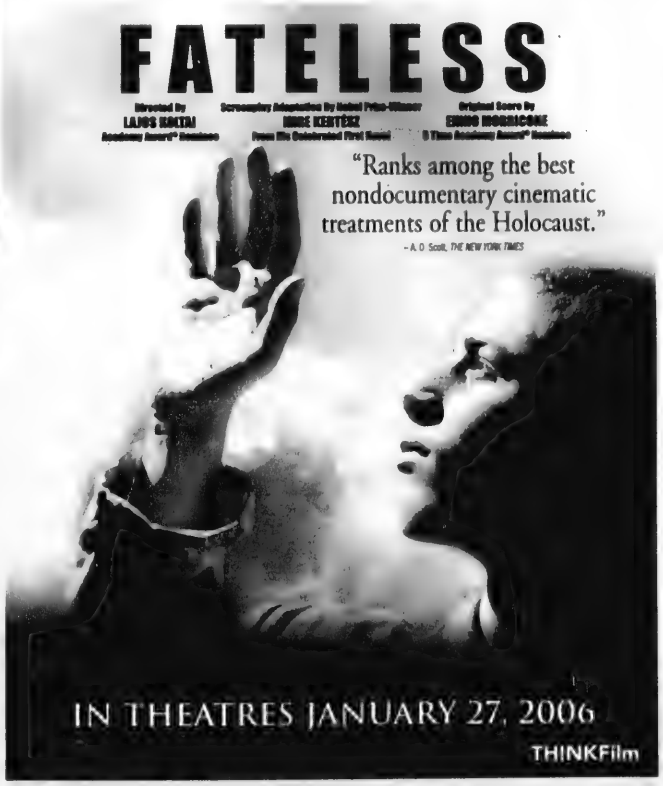
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Arts & Travel

Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World falls flat

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

For the past few years, the United States has been trying hard to improve its image in Muslim countries. Keenly aware of the problem, film director and actor Albert Brooks uses this intriguing theme to flesh out his newest movie, *Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World*, which opens in local theatres on Jan. 20.

Brooks impersonates himself in this 98-minute film. In the opening scene, he portrays a middle-aged Hollywood actor down on his luck at a meeting with three studio executives in search of "the next Jimmy Stewart." The encounter is embarrassingly brief, since he obviously is not suitable for the role.

Albert Brooks, centre, in a scene from his latest movie, opening on Jan. 20.

As he bewails his fate, the postman rings once and delivers a registered letter from the U.S. State Department summoning him to Washington, D.C. Fred Dalton Thompson, the actor/politician playing himself as well, hands him a special assignment. He is to spend a month in India and Pakistan, with a combined Muslim population of 300 million, posing one question – "What makes you laugh?" – and writing a 500-page report upon his return to Los Angeles.

Thompson suggests that the answer to that burning question may break down cultural barriers and improve the United States' standing among Muslims. "There are huge numbers of people we don't understand," he says in a reference to Muslims, be they Indians or Pakistanis.

The prospect of producing a book-length report fazes Brooks, but he accepts the offer after being told he will receive a Medal of Freedom for his exertions. Accompanied to India by two State Department assistants, Stuart (John Carrol Lynch) and Mark (Jon Tenney), Brooks sets up shop in New Delhi. He then interviews a succession of Indians vying for a position as his interpreter.

One of the candidates, a Muslim woman encased in a black cloak from head to toe, asks: "You are not a Jew, are you?" Her question intimidates and flusters Brooks. "Not at this moment… Sometimes I am," he sputters lamely. Judging by her comment, Brooks has his work cut out in India.

He gives the job to Maya (Sheetal Sheth), a comely young Hindu woman free of racist attitudes and eager to please. She and Brooks sally into the colourful and congested streets of New Delhi, asking people what tickles their funny bone.

Short of useful answers, and dejected to learn that New Delhi has no comedy clubs, Brooks rents a hall and invites locals to what he bills as New Delhi's first comedy concert. His jokes fall flat. A sample: "Why is there no Halloween in India? Because they took away the Gandhi."

Unable to obtain a Pakistani visa, Brooks sneaks into Pakistan and entertains a group of aspiring Pakistani comedians sitting around a campfire. They warm to his jokes, but they are pathetic.

Continuing his quest, Brooks meets with an Al Jazeera executive who surprisingly offers him a part in a forthcoming sitcom to be called *That Darn Jew*. When Brooks rejects the overture, the executive asks, "Do you know how to get hold of Jerry Seinfeld?" As Brooks leaves his office, the executive shouts, "Get me another Jew!"

This is not amusing. Nor is the rest of this ill-conceived, misbegotten film. More important, the premise of *Looking for Comedy in the Muslim World*, written and directed by Brooks, is silly, even as an artistic conceit. And the jokes, except for a Polish joke early on, are terrible.

As the film ends, Brooks' wife (Emma Lockhart) showers him with compliments on a supposedly successful mission and calls him "the Henry Kissinger of comedy." This is a gross misrepresentation. Brooks' talents in this picture desert him and leave him open to ridicule. Viewers, however, will not be disappointed by the shots of New Delhi's tourist sights. In contrast to the film itself, they are interesting.

Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. Stories should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 10. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office.

E-mail: **info@cjnews.com.** Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Please note: submissions will *not* be returned. Only writers whose work is chosen for publication will be contacted.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual **Purim Art Contest**.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of *CJN* employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN*'s 2006 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for $25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, 2006. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 3, 2006.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 16, 2006. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

Koltai proves his mettle as a director with *Fateless*

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

When Lajos Koltai, the renowned Hungarian cinematographer, read *Fateless*, Imre Kertesz's magisterial novel about the Holocaust, he was positively hooked.

"I thought I could photograph it," he said in a recent interview. "I could visualize it."

But after speaking with Kertesz, the 2002 Nobel Prize laureate in literature, Koltai suddenly found himself in unfamiliar territory.

Kertesz wanted him to direct *Fateless*, which was screened at last year's Toronto International Film Festival and is due to open in local theatres on Friday, Jan. 27.

Kertesz, whose novel was published some 30 years ago in complete obscurity, chose Koltai as director because their respective visions of the film meshed.

They agreed that the linear structure of the novel should be left intact and that the character of the protagonist, a boy of 14, should be revealed through his soul.

Koltai, who has collaborated with famed Hungarian director Istvan Szabo on 14 films, including *Mephisto*, *Colonel Redl* and *Sunshine*, began preparing for *Fateless* in 2000.

"We had sympathy, but no money," explained Koltai, a 59-year-old man with a thick mane of silver hair who, in his interview with *The CJN*, was clad in black from head to toe and wearing rimless glasses that reflected the light.

But after Kertesz won the Nobel Prize for his body of work, the Hungarian government pitched in and contributed half the budget of 11 million Euros (about $15.5 million Cdn), while Hungarian-born Canadian producer Andras Hamori came on board. (The film could have been made without the participation of the government, Koltai noted.)

Koltai never had any doubts about his ability to direct his first film. On previous film sets, he had not only been a cinematographer, but a collaborator as well, he explained.

"I wasn't just a technical person. I was always involved in the totality of the film. So it was not much of a big departure for me to be a director."

He never considered the possibility of acting as his own cinematographer. "It would have been impossible to be both. Anyway, I found a young, very talented Hungarian cinematographer, Gyula Pados."

Kertesz, who also wrote the screenplay, was not bothered by the fact that Koltai is not Jewish.

"He thought that was good. A certain emotional distance was needed. We didn't want sentimentality," Koltai said.

In his quest to find an actor to play the lead role, Koltai auditioned 1,000 boys and studied 3,000 photographs. He settled on Marcell Nagy, who carries the film, because he projects innocence and wisdom. "He has a clear, beautiful face."

Koltai could have filmed on location in Buchenwald and Auschwitz-Birkenau, but instead had sets built to stand in for these concentration camps. He felt the sites would have been desecrated had he shot there.

Fateless was "a huge success" in Hungary, he said. "It beat U.S. commercial films at the box office. The young generation ran to see it."

Asked to explain the film's popularity, Koltai replied, "Because of the boy, the beautiful, loveable boy."

To Koltai's relief, Kertesz liked it too. "He is unbelievably happy with it. He said, 'It's absolutely right and precise.'"

No one but Kertesz could have written the script, he said. "The book is so complex. He knows what's really important."

In Koltai's mind, the message in *Fateless* is unambiguously clear.

"Life is very unpredictable. You never know how it will turn out. You should be prepared for anything. The world is a terrible place."

Hungarians are just now coming to terms with Hungary's complicity in the Holocaust, he said. "We know that a Hungarian administration made it happen."

Yet many Hungarians are loath to discuss the Holocaust, which Koltai, the son of a leather worker, called "a trauma for European culture."

He noted that some Hungarians, possibly out of anti-Semitic motives, simply refuse to acknowledge the Holocaust. "My neighbour in Budapest thinks it's a legend!"

• • •

A review of Fateless *will appear in our next issue.*

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Medicine must treat body, mind, soul, says physician

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

The newest weapon in medicine's arsenal against Alzheimer's and other diseases could be a surprising one – a siddur.

Preliminary studies done by Dr. Yakir Kaufman, director of neurology services at Israel's Sarah Herzog Memorial Hospital, have shown that spirituality can slow the progression of dementia symptoms in patients with Alzheimer's.

He likes to challenge his audiences, most often other physicians, by asking them to define health. Usually, he hears that it's the absence of disease. "This," he says, "is like a shoemaker who doesn't know what a good shoe is."

He then introduces the World Health Organization's definition: health is "a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being," Kaufman told an audience at Shaarei Tefilah Synagogue last month, at an event co-sponsored by Torah in Motion, the Canadian Friends of Herzog Hospital and the Jewish Health Alliance

In his talk titled "The science linking body, mind and soul," Kaufman said he believes today's western medical system is failing because it does not provide health care in the truest sense – care of an individual's social, psychological and spiritual well-being, rather than just his or her physical symptoms.

"In China, doctors would only get paid when everyone in their village was healthy," he said. Here, patients go to a doctor with symptoms, expecting the doctor to dispense a pill or offer surgery. "The relationship is not creative. I don't think that enhances health in a true way."

He pointed out that the best orthopedic hospitals in the world are at the bottom of ski slopes in Switzerland. "It's like we're waiting for people to be sick. If people were healthy, we'd be out of business."

In Kaufman's field of psychoneuroimmunology, practitioners take a more multidimensional view. "Multiple factors cause diseases, not only pharmacological," he said. "As a doctor, I'd like to know his social background, strengths, stressors, so I can really treat him."

His first encounter with a patient generally takes more than an hour. This establishes a good relationship, which Kaufman said is a "springboard" for a positive effect on the health of the patient.

Established in 1895, Herzog Hospital was Israel's first psychiatric hospital and currently specializes in geriatrics and psychiatry. Today, it is continuing to be innovative with a planned integrative health centre, which will incorporate what Kaufman believes is "the best of traditional and complementary medicine."

Kaufman described the body's physiological reactions to stress and the negative repercussions they can have. Some, including hypertension and heart disease, are well-known. Others are less commonly linked to stress, including cancer, dementia and infertility.

Many couples who adopt a baby quickly become fertile, Kaufman pointed out. Why? Once the pressure is off to try to conceive, levels of anxiety and stress go down. Treating stress should be any doctor's first approach to infertility, especially given that hormone therapy is not only costly but can have potentially devastating, even fatal, side effects. "We're not using the knowledge that we have to treat the source of the problem itself."

Using his evidence and that of others, Kaufman showed that spirituality and religion can create a strengthening effect that is exactly the opposite of the wear and tear of stress. Several factors may contribute to this, he explained, including healthier behaviours like less excessive drinking, social support systems and an upsurge in positive emotions such as a sense of hope and optimism.

Much of Kaufman's Alzheimer's research took place at Toronto's Baycrest Centre, and relied on participants' description of their spirituality or religiosity, terms Kaufman emphasized are not always interchangeable.

Participants, all diagnosed with probable Alzheimer's, rated themselves on criteria such as regular prayer and a sense of divine presence. Those who rated highest in these areas generally demonstrated the slowest rate of decline.

Kaufman, who recently presented his findings to the American Academy of Neurology, is currently seeking funding for more in-depth research on the connection between religion and Alzheimer's.

He hopes this will ultimately help underscore a view that the Torah has taught for thousands of years, that body and soul are inextricably entwined. The 18th-century Maggid of Mezritch said, "A small hole in the body comes from a large hole in the soul."

About Nutrition

By LISA WEINBERG

Q. We just found out that my elderly father has diabetes. Which sugar substitute can he safely use?

A. Splenda or Sucralose is your best bet. It tastes most like sugar and you can heat it in cooking or baking. You also can use it in the same quantity as you would sugar.

Q. My son is away at university and when he was home over the holidays, he said that he and his roommates rarely eat fruits and vegetables because, while they do cook, they only grocery shop about once a month. How can he get vitamins in a more convenient way?

A. Probably the best way for him to do this, since they do cook, is from canned and frozen fruits and vegetables. The students can buy frozen entrees that have vegetables, stir-fry kits and bagged frozen fruit and vegetables. The fruit is great in smoothies. Canned fruit and vegetables are also full of vitamins and easy to serve, and there is no reason to avoid them, especially in winter, when they can be a healthy, convenient and affordable alternative to fresh produce.

Q. Like many others, my New Year's resolution is to lose weight. I already eat quite healthy but I want to lose about five pounds. Any tips?

A. Start by keeping a food log of what you eat for a week, and then review it. When they write it down, many people are surprised to find what they actually eat. Look for foods that occur often throughout the week like alcohol, fruit juice, desserts, cheese, crackers, cookies and snack foods. Also, be accurate about portions. Are they larger than necessary? Next ask yourself before you eat if you are really hungry or if you are eating out of boredom, habit or depression.

Once you have taken an honest look, you can probably find some places to improve. The best place to start may be by simply cutting down on your portions and adding more vegetables for satiety and get moving, be as active as possible. It is great to do a 30-minute cardio workout a few days a week, but if you only have 10 minutes, you can still be active, walk up and down the stairs, put on music and dance around your house, or walk around the block. Good luck!

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

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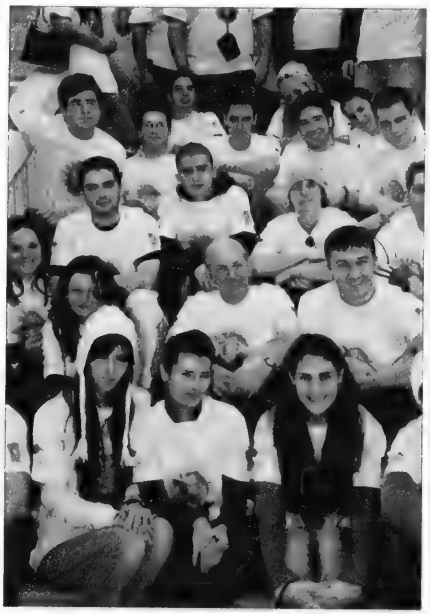
Freda Levine's 102nd birthday celebrated in Montreal, Jerusalem

When Freda Levine turned 102 in Montreal on Jan. 4, her nephew Charles Bronfman celebrated in Jerusalem, together with a group of Montreal young people who had arrived in Israel just hours earlier on a Taglit birthright israel trip.



Birthrighters from Montreal celebrate Aunt Freda's birthday in Jerusalem with Charles Bronfman, seated centre.

"Aunt Freda made a gift of a significant amount of money to Taglit-birthright israel because she's so in love with the program," Bronfman told his guests, who were gathered in the reception area of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies office in downtown Jerusalem.

The 35 Montrealers were among the 600 Canadians who are participating in birthright this winter. To date, over 10,000 Canadians and more than 80,000 youngsters from all over the world have gone to Israel on the program.

They wore T-shirts with "Happy 102nd Birthday Aunt Freda," and a photo of the lady was on the birthday cake. Bronfman was presented with a birthday card for his aunt that each participant had signed.

Bronfman thanked the Montrealers for participating in the celebration and for coming to Israel. "You are the guys who make this all happen," he said.

The Montrealers sang *Happy Birthday* in English, Hebrew and French. Bronfman told the group that his son Stephen and his wife Claudine, who live in Montreal, would be visiting Levine that evening, and would be showing her a photograph of the Jerusalem festivities sent via e-mail.

Levine's birthday party in Montreal was attended by close family members and friends, including 99-year old Syd Housner and 100-year-old Elsie Flanders.

Levine is Bronfman's late mother Saidye's youngest sister, the fourth daughter of Samuel and Priscilla Rosner, all of whom were born in Plum Coulee, Man. The family later moved to Winnipeg.

Freda was the only one who would graduate from university, the University of Manitoba. She married a doctor in Manitoba with whom she had two children.

"After Freda's first husband died, she moved to Montreal to be closer to her sister and brother-in-law, Saidye and Samuel Bronfman," Charles Bronfman said. "Soon afterward, she met and married her second husband, Moe Levine, a widower with two children.

A photo of Montrealer Freda Levine adorns a cake for her 102nd birthday, celebrated in Jerusalem by her nephew Charles Bronfman, along with Montreal participants on a birthright israel trip.

"Freda still lives in the same apartment today she has lived in for the past 30-odd years."

Bronfman co-founded the birthright israel educational program in 1999 together with American philanthropist Michael Steinhart, in conjunction with world Jewish communities and the government of Israel. Designed to strengthen Jewish identity among young Diaspora Jews, the program offers 18- to 26-year-olds their first Israel experience – 10 days in the country for free.

Non-Jewish Pole creates websites about Jewish history

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Tomasz Wisniewski, a historian, journalist and freelance writer who lives in Bialystok, Poland, has been interested in Poland's Jewish history for many years.

Although Wisniewski is not Jewish, he has been working on the reconstruction of Polish Jewish history along with the history of other national groups that existed in Poland for centuries. He has spent years researching the Jews of the Bialystok region, along with the Jews of numerous other places in Poland.

He has created several websites about Poland's Jews and written several books, including *Jewish Bialystok and Surroundings* and *Synagogues and Jewish Communities in the Bialystok Region*.

Wisniewski became an expert on the Jewish landmarks of Bialystok during his imprisonment in Poland, where he was jailed for dissident activities under the Communist regime in the 1980s.

"I became interested in Jewish history in prison because they [the prison] had a very good library, and once I read a book about the uprising in Bialystok ghetto, it was beginning of my interest. After I left jail, I went to the local library to find more books [and] information," he said in an interview conducted by e-mail.

Wisniewski's websites reflect the information he got from extensive research of Jewish life in Poland. Some of the information he got was from Jewish cemeteries, old synagogues and ritual baths. He said he "probably has the largest collection of original photographs of Jewish life in Poland taken pre-1945."

On one of his websites, it is noted that before World War II, the city of Bialystok was the heart of European Jewry, with approximately 50,000 Jews. "Today, only a dozen Jews live there."

He told *The CJN* that "Jewish Poland is a part of Polish history and there is no history of Poland without the history of the Jewish people.

"I am a Pole and Catholic. In old times, Poland had a multicultural face, and we have to protect this face and work to protect them.

"We are looking for Poland, Szukamy Polski, [which] existed for centuries, a Poland as heterogeneous as the Tower of Babel and that gloried in a rich and varied cuisine, a Poland that astonished and amazed foreigners, but which was familiar and made sense to those born here," he said.

He noted that Ukrainians, Lithuanians, Lemkes, Germans, Tartars, Russians, Karaites and Roma also "made brilliant contributions not only to our [Polish] national and cultural inheritance and to our way of thinking, but also to our cuisine and language."

Those cultures cannot be omitted from any part of Polish history, "even though Poland did not always behave towards them as a loving mother – in fact often more like a wicked stepmother," he added.

Wisniewski's website, the A to Z Gallery of Prewar Poland (www.aforgottenodyssey.com/gallery/Poland-Photos-pre-1945), can be viewed in nine languages, including Hebrew. The Hebrew version can be accessed from www.szukamypolski.com/gap/index.php?l=isr. The website features 9,000 prewar images.

The website's museum will exhibit thousands of original prewar postcards and photographs that reflect a multicultural Poland. Anyone will be able to look for their own or their family's hometown and scan the postcards and photographs, which will also have commentary, Wisniewski said.

The site will also have an interactive tool that will enable people to exhibit their own material and to make contacts all over the world.

The aim of the website "is to construct a central online forum for serious debate about Poland, to help build up a corpus of knowledge about the country, to stimulate the minds of secondary school pupils, and to provide access to a wide range of information," Wisniewski said

He is also working on a website documenting the colours on pre-1945 Jewish gravestones in Poland (www.aforgottenodyssey.com/gallery/albug36). "Many gravestones were painted before the Second World War, especially in the smaller Jewish cemeteries," he said.

Other websites and links Wisniewski recommends are:

- www.avotaynu.com/postcards/
- www.zchor.org/bialystok/bialystok.htm
- www.zchor.org/bialystok/announcement.htm
- www.szukamypolski.com/wystawy/ kadry/
- his own multimedia site, in three languages, www.szukamypolski.com/zydy/

For more information about Tomasz Wisniewski, visit the Polish Heroes Remembrance Center, www.polish-heroes.org/paginas/docs-eng.html.

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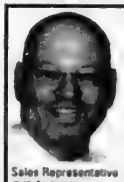

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Canadians among the select in Jewish Sports Hall of Fame

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

Take a look at the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame (IJSHF) website (www.jewishsports.net), and it immediately becomes apparent why the old myth of Jews and sports mixing like oil and water should be expunged forever.

The site clearly shows that in all categories of athletic endeavour and achievement, Jews have excelled, among them a number of Canadians.

IJSHF was inaugurated in 1981 in Netanya, Israel, to honour Jewish athletes worldwide who have performed at the highest levels. A partnership with Maccabi USA/Sports for Israel and the Wingate Institute for Physical Education and Sports, IJSHF is currently celebrating its silver anniversary year.

But it doesn't honour only sportsmen and sportswomen. The IJSHF also has a Pillar of Achievement Award, which recognizes those who have contributed to society through sports, and a Lifetime Achievement Award for those who have made a contribution to society and Israel.

Last year, Montreal-born Sidney Greenberg of Toronto, the one-time president of Maccabi Canada, received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his work with the Maccabi World Union, Canadian Olympic Committee and Basketball Canada.

Four Canadians have garnered the Pillar of Achievement Award: the late Sidney Halter of Winnipeg, the first commissioner of the Canadian Football League, from 1958 to 1966; Montreal's Ben Weider, for his leadership of the International Federation of Bodybuilders; Toronto's Irving Ungerman, one of Canada's greatest boxing promoters and a pivotal figure in bringing major league baseball to his city; and the late Julius "Goldie" Goldman, who moulded a Windsor, Ont., basketball team into silver medalists at the 1936 Olympic Games. Goldman was instrumental in eliminating the rule that required a "jump ball" after every basket.

The IJSHF has inducted six Canadians into its sports achievement ranks, which now have some 250 members, among them famed pitcher Sandy Koufax, swimmer Mark Spitz and the late sports broadcaster Howard Cosell.

In chronological order, the Canadians are:

• Montrealer Louis Rubenstein, inducted in 1981, who won the gold medal at the very first World Figure Skating Championships. As the IJSHF website duly notes, Rubenstein was "North America's first famous figure skater, and ultimately won the titles in the United States and North America several times."

• Fanny "Bobbie" Rosenfeld, inducted in 1982 and now deceased, who in 1950 was named by Canadian sportswriters as "Canada's Female Athlete of the Half-Century." She was arguably Canada's greatest female track-and-field athlete from that era, setting records in numerous events and garnering a gold medal at the 1928 Olympics. In 1996, Rosenfeld was among five gold medalists whose images were put onto a Canadian stamp.

• Fred Oberlander, inducted in 1991, who was one of Canada's greatest wrestlers and one of the original founders of the modern Maccabi movement. He won several European and Canadian titles and, as a native of Austria, refused to represent his country at the German Olympics in 1936. In 1946, Oberlander competed for Great Britain at the Olympic Games, and in 1953, was named Outstanding Jewish World Athlete by David Ben-Gurion.

• Cecil Hart, inducted in 1992, who coached the Montreal Canadiens to back-to-back Stanley Cups in the 1920s and saw the team make the playoffs for the eight straight seasons he presided over it. Hart was a direct descendant of Aaron Hart, who is considered Canada's first Jewish settler. The Hart Memorial Trophy is presented every year to the National Hockey League's most valuable player.

• Red Fisher, inducted in 1999, who has been covering the Montreal Canadiens and the NHL for over a half-century in inimitable, witty style. Fisher, who turns 80 in August, is a two-time winner of the Canadian National Newspaper Award for sports-writing and was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1995.

• Lew Hayman, inducted in 2004 and now deceased, who was involved in the Canadian Football League for close to 50 years and became a legend in the CFL. The IJSHF site notes that between 1933 and 1951, teams coached by Hayman, including the Toronto Argonauts, competed in five Grey Cup Championships and won them all.

Vujcic – a cut above the rest for Maccabi Tel Aviv

By YOAV BOROWITZ
Ha'aretz Daily Newspaper Ltd.

TEL AVIV — Many factors led to Maccabi Tel Aviv's dramatic away win recently over Hapoel Jerusalem: Sharon Sasson's cool play under pressure, Mario Austin's missed free throws, coach Pini Gershon's gutsy decisions. Without a doubt, however, Nikola Vujcic's 29 points and nine rebounds stood above them all.

At 27, Maccabi's Croatian centre is having the best season of his career, averaging 22.9 points and 6.4 rebounds a game in Israeli Premier League play as of late December.

"Vujcic is not the kind of player you come across every day," said assistant coach Dan Shamir.

But former Maccabi coach David Blatt, who brought Vujcic to the club four years ago, is a lot more enthusiastic. "When I started scouting Vujcic at Split, people weren't as excited as me," said the current Benetton Treviso coach. "I think the reason was his lack of athleticism. I saw he was a really smart and diverse player who understands the game intuitively."

Maccabi's assistant coach last year, Ya'akov Gino, also gets excited when talking about Vujcic.

"Despite his incredible individual ability, Vujcic is a team player of the highest level," Gino said.

"It's difficult to overstate just how much Vujcic brings to the game, especially because of his passing ability," added Gino, who called the Croatian "the big man's Jasikevicius," referring to Sarunas Jasikevicius, the Lithuanian guard who led Maccabi to two straight Euroleague championships and now plays in the NBA with the Indiana Pacers.

Vujcic – who scored 21 points and grabbed 10 rebounds in Maccabi Tel Aviv's 105-103 pre-season humiliation of the Toronto Raptors – also gets all-around accolades for his personality.

"He's a one in a million guy," Blatt said. "Honestly, he's one of my favourite players of all time."

Shamir echoes that opinion. "Nikola's contribution to Maccabi begins long before he steps on the court. He is always positive, always down to earth."

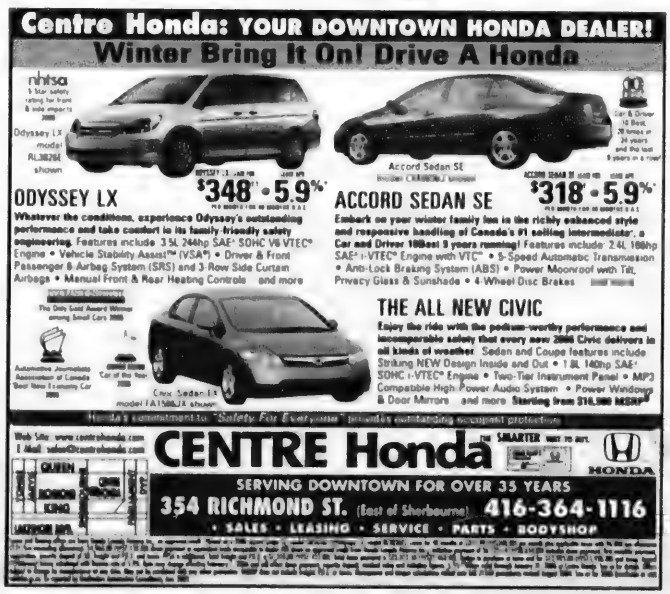
The question is will Vujcic remain with the back-to-back Euroleague champions, or will his play and personality see him follow Jasikevicius to the NBA.

"Everyone in the NBA is familiar with Vujcic," Blatt said. "But the NBA is a financial game, and Vujcic is already at a wage level where only a long-term, multimillion dollar offer is going to be attractive to him."

Vujcic has said on several occasions in the past that as far as he is concerned, "Maccabi is like the NBA." But the Croatian will certainly demand a significant increase over his estimated $650,000 (US) annual salary with Maccabi, and other teams will be ready to grab him if Maccabi does not pick up the tab.

"I have no doubt that Vujcic will receive five or six offers from European teams during the off season," said Blatt, who still can't figure out why the centre has yet to be snapped up by an NBA team.

"Every time I meet a friend from the NBA, I say: 'What the hell are you thinking. There are hardly any players like Nikola in the league.'"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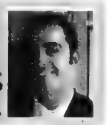
Spielberg's *Munich* contributes nothing to Mideast debate

ARTS IN FOCUS
By Oren Shefa



When celebrated director Steven Spielberg takes on a project as contentious as the recently released *Munich*, it seems inevitable that audiences and critics alike will have lots to say. Terrorism, state-sanctioned retribution and politically charged racism, after all, are meaty subjects that can inspire many a heated debate.

Yet, despite combining a gritty political thriller with the kind of honest and painful introspection exhibited by the film's main characters, *Munich* fails to deliver on the expectation of an in-depth analysis and deliberation of the larger and more convoluted issues it arouses.

Since its limited release back in December, critics, historians and even Israeli military spokespeople have complained about numerous inaccuracies, simplifications of deeply rooted transgressions and ideological immaturity at the hands of the film's director, Spielberg, and screenwriter, Tony Kushner.

But what exactly was the expectation here? That Spielberg would, in the span of less than three hours, deftly dismantle millennia of hostility? Admittedly, the man is an extremely gifted storyteller, but as a mere mortal he brings to this issue his own emotional baggage, skewed perspectives and a penchant for being more than a little empathetic.

There is no question that the film, which touts itself in its opening titles as having been "inspired by real events," took liberties. *Munich* is an artistically masterful thriller drawing on real events in an effort to heighten the audience's sense of urgency, but its strengths have little to do with historical fact.

Based in large part on George Jonas' *Vengeance* – an account widely discredited by several experts – Munich details the 1972 kidnapping and murder of 11 Israeli Olympic athletes. The film, however, uses the impact of these acts of terror as a jumping-off point to address the larger issues surrounding the centuries-old Mideast conflict and the ripple effects felt in the West.

When peace is made with the fact that *Munich* is not a documentary (a claim it clearly never makes), the contention with the film becomes less about historical fallacy than about its tendency to paint a human face on an issue that has long since lost its humanity. Showing terrorists as freedom fighters pining for a usurped land can be interpreted as a justification for heinous actions, while portraying Mossad agents as anything other than wholly patriotic and unwavering in their protection of Israel projects an element of weakness and insecurity that seems to highlight the current civil strife running through today's Israeli community.

In *Munich*, Spielberg reminds us of mankind's propensity toward conflict. He tries to illustrate where policies of the past have failed, policies still being implemented today. He hands out blame in equal measure and warns us of impending doom by focusing on an image of the World Trade Center in the background of the film's final frame.

But after 164 minutes of watching the film's political posturing, we realize that we are back precisely where we started. Nothing new has been added to this discourse, and so the question remains, what was the point of it all?

By focusing more on giving both sides an equal voice, Spielberg shies away from making any sort of bold statement that would give this film the kind of push it needed to really stir things up. In the end, when it comes to the core issues surrounding *Munich*, that of effectively dealing with bitterly divided and hostile people, the film avoids the next precarious step of taking a stand and pushing the envelope so as to provoke a more meaningful dialogue.

Roasted Spiced Sweet Potatoes

1 tsp. coriander seeds
1/2 tsp. fennel seeds
1/2 tsp. dried oregano
1/2 tsp. dried hot red pepper flakes
1 tsp. kosher salt
2 lbs. medium sized sweet potatoes
3 tblsps. olive oil

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Coarsely grind coriander, fennel, oregano, and red pepper flakes in processor. Stir together spices and salt. Wash potatoes and cut lengthwise into 1" wedges.

Toss wedges with oil and sprinkle over spices in a large roasting pan. Roast in middle of oven 20 minutes. Turn wedges over and roast 15-20 minutes more or until tender and slightly golden.

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WAITING FOR SHARON

A woman sits near a get-well sign outside the Hadassah - Ein Kerem Hospital in Jerusalem seemingly waiting for stricken Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to awaken from his coma. [Israel Sun photo]

Drugs: a followup

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

Last month, I asked people who had suffered from the angst of growing up, or who have a child suffering from drug abuse, to write me. Here are paraphrased excerpts from some responses. I hope they help you.

Dear Avrum:

I just read your column, and as someone who recovered more than 20 years ago, as a teenager, from the "hellish roller coaster" you described, I sincerely empathize with the mother you spoke to. My memories and regrets from that period are so strong that hardly a day goes by when I don't spent time dwelling on those years of struggle.

Certainly, the lack of peace (or vision) in my home played a big part in eroding my sense of purpose, hope and focus. If there were one vision I believe would have changed my life at that time, it would have been tikkun olam (repairing the world).

Ideally, this vision would have been conveyed from within my family, but it wasn't. My next hope would have been to get help through school counsellors, which is where I actually did gain valuable insight.

I began going to the library to study. I managed to quit drugs and even graduated from high school, albeit a year late. My efforts to turn my life around did not go unnoticed by some of my fellow students.

Still, responsibility without purpose left me still drifting from pleasure to pleasure for a number of years, and this is where my discovery of tikkun olam as a central priority in my life filled in the rest of the gaps.

Now, as a new parent of a darling little girl, it's my hope and prayer that she never experiences a lack of peace or vision in our home.

Signed: Shalom in the home

Shalom Avrum,

Our son died in 2000 at age 30 of an accidental overdose. He was introduced to the drug that killed him in Israel, by a student at a party at a yeshiva who told him he would feel euphoric if he tried it.

Our son was a user, and not a constant one, for only a year, or even less, but one small dose in a clean body was all it took for him to leave us. We could not understand what happened to our son, so we started going to JACS, an organization that helps Jewish alcoholics and drug addicts, and their friends and families (www.jacstoronto.org).

Until an addict admits he or she has a problem and that they sincerely want to stop, there is no use going to meetings. Support is so important. If a user/addict knows they aren't alone, then we have accomplished something positive. We are all good people who want the best for our families, but sadly and unfortunately, we're not all so lucky.

P.S. It's been more than five years, and I'm still wracked with pain.

Dear Avrum:

My daughter moved out of the house on her 16th birthday. My older son tried to keep tabs on her. She said she was moving in with a friend. She stopped calling. I didn't know it at the time, but she had checked herself into a clinic for drug addicts. Shortly afterward, she went to live with a rabbi and his family, who said she showed a desire to get off drugs. She started attending meetings at JACS and Toronto East General Hospital. She just had her 17th birthday and has been drug-free for almost three months. We are very proud of her. [At meetings], she spoke of her addiction and I heard things about her that I never knew. I sat and listened, totally stunned. This was my child. Oh my God! One of the things she said was that you can't help an addict until they want to be helped.

Avrum@vaadtoronto.org Shalom?

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This Week

National

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Jewish groups denounce family law arbitration changes. *Page 5*

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Mitchell Marcus wants to attract young people to musicals. *Page 50*

Books & Authors

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Canada Post Publication Agreement #40008684
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Olmert faces tough decisions

Acting PM will be tested from now until election time

By LESLIE SUSSER
JTA

Widely praised for the low-key and sensitive manner in which he has taken over from ailing Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Ehud Olmert is the odds-on favourite to win Israel's March 28 general election.

But the acting prime minister faces a number of severe early tests, and his continued popularity depends on how he copes.

First there is a potential flashpoint in Hebron, where young, right-wing Jewish extremists have been defying police and soldiers and challenging Olmert's authority.

Then there are a number of delicate issues regarding Palestinian elections on Jan. 25. Olmert has already had to make a call on whether there can be voting in eastern Jerusalem, and likely will have to decide in the immediate aftermath on Israel's attitude toward a Palestinian government including or even dominated by the terrorist group Hamas.

Analysis

In the run-up to Israel's own election, Olmert will have to decide how specific he wants to be about the possibility of a second Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank, following Sharon's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip and northern West Bank last summer.

How Olmert deals with the Hebron challenge could set the tone for something much bigger – future Israeli withdrawals from large parts of the West Bank. The standoff has been over the government's intention to evict Jewish settlers from Arab property in the town's vegetable market. The settlers say the property was originally Jewish-owned, and they therefore claim legal title to it.

Last Friday, young radicals from different parts of the West Bank converged on Hebron to confront police and soldiers who were carrying out the evacuation. The radicals, many of them masked, went on a rampage Sunday, destroying and burning Palestinian property and pelting Israeli security forces with stones and eggs.

Continued on page 43

Ex-Montrealer is Israel's newest homeboy

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

JERUSALEM — Most Israeli youth who bop to the beat of the new radio hit *Kabel!!!* (*Check This Out!!!*) have no idea it was done up by a Canadian.

But the unique "disco meets hip-hop" ditty is indeed one of 18 tracks on *Chai* (*Life*) – a Channel 24 best album of 2005 nominee, and the latest release by Canadian rapper Shai Haddad, aka SHI 360.

SHI 360 made aliyah from Montreal in November 2001. "I got here with two suitcases, a thousand Canadian dollars and a dream," recalls Haddad, 29, who left behind his job of five years as manager of operations at a direct marketing conglomerate to take the plunge. He made aliyah just three months after he returned to Montreal from a 10-day trip to Israel with birthright israel. "I had always dreamt of coming to Israel, but birthright was the last nail in the coffin," he says.

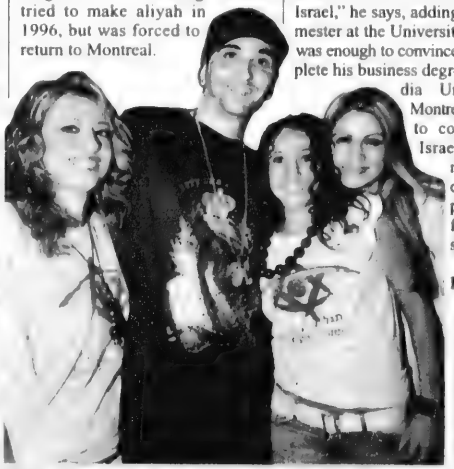
The move was nevertheless a long time in the making. Haddad tried to make aliyah in 1996, but was forced to return to Montreal.

"Until I arrived, I didn't realize how difficult it would be to live in Israel," he says, adding that one semester at the University of Tel Aviv was enough to convince him to complete his business degree at Concordia University in Montreal. "I decided to come back to Israel when I was mentally, emotionally, physically and financially stronger."

The stint in Israel was not without some success, since during his time there, he met Israeli hip-hop headliner Subliminal, with whom he established the T.A.C.T. Entertainment Group, which now handles Israeli rap stars Itzik Shamly, Sivan, Gavriel Butler and BooSkills. At the time, Subliminal went by the stage name "Caveman." It was Haddad who gave Subliminal his name.

Haddad's desire to move to Israel extends further back than 1996. Born in Haifa, Haddad moved with his family to Montreal when he was 11 years old. "The move to Canada was atrocious for me," says Haddad.

Continued on page 45



SHI 360 held a rapping workshop for birthright israel participants on Jan. 9. *[birthright israel photo]*

Election analysis in next week's *CJN*

As *The CJN* was going to press, Canadian voters were heading to the polls to elect a new federal government. We'll bring you analysis of key Jewish ridings in our Feb. 2 issue.

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Netanyahu says he'd make concessions for peace — see page 43

The News in Brief

Canada

Manor Appeals

TORONTO — The co-founder of the failed Toronto hedge fund Portus Alternative Asset Management appeared before Israel's Supreme Court last week to appeal an order to return allegedly ill-gotten diamonds or face a week in jail, the *Globe and Mail* reported. A Tel Aviv judge has twice ordered Boaz Manor, who fled to Israel last year after Portus collapsed and faces Ontario Securities Commission charges here, to return $9 million in gems that Portus's receiver, KPMG, contends he bought with firm funds. A ruling could come as early as this week.

World

Heirs Win Art Case

VIENNA — An Austrian arbitration court last week ordered the return of paintings to the heirs of their original Jewish owner. The ruling would return the works by Gustav Klimt, worth an estimated $200 million (US) to five heirs of Czech-Jewish businessman Ferdinand Bloch-Bauer. His niece, Maria Altmann, 89, sued Austria in 1999 to get back the paintings, which are still on display in Austria's Belvedere Gallery. The paintings were taken by the Nazis when Germany annexed Austria in 1938, the same year Bloch-Bauer fled the country. Three paintings will likely be transferred to Altmann, while two others, including a famous portrait of Altmann's aunt, would remain in the gallery and Altmann will be compensated for them.

Order Upheld

DETROIT — A U.S. appeals court upheld the decision to strip a Detroit man of his citizenship for lying about his World War II-era activities. The Jan. 12 decision strips Johann Leprich, 80, of his citizenship for lying about his participation in the Nazi Waffen SS when he came to the United States in 1958. The decision clears the way for Leprich, an ethnic German born in Romania, to be deported.

Annan in Map Flap

NEW YORK — The U.S. ambassador to the United Nations has asked Secretary General Kofi Annan to explain why he posed in front of a map that leaves out Israel. The *New York Sun* reported that John Bolton wrote to Annan Jan. 3 asking him why he attended a UN event, "The International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People," that featured the map. Annan's speech at the Nov. 29 event noted that Palestinian terrorism against Israelis was an obstacle to Palestinian progress. Bolton wants funding to be cut to the UN groups that organized the event, which are solely devoted to promoting the Palestinian cause.

Aliyah Interest Down?

PARIS — The number of people attending an annual Paris event focused on aliyah fell by more than half. Some 2,000 people came to the Jan. 15 Aliyah Day, which is organized by the Jewish Agency for Israel, compared to 4,500 a year ago. In early 2005, many Jews were fearful of anti-Semitic violence by North African youth, especially in suburbs of Paris. Aliyah Day this year came after a wave of Muslim rioting in November, but Jews were not targeted.

Robertson Apologizes

WASHINGTON — Israel's ambassador to the United States, Daniel Ayalon, has accepted an apology from Pat Robertson and planned to speak with the religious leader. Robertson apologized for saying Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's recent stroke was divine punishment for Israel's pullout from Gaza. Ayalon said Robertson has taken the outrage over his comments to heart. "I felt he was very sincere. He is a great friend of Israel," Ayalon said, adding he expected Robertson will again be allowed to take part in a project to build a Christian theme park in Israel.

Russian-Israeli Refugee Claimant Deported

ST. JOHN'S — A Russian-born Israeli refugee claimant who sought sanctuary with his family in a Marystown, Nfld., Catholic church was deported to Israel last week.

Alexi Portnoy, 34, came to Canada with his family in 1996 but was deported in 2000. They re-entered Canada illegally a year later and moved to Newfoundland in 2003.

Portnoy, whose father is Jewish, had been living in the church with his pregnant wife and four children – two of whom are Canadian citizens and don't face a deportation order – since September, but he was picked up by police last month for speeding after leaving the church to collect materials for a charity with a friend, Canadian Press reported.

In 2004, the family applied to stay in Canada on humanitarian grounds, but they were rejected reportedly because Portnoy had a car-theft conviction in Israel.

Supporters say one of their daughters has cystic fibrosis and can't get proper treatment in Israel, and he has said he doesn't want his children to face military service in Israel.

The couple is originally from Moldova and immigrated to Israel in 1991.

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Vol. XXXVI, No. 5 (1,732)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation 38,949 copies
Total paid circulation 38,099 copies

CCNA verified circulation Sept. 7, 2005

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada $35.95, 1 yr. Incl. GST
$63.95, 2 yr. Incl. GST
U.S.A.: $100 U.S funds, 1 yr
All other countries: $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr

Postmaster: Please return 29Bs and changes of address to Toronto office

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

*Under current ownership

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.

Canada

The Canadian Jewish news

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York school board pulls controversial children's book

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The York Region District School Board has pulled a controversial children's book about the Middle East from the prestigious Silver Birch Awards reading program for older elementary school students, but the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) will continue to make the book available to its students.

The book, *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak* by award winning author and anti-war activist Deborah Ellis, focuses on the testimony of Israelis and Palestinian children, and includes their views on everyday life and the Mideast conflict.

The Ontario Library Association (OLA) has vetted the book and recently included it as a nominee for its Silver Birch reading program, which is designed to encourage children in grades 4, 5 and 6 to read recreationally. School libraries stock the Silver Birch books and students can remove them and read them on their own, and not as part of the school curriculum. At the end of the school year, children vote for their favourite fiction and non-fiction book.

The OLA describes *Three Wishes* as allowing "young readers everywhere to see that the children caught in this conflict are just like them, but living far more difficult and dangerous lives. Without taking sides, it presents an unblinking portrait of children victimized by the endless struggle around them."

Critics, however, argue the book presents a uniformly negative image of Israel, provides little context for young readers about a conflict whose details are beyond their understanding, and introduces students to Palestinian youths who aspire to be suicide bombers and kill Israelis.

Late last week, the York Region board appeared to side with the critics.

"We will not be using *Three Wishes* as part of the Silver Birch selection," said Robert Dunn, superintendent of education for the York Region District School Board. "We've reviewed the material. It's not compliant with our policies, and it's not appropriate for the age group for which it is intended."

Dunn said if schools wish to use it for older students, they should "use it with caution in accordance with our learning resources guides to activity."

Tim Gauntley, program co-ordinator for libraries and learning resources with the TDSB, said the school board believes the book is "completely appropriate" and has no plans to restrict its availability to student readers. All the books available in the Silver Birch program are optional, Gauntley noted, adding "choices are made by students consulting with librarians and teachers.

"The point is to empower children to make independent reading choices" and to discuss the books with teachers, librarians and other students, he said.

Sarah Burakowski, a special education and resource teacher in the York Region school system who brought the book to Dunn's attention, said the book is "slanted, biased and inappropriate for children in grades 4 to 6... If this was [geared for] students in high school with the appropriate background knowledge, I would have no problem with it."

Burakowksi, who has been a teacher for 29 years, said the book demonizes the Israeli army and glorifies suicide bombers.

She said children participating in the Silver Birch program are not equipped to understand the complexities of the Mideast conflict or make sense of some of the Palestinian children's stated desire to either become a suicide bomber or applaud a sister who became one.

In *Three Wishes*, several Palestinian children say they hope they will be able to one day kill Jews.

Continued on page 6

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Greater Toronto Area

Lively debates of policy

From the editor's desk

The annual Herzliya Conference in Israel has evolved into a key forum for the public debating of security-related policies by experts of all professional stripes and nationalities and of the floating of policy trial balloons by Israeli politicians and their policy advisers.

Now in its sixth year, the conference is organized by the Institute for Policy and Strategy at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC), Herzilya. The high-intellectual-octane institute was founded and is headed by Uzi Arad, an internationally acknowledged thinker in matters of national security.

The conference this year began on Jan. 21 and concluded two days ago on Jan. 24. *The CJN* was fortunate to be there. Over the next few weeks, in this space, I will record some of my observations from the conference.

Since the conference last year, Israel unilaterally withdrew from the Gaza Strip and from four communities in the northern West Bank. Syrian troops left Lebanon. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad became president of Iran on Aug. 3, 2005. And elections were held in Iraq.

Last year's conference was held on the eve of Palestinian elections for president. Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat had died some weeks before. Most of the speakers spoke of great possibility hanging in the air then. This year's conference was held literally, on the eve of Palestinian elections scheduled for Jan. 25 and of Israeli elections scheduled two months later on March 28.

But the larger-than-life Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who has so dominated Israeli politics these past three years and who announced the policy of unilateral disengagement at this conference in 2003, is absent. He is, still, in a medically induced coma, fighting for his life, removed likely forever from public life.

The conference opened Saturday night, accentuating for everyone travelling to the seaside hotel where the conference is being held, the whirl and rush of frenetic post-Shabbat activity.

Among the more than half-dozen speakers Saturday night was Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz. He covered a number of subjects in his relatively brief remarks. Sounding nearly biblical in the severity of his words, he spoke directly to the leaders and the people of Iran. (Many presenters at the conference would speak about if not to the leaders of Iran. The subject of Iran's nuclearization was a prominent subject on the conference's agenda.)

"I suggest you take a look throughout history (was he referring to Haman and the story of Purim?) and see what has happened to others who tried to wipe out the Jewish people. The people of Iran should know that [President Mahmoud] Ahmadinejad's policies will bring disaster upon them."

Without using categorical words, he actually sounded quite categorical on the subject of Iran's drive to acquire nuclear weapons capability. "Israel is committed to protecting itself and that is what it will do."

Israel (Robert) J. Aumann, of the Center for the Study of Rationality, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and a recent Nobel Prize laureate in economics, was one of the keynote speakers.

He spoke at length and emphatically, occasionally borrowing from some of the concepts of mathematics and game theory for which he won the Nobel Prize. He also spoke "politically" from his heart as much as from his prodigious mind, and as some people observed, quite provocatively, expressing open skepticism about the motives of the leaders of the PA and the Palestinian people.

"I fear that the number of the Palestinians who want to live in peace with Israelis is a minority. What are their true objectives?"

Aumann was critical of the Palestinian leaders. He demanded that they stop their incitement against Israel and the Jewish people. But he was also critical of Israeli leaders.

"But we are also guilty because we did not demand that they [the Palestinians] stop the incitement.

"And this [the unceasing incitement], in a sense, was even more horrible than the actual acts of terror. The small ones, who are taught to wipe Israel off the map, soon become grown-ups who hold on to that objective."

Aumann reminded the audience that Israel's neighbours have a very different sense of history. They take a longer view of the passage of time, recalling the evanescence of the Crusaders as merely a fleeting episode of Christian involvement in the eternity of unfolding time in the "Muslim part of the world."

He was clearly not supportive of the unilateral disengagement from Gaza. He felt it was a betrayal of the people whose lives had been uprooted as well as a glaring example of the failure to go slow in trying to change the other side's approach to accepting Jewish involvement in this part of the world.

"Our problem is that we are in a rush. We do not understand the future. But if we have patience and persuade the other side that we are prepared to wait for a long time and to keep the status quo, then perhaps we can arrive at true peace. Peace is much like honour. He who pursues it will find it elusive."

True peace and how to achieve it was the recurring theme, in many variations, throughout the four-day conference. And because, there were so many people speaking about it and thus, so many competing opinions, the discussions were quite lively.

— *MBD*

See JN

DEEP IN STUDY

Boys attend a Bible class in an enclave slated for eviction in the West Bank city of Hebron. Israeli police forcibly removed a handful of right-wing Jewish youths from the West Bank town of Hebron last week to try to end days of unrest over plans to evict a settler enclave there.

[RNS/Reuters photo]

Jewish groups say new bill targets beit dins

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

Ontario's planned changes to family law arbitration were denounced last week as discriminatory and "blatantly" unfair to Jews.

Over two days of public hearings on Bill 27, which seeks to amend the 1991 Arbitration Act, Jewish groups said the government, in its quest to ban *sharia*-based Islamic tribunals, has targeted rabbinic courts, which have functioned unimpeded in Ontario since 1889.

It was the first chance Jewish organizations had to speak out on the bill, which they have charged was written without any input or consultation from them.

Last September, Premier Dalton McGuinty announced that "there will be no religious arbitration in Ontario. There will be one law for all Ontarians." His move capped two years of heated debate in Ontario over a proposal from a Muslim group to set up tribunals that would employ *sharia*, or Islamic law.

There was widespread fear that such panels would discriminate against women in matters of child custody and inheritance.

But McGuinty left the Jewish community concerned that his decision would extend to the rulings of rabbinical courts.

Since the Arbitration Act was enacted in 1991 to take pressure off courts, all rulings of a rabbinical court – a *beit din* – have been enforceable in a secular court, provided both parties consented.

Jewish groups are concerned that Bill 27 – which deals only with arbitration in family law, including child custody, inheritance and division of assets – could have the effect of stripping *beit din* rulings of their legal authority in these areas.

The bill also calls for family arbitrators to be trained members of "specified" dispute resolution organizations. As well, family arbitration would be conducted "exclusively in accordance with the law of Ontario," or of another Canadian jurisdiction.

In its submission to the legislative committee reviewing Bill 27, the Ontario region of Canadian Jewish Congress said the legislation "overshoots its own intentions" and would lead to "unintended and undesirable results."

Although the words "faith-based arbitration" do not appear in the bill, its context "suggests it was intended to prevent such arbitration," stated Mark Freiman, honorary legal counsel for CJC's Ontario region and a former deputy attorney general of Ontario.

While Congress agrees that consent is required to appear before a faith-based arbitration panel, it said it does not agree that the solution is to remove the government's support for these procedures.

Rather than remove the state's support, the legislation "should stand strongly beside any woman who chooses to express herself through her faith, knowing she need not compromise her Canadian sensibilities," CJC's brief stated.

Family law arbitration, whether faith-based or not, is not inherently coercive, unfair or contrary to Canadian laws and values, Freiman said, adding that it is "insulting" to curtail the autonomy of faith communities.

Bill 27 would not eliminate faith-based arbitration but drive it underground, while costs of resolving family disputes and court wait times will both increase, CJC warned.

The focus should be on results of arbitration, not the process, it added.

Congress also noted that to its "dismay" that it was not consulted on the bill.

So did B'nai Brith Canada in its submission. Legal counsel Anita Bromberg told the committee that her organization was "largely ignored" in the process. She said it is the Jewish community that is "most unfairly burdened" by the bill, which would push faith-based arbitrations "further underground."

The next day, the Liberal-dominated committee rejected both of CJC's "suggested improvements" to the bill: a consent requirement for those entering arbitration, and an amendment stating that a family law arbitration is not enforceable unless it is compatible with the law of Ontario and the Charter of Rights.

The ranking Conservative on the committee, Bob Runciman, spoke in favour of the amendments, while the NDP's Peter Kormos voiced his party's opposition to efforts by private tribunals to have their decisions enforced by courts.

The ranking Liberal on the committee, Willowdale MPP David Zimmer, had no comment.

The most direct criticism of the legislation came from lawyer John Syrtash, who told the committee that the bill, as it stands, should be "completely withdrawn, not just amended or modified."

Appearing on behalf of the Vaad Harabonim of Toronto and several Orthodox groups, Syrtash called the bill "blatantly unfair" and a "harrowing, tragic mistake… unique in the world."

He hinted at a future court challenge, saying that if the bill is passed in its current form, the Vaad and others are "committed to defending the historic rights of the Jewish people in Ontario… since the government has no business in the synagogues of the nation."

Syrtash noted that the bill would enjoin courts from enforcing the ruling of a family law arbitrator if it was based on a non-Canadian legal system.

But such systems, he said, have been historically based almost exclusively on Jewish law and banning such enforceability "would likely" contravene the rights of Jews under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Syrtash also argued that the bill would effectively render all previous *beit din* rulings in family law void if they have not yet been incorporated into secular court rulings. He said the bill contains no transitional or grandparenting clauses for old rulings, something that would lead to more litigation and reopen "countless disputes going back several generations."

"Think what you're doing," he told MPPs.

The bill especially targets Orthodox women, he added.

"The Jewish concept of modesty – *tznius*– requires privacy. It is crucial to a Jewish woman's spiritual maintenance. This bill takes that right away from her. If you interfere with women's rights to privacy, you are on the road to tyranny."

Jewish law prohibits Orthodox Jews from taking fellow Jews to a secular court, said Syrtash. As well, the Orthodox do not want the "public glare and expense" of secular courts.

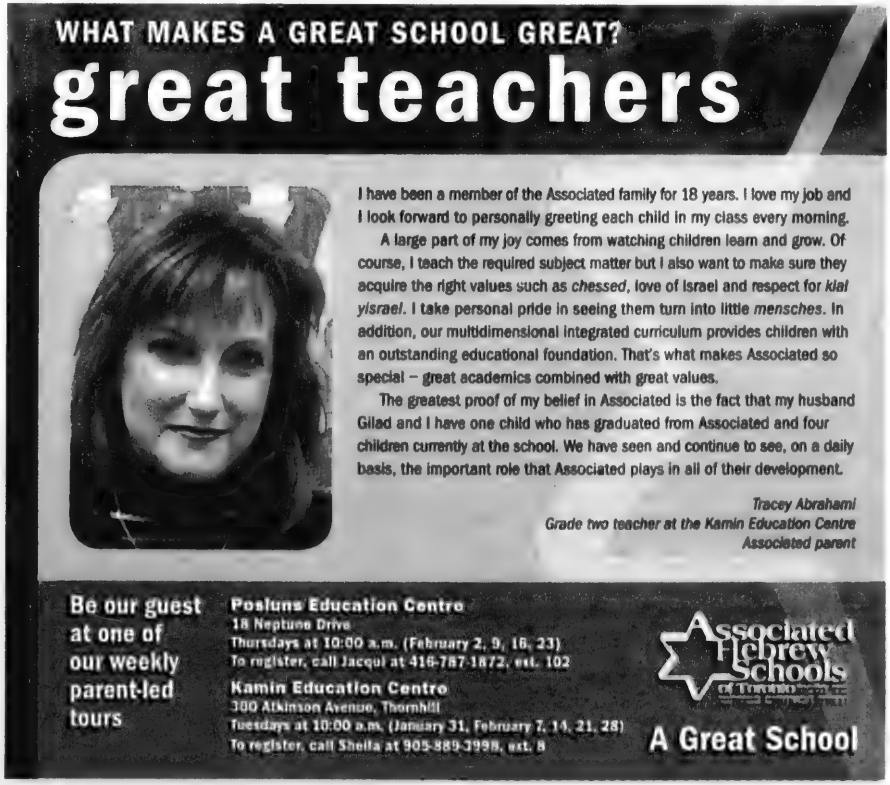
He said there have been no problems with family law rulings by rabbinic courts in more than a century – a fact he said was noted in an extensive report to the government supporting faith-based arbitration, written by former Ontario attorney general Marion Boyd.

Appearing with Syrtash was Rabbi Mordechai Ochs, head of Toronto's *Beit Din Zedek*, which issues Jewish divorce decrees – the *get*.

Though the legislation would not affect the issuing of *gets*, Rabbi Ochs said the law "cannot address a problem by taking rights away from others."

Jewish women, Rabbi Ochs said, "are not discriminated against. They enjoy the fact that they are treated as equals."

The bill now heads to third reading.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Associated Hebrew Schools
A Great School

Little context given to explain books, teacher says

Continued from page 3

One Palestinian girl, Wafa, 12, complains about Israeli military checkpoints, saying " the Israeli soldiers treat us like dogs. They make us stand and wait for no good reason, just because they can.

"Killing an Israeli will make me feel glad. It will make me feel strong… I am tired of them making me feel small and weak. I want to feel strong and proud."

Another Palestinian girl, Maryam, 11, said "there are women martyrs who do the suicide bombings. They are very brave… I have only one wish. I would like to go to heaven. Maybe in heaven there is happiness after we die. Maybe then."

Salam, the 12-year-old sister of suicide bomber Aayat Al-Akhras, who killed herself, a security guard and 17-year-old Rachel Levy at a Jerusalem market, said she would have made her sister a special breakfast on the day of her attack, had she known about it.

"I don't think it would hurt if I blew myself up. I don't think it hurt my sister. I think she was very brave, not scared at all. I think she was probably very happy," Salam said.

Though students can later discuss the book with a teacher, there is very little context and background given to explain the books, Burakowski said.

Similar concerns were voiced by a teacher/librarian in the Toronto school system, who did not want her name used. She said she and two non-Jewish teachers were concerned "that the children don't have enough knowledge of what is going on in the Middle East to figure out what is fact or opinion."

For instance, she said, one Palestinian girl asserts Israeli don't want her to do well in school. "That's not a fact, but it's something she's been taught to believe.

"I didn't feel, and neither did the other teachers, that the children here have the knowledge to understand the difference between opinion and fact."

Miriam Drazin, a teacher in York with 25 years experience, said the book presents "a very negative picture of Israel."

One example she pointed to was a Palestinian child claiming Palestinians drink one cup of water versus four cups drunk by Israelis. "I think if you hand the book out kids, will accept it as fact.

"I found it is so negative. They each hate the other side.

"One child talks about being a martyr. Is that what we want our children to be reading about?"

Peggy Thomas, chair of the OLA's selection committee, said she did not agree the book demonizes the Israeli army. She rejected criticism the book was not age-appropriate, saying young children can understand the book's underlying message that hate is something that is taught.

"I think that's something kids in grades 4, 5 and 6 will get," she said.

Thomas said the book does not take sides and the author, who she called "a remarkable human being," wanted to let the children speak for themselves.

"What you have here is what the children have expressed to her," Thomas said. "What she's done here is given them a place to voice their responses to what their lives are like."

References by Palestinian youngsters to suicide bombers "could be dealt with by supportive teaching," she continued. "This is what the children are feeling. I think what Deborah Ellis' idea was was to show how an environment warps children's perceptions."

"You have to teach about these things," she said. "It opens minds to what is happening in the world."

Children's book critic Jeffrey Canton said, "I feel quite passionately about this book. I feel it is an extremely brave attempt to give voices to a very complex situation.

"The notion that this is a situation far beyond the comprehension of children in these grades is troubling. Because, what are teachers and librarians for but to help give context… for these very complex issues."

Avi Benlolo, director of the Canadian office of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, called the book "very disturbing." It presents a gloomy "war-torn" picture of Israel with no reference to the fact it is a modern, first world country where people lead ordinary lives.

Benlolo said the book "can create a negative attitude about Israel and Jews."

Len Rudner, director of community relations for Canadian Jewish Congress, said "my initial take on the book is that the contents require a more mature reader. I believe the book may have some value, but children aged nine to 11 may be too young to understand a book and the real life events it describes."

"This is a book that gives children the opportunity to discuss their pain."

"The position Congress has always taken is that the schools have the responsibility to deal with sensitive issues in a sensitive manner," he added.

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Canadian, Israeli doctors work together in Israel

Working to improve orthopedic surgery

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

As part of an ongoing medical exchange program, Dr. Cari Whyne, a biomechanical engineer at Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre in Toronto, was in Israel last month to share her expertise in orthopedic surgical technology with Israeli doctors.

Sunnybrook Hadassah Orthopedic Trauma Exchange (SHOTE) is a five-year-old initiative that involves Sunnybrook & Women's, the University of Toronto's faculty of medicine, the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem, and the faculty of medicine at Hebrew University.

"We're always working in conjunction with clinicians, surgeons and scientists, developing methods to answer their questions and then translating that back to changing and improving clinical practice," Whyne said of her work at Sunnybrook.

Her Dec. 16-24 trip to Israel, sponsored by SHOTE, gave her the opportunity to develop both clinical and research collaborations with Israeli doctors, she said.

During her visit to Hadassah, Whyne worked to help improve the hospital's finite element modelling lab, which doctors use to better understand the inner workings of bones and muscular tissues.

She also worked with orthopedic trauma surgeon Dr. Amal Khoury, an Israeli Arab who spent a year at Sunnybrook treating pelvic trauma before returning to Hadassah last year.

While Whyne had much to offer the Israeli medical staff at Hadassah, she, along with Sunnybrook's orthopedic trauma surgeon and SHOTE chair Dr. Joel Finkelstein, also benefitted from the Israeli doctors' expertise about computer-assisted orthopedic surgery, which creates three-dimensional images to help surgeons realign bones.

Doctors Joel Finkelstein, bottom left, and Cari Whyne, top left, joined doctors Amal Khoury, bottom right, and Yoram Weil at the Hadassah Medical Center in Jerusalem to collaborate on orthopedic research.

Leonard Goodman, chair of SHOTE's financial advisory board, said that contrary to what people might think, the Israeli doctors are not the only ones benefiting from the exchange of ideas and research.

"We here in Canada are learning a great deal from Israeli resources. Most people do not understand that. What is Canada getting out of this? We're getting access to some terrific technology and brain power," he said.

"We have different strengths that can really compliment one another," Whyne added.

"[The Israeli orthopedic trauma surgeons at Hadassah] are the leaders of the clinical application of computer assisted orthopedic surgery," she said.

"There are excellent opportunities for collaborating some of the technologies we have here, and some of our engineering analyses, with the research and clinical abilities that they have there."

One of the areas that Israeli doctors were interested in learning about, Whyne said, was finite element modelling, which is used to better understand the inner workings of bones and muscular tissues.

"It can predict fracture," she said of the model. "If there is strain in a specific area, [we can predict] where it's going to break."

Although the doctors were interested in this technology, Whyne noted that the Hadassah doctors were mostly interested in her expertise in computer-assisted orthopedic surgery.

Continued on page 54

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Role reversal, a 'strategic aim'

The line of Jewish history pushes – some say providentially, some say mysteriously, some say inexorably – forward. But most of us are able to see its path only by looking back. We seldom see it ahead because our vision is often clouded by ephemeral clutter. And even less frequently do we steer its course, though it is often imperative that we try.

The editorial in the *Jerusalem Post* of Jan. 20 was an urgent effort to etch that line deep into the consciousness of Jews around the world. Titled "Save the Diaspora," it commented on the release last week of the second annual report by the Jewish People Policy Planning Institute on the state of world Jewry. Specifically, the editorial writer lamented the seemingly unstoppable decline in the number of Jews living outside the State of Israel and urged the new Israeli government that will be elected on March 28 to "formally define the revitalization of the Diaspora as a strategic aim."

Some 58 years year after the State of Israel came into existence, the roles between the two broadly labelled Jewish communities – Israel and the Diaspora – are essentially being reversed.

When Israel was born, there were more than 10 times the number of Jews living in the United States than in the nascent Jewish state. Today the populations are approximately equal. Indeed according to renowned Hebrew University demographer Sergio DellaPergola, merely 45,000 more Jews live in the United States today than in Israel.

On the one hand, it is a remarkable story of the courageous, resolute rebuilding of the ancient Jewish homeland and the restoring to sovereign self-rule of the long-suffering, long-ago displaced Jewish people. On the other hand, however, it is also the sad, disheartening story of the modern assimilation of western Jewry.

In short course, given demographic trends, Israel will have the largest Jewish population of any community in the world. Many will contend that is as it should be. But no one will suggest it should be that way because of the unceasing decline in the number of Jews outside Israel. DellaPergola noted that the current population of the Diaspora is 7.5 million people. Over the past 35 years, the number has actually shrunk by some 2.25 million – and not because of aliyah. Though not as alarming as the numbers in the United States, the demographic pattern for Canadian Jews is hardly encouraging, as emeritus professor Leo Davids of York University recently wrote in *The CJN*.

If Israeli leaders are being urged to "save the Diaspora," the task falls first and foremost to us, the Jews of the Diaspora, and to our leaders.

The prescription is an old one.

But the resolve must be new.

The lines of Jewish life must be indelible and is is our responsibility to write them.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• In Jerusalem, Edgar Bronfman was unanimously elected president of the World Jewish Congress. His election was hailed by a spokesperson for the Canadian delegation as "a symbol of a new generation taking over with judgement, businesslike attitude and courage in decision making."

Dry Bones
A PENTAGON ANALYST GOT 12 YEARS FOR TELLING TWO AIPAC GUYS CLASSIFIED INFO ABOUT A THREAT TO ISRAEL.
NOW THE TWO FORMER AIPAC EMPLOYEES ARE BEING PROSE-CUTED.
FOR WHAT?
ISN'T IT OBVIOUS?!?
FOR NOT STICKING THEIR FINGERS IN THEIR EARS.
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The ban on Rabbi Slifkin's work (1)

In "The Slifkin affair: a lament for Orthodoxy" (*CJN*, Jan. 12), Joseph Yossi Adler seems to use the argument that the "the vast majority of the western world has accepted the age of the universe and certain other well-established scientific principles" as a means of decrying the fact that leaders of the haredi community have imposed a ban on Rabbi Nosson Slifkin's work. Surely, he must realize that the annals of scientific history are replete with once well-accepted principles that have long since been abandoned as irrelevant or untrue.

Moreover, Judaism has never held to the idea of accepting as true the beliefs of the world outside its own hallowed traditions. Its very survival to this day is proof of that.

Those who occupy the rarefied air of leaders like Rabbi Shlomo Miller didn't attain their status by chance. They have done so by having continuously demonstrated not only an unequaled breadth of Torah knowledge, but as well the spirit of wisdom necessary to translate that knowledge into rulings applicable to modern times.

The words chosen by Rabbi Miller and others who have spoken out against Rabbi Slifkin may not be the ones we would have chosen ourselves to express in casual conversation, but insofar as they come from one of unquestioned authority, they must of necessity be chosen to convey not only ideas, but the sense of urgency those ideas require. Nor can I acquiesce to the idea Rabbi Miller's condemnation was meant to quash the debate, for here we see Adler debating with as much vigour as ever.

Rabbi Miller did nothing more than what his community expected him to do. He expressed a point of view on a controversial matter, one that he alone was capable of expressing. Surely, this was nothing less that Rabbi Slifkin himself was expecting.

Sheldon Liberman
Toronto

* * *

The ban on Rabbi Slifkin's work (2)

I recently had the privilege of hearing Rabbi Nosson Slifkin speak at a Torah In Motion seminar. I thoroughly enjoyed his speech and have begun reading one of his books, *Seasons of Life*, which is equally interesting. I would like to see the ban on his writing lifted, so his books can be enjoyed by more people.

Ora Shore
Toronto

Closing of breastfeeding clinic

I was dismayed, but not entirely surprised, that a North York General Hospital spokesperson was quoted as saying that "not all women breastfeed… it is a personal choice" when asked about the rationale for closing Dr. Jack Newman's breastfeeding clinic ("Advocate fights to reopen breastfeeding clinic," *CJN*, Jan. 12).

From this comment, it seems that hospital budget-makers believe that life would be simpler if more women fed their babies with formula. This makes no sense at all.

Even a brief exploration of the topic will reveal to anyone the endless advantages of breastfeeding. However, some women need support – not just hand-holding, but skilled instruction and sometimes medical assessment – to nurse infants optimally. Without these resources, more women will certainly turn to formula feeding, because it is touted as being "simpler."

What a shame that the only MD-supervised lactation clinic in Toronto is not deemed worthy of a hospital-based location. As a new mother, I am grateful to Newman as a patient, and I know of many mothers in the Jewish community who have visited his clinic. As an MD, I continue to be grateful to Newman for his tireless efforts to educate his colleagues, myself included.

Elana Lavine
Toronto

* * *

Kehilat Or Hadash not egalitarian

Kehilat Or Hadash (KOH) was mistakenly described as a "New egalitarian minyan aimed at young Jews" in *The CJN* (Jan. 19). While we do believe that our new minyan is innovative, creative and dynamic, we do not describe it as egalitarian.

KOH attempts to push gender boundaries in many respects, however, there are not identical roles for women and men in the realm of tfillah. Pushing the limits of a Halachic framework, KOH encourages women to lead Psukei D'zimra and parts of the Torah service, as well as participate in giving divrai Torah. At the same time, however, KOH davens with a traditional mechitzah and men lead portions of the tfillah that are dvar she'bkedushah, such as Shacharit and Musaf.

While KOH does not offer identical opportunity for men and women to participate in davening, it does offer equal opportunity for space, comfort and dialogue.

Daniel Held
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Munich not faithful to my book, author says

By SHLOMO SCHWARTZBERG
Special to The CJN

Everything old is new again.

That expression has gained renewed cachet with the 2005 rerelease of George Jonas' *Vengeance* (Simon & Schuster), the 1984 book that is the basis for Steven Spielberg's controversial film *Munich*.

Jonas' equally controversial book, which tells the dramatic story of the Israeli Mossad's hunting down of the Palestinian terrorists responsible for the massacre of 11 Israeli athletes at the 1972 Munich Olympics, made a clear moral distinction – reiterated in its last paragraph – between terrorism and counterterrorism. The $70 million Hollywood movie, by many accounts, does not, adding a key scene that offers up the Palestinian point of view and others in which the Mossad agents engage in constant questioning of their mission.

Sitting in the lobby café of a local hotel, Jonas, voice hoarse from all the interviews he's done about the movie in recent weeks, seems almost bemused about the furor over the film adaptation, which he also addressed in a recent *Maclean's* magazine cover story about the ongoing run-ins he had with various people involved with the film over the last five years. "The interesting thing is that the film actually is quite faithful, perhaps slightly more faithful, to the letter of the book than I would have been had I made a film of it. What it is not faithful to is the fundamental spirit of the book," says Jonas.

In *Maclean's*, he wrote: "The book has no trouble telling an act of war from a war crime; the film finds it difficult. Spielberg's movie worries about the moral trap of resisting terror; my book worries about the moral trap of not resisting it." Fortunately, Jonas says, "There have been a handful of reviewers, in the *New York Times*, the *Weekly Standard*, who actually bothered reading the book before making comparisons between the movie and the book. [They] saw the fundamental difference between the conclusions of the book and the conclusions of the film"

George Jonas

However, most journalists, whether defending or attacking Spielberg's film, have also taken a swipe at Jonas' book, deeming it inaccurate or saying its veracity has been called into question, specifically concerning the "existence" of the Mossad team leader, Avner, the non-descript Israeli whom Jonas was introduced to in hopes he would tell his story in a book.

Says Jonas, "The use of the word discredited when you mean to say attacked or denigrated comes from a limited understanding of the English language, without which it is difficult to be a journalist. The book had been denigrated and attacked by various sources, both when it came out the first time and after the reissue [with the new subheading "The True Story of an Israeli Counter-Terrorist Team"]. A number of people who want to attack Spielberg for a whole variety of reasons his take on history, his interpretation – find it a natural start to say that his film is based on a discredited book. It's a kind of an in to attack Spielberg.

Steven Spielberg's *Munich* was based on George Jonas' book.

"Personally… like every writer, I would be happier if there were no suggestion about the book's research lacking or being in any way in doubt," Jonas adds, sending this interviewer to the new edition of *Vengeance* and the 15-page afterword he says addresses all the criticisms of the initial book. "I feel quite comfortable about my research [for the book]."

Malcolm Lester, whose then-company Lester & Orpen Dennys co-published the book with Collins in 1984, stands by the book's truthfulness, as well, provocatively adding that many of the broadsides against it "may come from the Mossad who want to create disinformation.

"I can only guess that," he added, pointing out that when *Vengeance* first appeared Israel's spy agency denied even engaging in targeted assassinations. ("Today," says Jonas, "you see examples of counterterrorism on television, on CNN news; you see an Israeli missile launched to strike a terrorist enclosure on the West Bank.")

Lester also met Avner and says, "I have no doubt that Avner at one level is who he says he was; whether all the details [he gives] are true… [But] I think George got at the truth of what was going on."

Jonas had nothing to do with *Sword of Gideon*, the 1986 four-hour TV movie also based on the book. (It comes out on DVD on Feb. 28.) "It's a bit of a plodding movie," Jonas says. That was also when the rights for the book were sold to Alliance, now Alliance Atlantis, who then sold them to Spielberg and company. "I would not have had that choice of not selling to Spielberg," he says, "but frankly had I had that choice, I would have sold it [to him]."

Controversy, like that swirling around *Munich*, is nothing new to the Hungarian-born Jonas, who still exudes a gentle old-world European charm, despite having spent most of his life in Canada. (He emigrated from Hungary after the Soviet-quashed 1956 uprising.) His strong opinions, such as those decrying Communist holocausts as comparable to the Shoah, have been manifest in his columns for the *National Post*, which he's been writing since the newspaper's inception in 1998, and in his syndicated newspaper column for CanWest Publications, which date back to the mid-'90s. (He writes one column a week each for the *Post* and CanWest.)

Jonas was the writer/ producer/ director of the award-winning *The Scales of Justice*, dramatizations of landmark and interesting judicial cases that Jonas did for both CBC radio and television from 1981 to '96. David Cronenberg directed a TV segment of the show in 1990 when he was in between movies.

Jonas writes regular columns for *The Canadian Lawyer*, the *Toronto Sun* and *Toronto Life* magazine, and he has written several works for the stage such as the full-length play *Pushkin* and more than a dozen books. His memoirs, *Beethoven's Mask: Notes on My Life and Times* (Key Porter Books), came out last fall, around the same time he celebrated a milestone 70th birthday.

His major birthday and the release of *Beethoven's Mask* were just a coincidence ("I was actually a year too late [with the book]. It took me longer to write," says Jonas). But it prompts a question as to whether he's surprised at how his life turned out. "I came here like any immigrant, doing all kinds of jobs, from being a taxi driver to parking-garage attendant. For me, it seems pretty much what people do. I know that most people are not writers, [so] in that sense it was unusual. Whether you're a writer or a dentist makes very little difference. You learn how to handle the tools of your trade and then you handle them."

Despite his success as a writer/ producer/ director, and for the last 20-plus years as a freelancer, Jonas has always felt like an outsider. He tells the story of when he parked cars for the members of Toronto's tony Granite Club. "A Granite Club member couldn't place my accent and he said, let the Martian park my car. In many ways, he was accurate.

"I was always a bit of a Martian in any group. I did not fully belong to any group that I nominally was a member of, whether it was fellow writers, fellow Hungarians or fellow Canadians or fellow Jews or fellow lyric poets or fellow motorcycle racers. I was never quite at home [with them], so in that sense I was a bit of an outsider."

That's a description that many writers and artists would embrace, he adds. "If you were to ask me a question, do I belong to a group called outsiders, the answer may be yes."

Politically, Jonas is often perceived as a right-winger, probably since his employers at the *Post* and Can West have that reputation and since he does tend to buck the liberal-left trend prevalent in a good part of the Canadian media. He disputes that label. "I do not see myself as a libertarian. I certainly don't see myself as a neoconservative. I see myself as a classical liberal. My political views I derive from 19th-century liberalism, [from] John Stuart Mill, the kind of liberalism derived from the Scottish philosophers, not from the French revolution." It's a liberalism that he regards "as an organic property of existence, not a gift of the state."

He refers to the late John F. Kennedy's famous dictum, "Ask not what your country can do for you but what you can do for your country." "I would have some difficulties with that," says Jonas. "I believe that it's the country that exists for its individuals, for its people, rather than the individual for the country."

Those views come into contentious play today in our post-9 /11 world. "9 / 11 has awakened people to one danger, the danger of international terrorism, a certain totalitarian streak of Muslim theocracies" he stresses. "But in another sense, it's increased the aspect of statism in many areas, in the name of security. It's not because [the need for security] is not real, but it can serve as an excuse for that all-encroaching state to interfere with more and more aspects of your existence and develop more and more control over your life as an individual, on the basis that it's doing it for your own security. The paternalism of the state has been increased."

If so, it's a safe bet that Jonas will continue to sound the warnings against that paternalism and all the other pernicious ideologies that he fears affect us all.

Media biases revisited

When reflecting on the past five years of the Mideast conflict, there's no doubt that Israel has been able to defend itself militarily, and convincingly so. By contrast, it's had much less success on the public relations and media fronts, where, time and again, unbalanced coverage has given the Palestinian cause many an undeserved victory. The reasons for this are complex. And while it's generally recognized that the stereotype of Israel as the aggressor and the Palestinians as the interminable victim remains a dominant theme on the universal propaganda screen, challenges to such imagery have been mostly insufficient and ineffective.

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

In her recently published book *The Other War: Israelis, Palestinians and the Struggle for Media Supremacy* (Encounter Books, 2005), journalist Stephanie Gutmann skillfully examines this phenomenon, with a particular focus on the dynamics that have driven elements of Israel's foreign press corps to ever loftier heights of sensationalist, and seriously flawed, reporting.

In one chapter, titled "If it bleeds, it leads," she describes the cynicism of bureau chiefs and senior editors who tend to pursue, at all costs, the guts and gore that they perceive to be intrinsically newsworthy. In other sections, she goes behind the scenes to explore the sometimes murky domains of the "fixers" – those indispensable Arab translators who, in Gutmann's words, also double up as a foreign correspondent's "native guide, driver, and maker of introductions."

And it comes as no great revelation that these "media assistants," as the fixers prefer to be called, inevitably "control what reporters see, whom they meet, and even every word they hear." Many of them, we're told, have trained at the Media Institute of Bir Zeit University in Ramallah, where, incidentally, Hamas candidates last year won a majority of student council seats on a platform of having killed more Jews than any other group running for election!

Whole chapters of Gutmann's text are devoted to contextualizing some of the most flagrant media distortions to have emerged from the intifadah – including the "massacre that wasn't" at Jenin and the chicanery surrounding the shooting of 12 year old Mohammed al-Dura. The al-Dura incident, we'll recall, pointed the finger of blame at Israeli soldiers and added instant fuel to an already explosive situation. It was only months later that forensic evidence demonstrated that Palestinian, and not Israeli, bullets were the likeliest cause for the boy's death.

The Other War is both absorbing and informative. Through well-researched examples and the personal experiences of its author, it reminds us that the news and those who mould it are not to be taken at face value – and all the more so when matters as intricate as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are the subject of discussion.

We backed Sharon in his hour of near-greatness

Every morning at dawn, I hop over to the Machane Yehuda food market to buy fresh bread for my kids' lunches. That's when I tune into the talk of the day among the vendors. If the latest soccer or basketball match isn't on their minds, politics is sure to be the next best thing.

Ross Culiner in Jerusalem

Making my way groggily between the various stalls on Erev Shabbat, Jan. 13, as our country's prime minister lay unconscious in Hadassah Hospital, I was struck by how normal the overall mood was. I had expected a pall of glum silence to have settled over everything, punctuated now and then by muted murmurings of sympathy and even despair. After all, one of the most venerable personalities in Israeli public life for the better part of the past half century, and the country's unchallenged political leader, was in grave condition.

Quite to the contrary, the air was electric with energy and anticipation, as it is each and every Friday while merchants frantically prepare for the coming tide of weekend shoppers. There was little hint of a country beset by deep crisis. Indeed, not a single thread of conversation about "Arik" reached my ears during my brief walk.

On the one hand, I was somewhat encouraged by the fact that the tried and tested routines of life were proceeding apace, undisrupted. It strengthened my faith in the essential stability of our society. There was this widespread confidence, apparently, that nothing fundamental to our survival and security had come under any kind of serious threat as a result of the prime minister's illness. People retained their belief that the ship of state was a seaworthy vessel, not so easily steered off course by even the severest of political storms.

And yet, the more I thought about it, the odder it all seemed. There was not even a whisper of the name "Sharon" during the 15 minutes I'd spent in the market? Mere coincidence? Perhaps. I could not help but contrast, however, this mood of perceived calm with the profound outpourings of personal and public grief, and the sense of irreplaceable loss, that followed prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination some 10 years earlier. For in spite of all the differences, there was also a point of convergence, namely that now, as then, we, the people of Israel, were being robbed of the single individual who, through his personal prestige, clout, conviction and determination, had enabled our country to take some of the most difficult, risky and fateful decisions in its history.

And, indeed, all the way home I debated with myself about whether I was being misled by my own biased perceptions. Just because I had trouble feeling for Ariel Sharon, did that necessarily mean that others did as well? Surely not everyone continued to dwell, as I always did, upon the deeds and misdeeds of the younger, leaner and meaner Sharon of years gone by – the one whose name was associated with acts of brutality in places such as Qibya and Sabra and Shatila. Surely not everyone, like me, bore him a permanent grudge for the way he'd betrayed me, one of his soldiers, and our prime minister, Menachem Begin, too, during the war in Lebanon. And how many others continued to resent him, I wondered, for the way he had squandered national resources in a grossly miscalculated settlement extravaganza?

It had been easier, I decided at last, to grieve for Rabin. He'd possessed the human frailty and stuttering diffidence of a tragic hero, whereas Sharon would be remembered for his bewildering inconsistency, for a career marked by a mix of heroism, headstrong impetuousness, raw opportunism, outright callousness, occasional pragmatism and a dramatic, last-minute and almost noble reinvention of himself and his ideology.

And if many of us lined up loyally behind this latter-day Sharon, it was despite the lingering hurt and disgust. It was because there was a final hour of near-greatness, when at long last, and with the full force of his wilful character, he'd mounted a heroic charge towards a more feasible future. And not necessarily because we loved him all that much, or had quite forgiven him everything.

Culiner@netvision.net.il

The pragmatic centre will carry Sharon's legacy

In the five years he served as Israel's prime minister, Ariel Sharon completely altered both Israeli politics and Israel's complex relationship with the Palestinians.

In early 2001, when Sharon brought down what remained of Ehud Barak's Labor government after the failed Camp David summit, Israel faced a well-planned terror campaign. Moving deliberately, even after mass terror bombings against buses and cafes, Sharon kept Israeli society united while isolating and eventually defeating Palestinian Authority President Yasser Arafat, both militarily and politically. This was Sharon's second strategic success (his first came as a tank commander in the 1973 war), and it completed his political comeback after the disastrous Lebanon campaign in 1982.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

But Sharon also worried about the instability of a stalemate and the growing threats, particularly from Europe, to impose an illusory "quick solution." He recognized that it will take years, or even decades, for Palestinians to accept the compromises necessary for a negotiated settlement. Thus, in an attempt to avoid Israel disappearing into a growing Palestinian population or being forced back to insecure and undefendable borders, Sharon ended Israel's presence in Gaza.

Only a leader with Sharon's credentials could have taken the traumatic step of dismantling settlements he himself had built – and he did so in the absence of a peace treaty and without provoking a civil war. (Critics in the Likud party noted that former prime minister Menachem Begin at least received a peace treaty with Egypt in exchange for the Sinai).

Sharon did not invent the unilateral disengagement strategy, which also includes the construction of a north-south physical barrier that demarcates a de facto border with the West Bank. The strategy was forced on him by a wide Israeli consensus that recognized there was no better alternative available. The Israeli public had become more pragmatic and centrist than its leaders, and Sharon understood that he could either accept this reality or be swept away in its wake. He chose the former, losing his political base in a fractured Likud, but discovering a bigger one in the centre.

This large, pragmatic and centrist political consensus is likely to carry Sharon's final political legacy for many years. Most Israelis have abandoned faith in grand peace plans, including the internationally sponsored "road map," that end in catastrophe. And, as opinion polls have shown consistently, most Israelis – not enthusiastically, but as the least bad option – favour separating from the Palestinians to the maximum extent possible, depending on security and stability details.

However, without Sharon to lead this process, Israel's political realignment will probably take longer. Instead of the "big bang" that seemed ready to propel Sharon quickly into a new era of Israeli politics, the process may proceed more slowly and with hesitation, and Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu may be able to repatriate enough Likud voters to catch up with Kadima, which remains far ahead in the polls and is led, for now, by acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert.

Even if Sharon had remained healthy and done well in the March 28 Israeli election, further separation moves in the West Bank would have been much more difficult than the Gaza withdrawal. Instead of the hoped-for Palestinian moderation and emphasis on vital economic development (based on huge aid packages channeled through the World Bank), the reality in Gaza has been chaos and more terror.

PA President Mahmoud Abbas is barely a figurehead, while the role of Hamas continues to grow. And along what remains of the border with Gaza, Egyptian guarantees to prevent the smuggling of weapons and terrorists have disintegrated. As a result, even the most pragmatic Israelis will be far more cautious about withdrawing from areas that would bring Tel Aviv and Jerusalem into rocket-firing range.

In the meantime, Israelis can be expected to look hard at potential successors to Sharon. Security is still central, and Israel is still at war, not only against Palestinian terror and rejectionism, but also against Iranian threats of nuclear genocide. But a successful Israeli leader must also demonstrate the political skills needed to work closely with the United States, and, when possible, Europe. Like former prime ministers Ben-Gurion, Begin, and Rabin, Sharon will leave an enduring legacy in both dimensions.

The Kirshner File

France 'declares war' on anti-Semitism

For the past five years, Jews in France have been subjected to a series of random attacks targeting individuals, synagogues, schools and cemeteries.

The incidents, the worst in decades, have ranged far and wide.

Sheldon Kirshner in Paris

In Paris, a man leaving a shul in the 19th arrondissement was hospitalized after being assaulted, and near Lyons, a couple was beaten severely. A shul was burned to the ground in Marseille, a sports club was torched in Toulouse and a secondary school in the Paris suburb of Gagny was gutted by arson. In Bordeaux, a 16-year-old teenager was set upon, and in Paris, a bus parked beside a Lubavitch school was stoned. Meanwhile, in Strasbourg, graves in a cemetery were desecrated.

Most of the estimated 600,000 Jews in France have not been affected by the violence, but the shock waves have touched almost everyone in the Jewish community, the largest in Europe. Still, there is a recognition that, as serious as these incidents have been, they have not resulted in fatalities, as in previous cases of post-war anti-Semitism.

In 1980, gunmen reportedly affiliated with Abu Nidal, the Palestinian terrorist, bombed the Copernic synagogue in Paris, killing four people. At the height of the 1982 war in Lebanon, terrorists believed to be Palestinians bombed Jo Goldenberg's restaurant in the Marais, a quaint Jewish district in Paris, killing six people and wounding 22. Eight years later, in 1990, five neo-Nazi skinheads vandalized an ancient Jewish cemetery in Carpentras, disinterring the recently buried corpse of Felix Germon and impaling him on a beach umbrella. Profoundly shaken by this desecration, one million Parisians turned out in a demonstration to protest anti-Semitism.

Observers generally believe that the latest manifestations of anti-Semitism were prompted by two interrelated factors: Israel's handling of the second Palestinian uprising and the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the Muslim community, which comprises one-tenth of France's overall population.

Racist and anti-Semitic incidents nearly doubled in 2004, hitting a decade-high level, says a report issued by the National Consultative Commission of Human Rights and presented to the then prime minister, Jean-Pierre Raffarin. The commission recorded 1,565 threats and violent attacks, and of those, 970 were anti-Semitic in nature, compared with 601 in 2003.

Reflecting on these incidents, Haim Musicant declared, "They represent the most serious attacks against Jews in France since World War II." This is quite an indictment, as Musicant is director general of France's leading national Jewish organization, the Conseil Representatif des Institutions Juives de France, better known as CRIF.

"What happened here was something new," he explained in an interview. "People thought that, because of Auschwitz, anti-Semitism was finished in France. So they were shocked."

Jean-Marc Dreyfus, a professor at the Institut d'Etudes Politiques whose specialty is the Holocaust in France, said that the traditional source of anti-Semitism in this country, the xenophobic extreme right, has not played a major role in the latest attacks.

Many of the attackers have been poorly educated, embittered Muslim youths of North African origin from depressed housing projects who sympathize with the Palestinian cause and who themselves have been victimized by racism and hobbled by high rates of unemployment.

Marilou Jampolsky, an official at SOS-Racisme, a Paris-based organization dedicated to fighting racial prejudice, finds this to be a supremely ironic situation, brimming with psychological implications.

By Musicant's count, 40 per cent of the assaults have been carried out by Arab and African Muslims who feel oppressed and marginalized by French society.

He estimates that a further 40 per cent of the attackers have been "thrill-seekers" and "publicity-seekers" bent on generating sensationalist newspaper headlines, while the other 20 per cent of the perpetrators have come from the far right, which historically, has singled out Jews, Muslims and Africans.

The most visible right-wing political extremist in France today is Jean-Marie Le Pen of the National Front. To everyone's surprise, he polled 17 per cent of the vote in the first round of the 2002 presidential election.

Dreyfus – a distant relative of Alfred Dreyfus, the Jewish army captain whose sacking and imprisonment convulsed and divided Belle Epoch France – argued that the upsurge of open animus against Jews is rooted both in anti-Semitism and juvenile delinquency.

Yet violent anti-Semitism, a phenomenon common in other European countries as well, is not the sole concern of Jews in France.

[Sheldon Kirshner photo]

Haim Musicant

Last summer, for example, a court in Versailles condemned two passages in an inflammatory article on the Arab-Israeli conflict published by *Le Monde*, the *New York Times* of France.

The offensive sentences in the liberal daily referred to Jews as "a people dominating and sure of itself" and "a contemptuous people getting satisfaction by humiliating." In its ruling, the court criticized the authors for equating Jews with the Israeli government.

As worrisome as these incidents have been, French Jews can take some solace from two indisputable facts.

First, last autumn's riots in France, spearheaded by Muslims and Africans of Muslim descent, were neither anti-Semitic in tone nor action.

Second, the number of anti-Jewish acts dropped by almost 50 per cent in 2005. Roger Cukierman, the president of CRIF, ascribed the decline to sincere and concerted efforts by the French government to deal with the issue.

This is indeed true, both on a rhetorical and an operational level.

When French President Jacques Chirac met Prime Minister Ariel Sharon of Israel last July, Chirac told Sharon he was totally committed to wiping out "the scourges of our time: terrorism, racism and anti-Semitism."

Dominique de Villepin, the French prime minister, was just as forceful. In a speech last summer marking the 63rd anniversary of an infamous roundup of Parisian Jews, he promised to work tirelessly to fight anti-Semitism.

Still other high-ranking government officials, notably Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy, a future presidential candidate, have stated that when a Jew is threatened, the French republic itself is threatened.

In practical terms, France has taken concrete steps to assuage fears in the Jewish community that it is not serious about combating anti-Semitism.

Police are out in force protecting Jewish property. When I visited CRIF headquarters, several armed police officers stood guard in front.

Courts are adopting a tougher approach to criminals motivated by racial animosities. The ministry of education has implemented measures aimed at defusing xenophobia, racism and anti-Semitism.

"The government is doing its job," said Musicant, who has good relations with the ministry of interior, which monitors anti-Semitism. "It decided to declare war on anti-Semitism."

Musicant believes that, while the government's zero tolerance attitude toward anti-Semitism has achieved results, the cooling of the intifadah has also had an impact.

David Kornbluth, Israel's acting ambassador to France, said that while France was initially slow to understand and address the magnitude of the problem, the government has since made amends.

"They're very, very strong about it now. They're using the full resources of the state. France is a model in Europe in dealing with anti-Semitism."

Dreyfus contends that the North American media has failed to present a balanced picture of the anti-Semitic attacks. "The way it was described was exaggerated. It was not an organized movement. Organized anti-Semitism comes from Le Pen, but he has stopped making anti-Semitic statements in public. He knows it is more advantageous for him to bash foreigners rather than Jews."

Jean-Jacques Fraenkel, a Holocaust survivor who divides his time between France and Canada, brings a dissenting voice to the debate on anti-Semitism. He is less than convinced that open anti-Semitism is on the wane.

"It's a French Catholic tradition to be anti-Semitic," said Fraenkel, whom the Nazis forced to wear a dreaded yellow star during the German occupation. Since 2001, he has received three anti-Semitic leaflets in his mailbox, and on the advice of friends, he tucks his Star of David chain inside his shirt.

It is impossible to ascertain whether Jews in France share Fraenkel's pessimistic outlook. But he certainly typifies a certain viewpoint, one formed on the red hot anvil of rejection and persecution.

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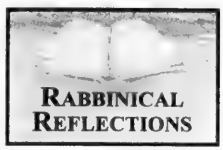
Jewish Life

We need a time and place to grieve

By RABBI MARK FRIEDMAN



As my friend and colleague, the late Rabbi Myer Schechter of the Jewish General Hospital in Montreal, once observed: "People truly do not understand the complex problems we rabbis encounter today. This is all the more the case in the hospital setting."

Indeed, as a rabbi and hospital chaplain, I sometimes long for the simple question, such as "How do I obtain kosher food in the hospital?" or "What do I do I do about lighting Shabbat candles in my room?"

Although I receive such questions, more often than not, these are not the questions for which a physician or a nurse calls me to a floor; these are not the situations that require the special intervention of the rabbi/chaplain.

I shall relate a case in point. In one of the hospitals where I provide service, a man was dying of cancer. His daughter was distraught. Her mother told her that when her father died, his remains would be cremated and his ashes scattered. There would be no funeral.

I gave this woman the opportunity to grieve her father's impending death and to express her anger at her mother. She said her relationship with her mother had always been strained, and she felt this latest disagreement was a culmination of her mother's ongoing rejection of her.

She asked me whether there was anything I, as a rabbi and chaplain, could do to help.

I proposed that after her father passed away, we could have a memorial service. The hospital maintained a non-denominational chapel, and this woman's husband, children and any friends she might wish to invite could attend the service with her there. She welcomed the suggestion.

The service took place the day after her father died. I conducted the service and recited several chapters from the Book of Psalms. Her husband delivered a eulogy, and I spoke to their young children about their good memories of their grandfather. I also suggested that this woman recite Kaddish in memory of her father, and she did so.

Several months later, the woman called and asked to meet with me. She said she needed a physical place where she could grieve for her father. I asked her what kind of space she was looking for. Did it have to be a place connected to his life? She said that would be best, if possible. I asked her if a room in the hospital would be acceptable. She said it would be, so I explored the possibility of finding an appropriate space there.

I found an unused office in a ward that had been closed. I asked for it to be cleaned up and made presentable. I suggested to the daughter that a ceremony be held there where she, her husband, and her children would place cherished objects from their father and grandfather – pictures of him, letters from him, even objects he had given them. She liked this idea, and such a ceremony did indeed take place.

From this woman's great-pain, I came to understand the insight of our tradition, which gives us both a place and a time for grief and mourning.

Perhaps this is another reason why Judaism disapproves of cremation. We know that we must inevitably lose the ones we love, but cremation is too violent a destruction of a body that once held a beloved parent or family member. Our wise and compassionate tradition understood this very well.

Rabbi Mark Friedman is a hospital chaplain for the Montreal Jewish community.

Are Jews trading shul for the couch?

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

In 1946, Reform Rabbi Joshua Liebman, in his best-selling *Peace of Mind*, pronounced that psychology had become as important to the spiritual lives of Americans as religion.

Although many in the religious world were unhappy at this comparison of the two domains, Rabbi Liebman's assertion has only grown in significance over the past 60 years, and the convergence of Judaism and psychological thought today can be seen as a potentially fruitful union in many ways. Despite Freud's classic formulations of religion as an "illusion" employed to fend off fundamental anxieties of death and meaninglessness – which created a deep-rooted mistrust of psychology in Orthodox Jewish circles – many schools of psychological thought have emerged that grant respect and importance to the spiritual life of patients.

Many Jews, whether or not they're religiously observant or strongly connected to Judaism, are flocking to therapy. It is there, in the safe haven of the therapeutic encounter (and, alas, not in our synagogues or with our religious leaders) that the really important issues people are desperately struggling with in their lives are being revealed – their spiritual dissatisfactions, romantic restlessness, family conflicts, and just plain existential turmoil.

Michelle Friedman, director of pastoral counselling at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah, writes: "People come to mental health treatment because they are in pain. The presentations of their pain vary – they come because they suffer from symptoms that restrict or threaten their lives, because they are struggling with inner conflicts that undermine or torment their integrity, or because if they don't come, they will lose their job, their spouse or their children."

Such a desire to alleviate pain and make more sense out of life is universal. Unlike the old quip, it's not just crazy people who go to a psychiatrist. Rather, the reverse is often true: a denial that one needs to pursue therapy can often prove to be utterly disastrous.

On Saturday night, Jan. 28, in Toronto, as part of a Torah in Motion conference on Judaism and Psychology, I will be discussing, with some of the top mental health professionals on the Jewish scene, why it is that people seek out therapy and what they hope to accomplish. Why do certain Orthodox Jews still stigmatize psychotherapy, such that their religious neighbours will not admit that they have sought therapeutic treatment? What is the proper relationship between the therapist and the rabbi? Do rabbis sometimes fancy themselves as therapeutically skilled, and then wade into complex emotional situations that are far beyond their purview? What is the line between healthy piety and dangerous pathology?

"Turn it over and turn it over, for everything is contained within it." If this Mishnah in Pirkei Avot is correct, then why can't contemporary Jews solve all their problems simply through Torah? Why are they turning to psychology? What are they telling their therapists about shidduchim (arranged marriages), about their religious strivings, about their secret hopes and failings? And how has therapy changed their lives forever?

Jewish Life

Peace in the Middle East

***Inheriting the Holy Land: An American's Search for Hope in the Middle East* by Jennifer Miller, Random House.**

Books
Bernard Baskin

This is not a groundbreaking book about the Middle Eastern conflict, but it is a well written, helpful and welcome synthesis of history and reportage.

Jennifer Miller, during her six-month sojourn in Israel, was forced to confront her presuppositions and biases as an American, a Jew, a young woman and journalist. Her father, Aaron Miller, was a U.S. State Department negotiator at the Oslo and Camp David peace summits. The cause of a secure Israel is close to her heart.

Her real interest and experience with the complex interaction of Israelis and Palestinians began several years before she lived in Israel, when she joined the Seeds of Peace program, a privately funded project that brought young people from the Middle East to a summer camp in Maine for intensive sessions in problem resolution. Since 1993, the camp program has expanded to include other European and Asian countries. In 10 years, it has graduated almost 2,700 young adults.

It was an enlightening experience for her to be confronted with the views, opinions, fears, attitudes of Palestinians, Israelis, Jordanians and Egyptians. She soon discovered, however, that it was one thing to discuss controversial issues in the tranquil, almost idyllic, camp setting, but quite another to deal with the same teenagers on their own turf, where animosities festered, illusions were created and bloodshed was widespread.

A young Israeli complained to the author about the rampant corruption in the country's political system. Why did government officials put trivial or selfish concerns above the needs of constituents? She mentioned a news report about the problem of cellphones in Knesset meetings; the members were constantly answering them under the table during important discussions. "That's what matters to them?" she asked, incredulously. "My teachers say it's not right to answer your phone in the middle of a class. And the people in the Knesset were saying, 'I don't want to turn off my phone!' And these people are the leaders of my country?"

Everywhere in the West Bank and Gaza, the author discovered the high honour paid to suicide bombers. Miller writes: "The game of 'martyr' is popular among little kids; I once watched a Palestinian girl play dead as her sisters carried her by her arms and legs in a funeral procession around the house before finally depositing her into her 'grave,' the family-room sofa. In fact, anyone who dies by Israeli hands, whether he blows himself up or is hit by a stray bullet, is considered a martyr. To actively give up your life in fighting the occupation is the greatest honour of all."

Colin Powell, former U.S. Secretary of State, told the author in a frank interview that while the United States could not solve the conflict for Israelis and Palestinians, he firmly believed that an active U.S. role was crucial to helping these nations reconcile. No other country, he said, had enough influence with both parties to be an effective third-party broker. Moreover, Powell said it was irrelevant whether the American administration was headed by Democrats or Republicans. "The United States must get involved," he said.

Orthodox Rabbi Michael Melchior, a leading member of the Meimed Party in the Knesset, told Miller that in order for Israel to remain both Jewish and democratic, it had to separate from the Palestinians, even if it meant compromising on the value of Greater Israel. "I don't know any source in Judaism that puts the value of Greater Israel over the value of life," Melchior told me. "Those who are practising that value are distorting what Judaism is about."

This book ends on an optimistic note. The author is convinced that impetus for change is brewing on both sides of the conflict and that old regimes will give way in the future to more open and imaginative ones that will contribute to a new era of peace and reconciliation.

Jewish podcasts, Part 2

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Whenever a new medium is developed to spread information, rabbis will find a way to use it to do some teaching. That's what happened with the printing press, the Internet, and now, with podcasts.

Last week, we began to listen in on podcasts, amateur radio shows that can be produced by practically anybody who has a microphone, a computer and something to say. Once you find one you like, you can download it and listen to it anytime you like and even copy them to an MP3 player like an iPod, so you can listen to them whenever you please.

Rabbi Zelig Pliskin has created four short, inspirational talks for Aish Hatorah's Podcast for Personal Growth. Rabbi Pliskin uses Jewish themes to explore contemporary issues such as finding the right way to point out faults in others and learning to deal with envy. In his podcast, the Joy of Taking Action, he tackles laziness. He asks why laziness is such a powerful force and quotes the 18th-century rabbi, the Vilna Gaon, who ties it to our need for comfort. Sure, "it's more comfortable to do nothing than to do something." But Rabbi Pliskin explains that it is far better to make goals for yourself and to accomplish things. "Do it with joy… the joy of being in control of the one person in life that you really can control… yourself." **[http://tinyurl.com/ca6k3]**

In The Shmuz, Rabbi B. Shafier also poses some profound and troubling questions. In Understanding Life Settings, he asks why "some people are blessed with success and others not?" He suggests that your temperament and your inner nature are inborn. They were given to you in the "ideal life setting" so that you can use them to grow and accomplish what you were put on the planet for. This, of course, is a difficult subject and not surprisingly, the rabbi takes a full hour to address it. Once done with that topic, you can listen to eight other podcasts from the rabbi. **[www.theshmuz.com/]**

Yonah Bookstein must be one of the more prolific rabbinic podcasters around. The campus rabbi at Hillel of Long Beach and West Orange County in California has put together sessions on the weekly Torah portion and the observance of mitzvahs. But he also isn't above using a trendy title in order to attract a crowd to his lectures or podcasts. "Madonna and Kabbalah" is a series of four lectures that actually debunks the trendiness of the modern movement and explains the authentic roots of Kabbalah. You can find links to all of this and more at the Guide to Rabbi Yonah's Podcast Jewniverse. Rabbi Yonah even sings in a couple of his podcasts. **[http://tinyurl.com/78cz6]**

Lubavitch Chassidim have been studying Tanya since Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi wrote the mystical text in the 18th century. In order to cycle through the entire text annually, Tanya is divided into daily portions. Subscribe to the Daily Tanya Class for instruction from Rabbi Manis Friedman. **[www.chabad.org/generic.asp?AID=298447]** (This is an advanced class.)

Still have room to spare on your iPod? Then take a listen to Rabbi Meir Schweiger from the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem. **[http://podcasts.pardesusa.org/category/podcasts/]**

Rabbi David Botton presents detailed Jewish laws governing rising in the morning as laid out in the *Kitzur Shulchan Aruch*. **[www.teachittome.com/]** And Rav Moshe Kaplan leads classes on Israel's Redemption at Machon Meir in Jerusalem. **[http://israelredmption.blogspot.com/]**

Do you have a Jewish or Israeli podcast that you have come across and listen to religiously? Share your find with me and I'll pass it along in a future column. Next week, I conclude my look with Jewish music and popular culture podcasts, and a podcast about one man's dedication to what he believes is the most Jewish of beverages.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Yiddish teacher helps kids understand heritage

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Marc Kates has come full circle. *Lehrer Moishe* (Teacher Marc), as his students call him, is a graduate of Bialik Hebrew Day School, the same school where he has been teaching for the past four years and one of the few where Yiddish is a compulsory subject.

A 30-year-old, fifth-generation Canadian on his mother's side, he has been involved in teaching Yiddish since he was a 16-year-old student at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto. At the time, he worked as a teaching assistant at Sunday morning Yiddish classes that were part of the North York Board of Education's heritage language program. Later, he taught adult Yiddish classes through UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Committee for Yiddish.

Although Kates also teaches Grade 8 history and geography, and has a class with his homeroom students once a week where he deals with issues such as identity and friendship, there is no doubt that his classroom is Yiddish Central, with its pictures of Yiddish writers next to an "I (heart) Yiddish" T-shirt, a blackboard filled with Yiddish writing, and the back wall decorated with Yiddish sayings and their English translations.

A lesson from the teacher: *"I tell my students, 'A bisl un a bisl vert a fulle shisl.' (A little and a little makes a full pot.) Little by little, their knowledge increases. Bit by bit, the bowl becomes full."*

Kates attributes his love of Yiddish to two of his former Bialik teachers: Henia Reinhartz, now retired, and Ana Berman, who still teaches at the school. "They were the ones who turned me on to Yiddish."

He also credits Reinhartz for his Yiddish teaching philosophy, based on the idea of "instilling a spark in each child for the Yiddish culture, spirit and heritage... Hopefully that spark will grow into a roaring fire."

Recalling Reinhartz's words, Kates mused, "I thought that was beautifully said... that's [become] my philosophy as well."

He said he encourages his students to appreciate the language, and to use it to understand their heritage. Song, stories, dialogues and Yiddish film (for his Grade 8 class) all form part of his curriculum. "We do a lot of singing," he said.

Although Bialik has developed its own Yiddish curriculum over the years, Kates said he has "a lot of leeway" to introduce his own material. Last year, he wrote and directed the dramatization of a shtetl wedding, in which all three Grade 7 classes took part.

"It was a freilech [lively] evening," he said.

His own wedding last summer to Rachel Spitzer, the Toronto obstetrics and gynecology resident who delivered conjoined twins Tinotenda and Tenashe Mufuka in Zimbabwe last year, was a more low-key affair, he said.

The Grade 7 shtetl wedding, replete with Yiddish songs, was well received, and Kates is working on a repeat production, scheduled for next month.

"Through [the play], they learn what east European culture was about," he said.

"*Zei shtill* [be quiet]," he tells a class of Yiddish students, as they settle down to rehearse their lines for the shtetl wedding. As the class continues, he uses the script to weave in lessons about Yiddish and Judaism.

Kates honed his teaching philosophy and skills at UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education's Midrasha L'Morim, then during year-long stints at two other Jewish day schools before completing his B.Ed. at Brock University. He is currently working on his master's in education at York University, where he is doing a project on education in the shtetls of eastern Europe.

"It's a joy to come to work every morning," he said.

Marc Kates, seen with t-shirt, believes in instilling a "spark in each child for the Yiddish culture, spirit and heritage." [Frances Kraft photo]

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Greater Toronto Area

Hamas and Iran could upset Mideast apple cart

As of this writing, along with reports about the tragic death of Canadian diplomat Glyn Berry and the wounding of three Canadian soldiers in a suicide attack in Afghanistan, two other Middle East stories were making news: the chaos in the Palestinian Authority ahead of Jan. 25 elections and Iran's reckless pursuit of nuclear weapons.

According to Reports
By PAUL MICHAELS

In "Israel's Hamas Problem: The Danger Begins Next Door" (*New York Times*, Jan.15), Steven Erlanger wrote: "Israelis are watching with enormous concern the deterioration of the Palestinian Authority and its mainstay, the Fatah faction led by [PA President] Mahmoud Abbas, and the rise of Hamas, the radical Islamic group dedicated to Israel's destruction. A strong showing by Hamas, and such a showing is expected, would test Israel's ability even to talk about a final settlement with the Palestinians, or make any new pullback from the West Bank."

Erlanger noted that Abbas "has promised to move to dismantle the terrorist apparatus of Hamas and other groups once the Palestinian elections take place. That and a rejection of any military option against Israel constitute the major Palestinian obligation under the first stage of the road map." However, "few in Israel expect Mr. Abbas to deliver on his promise."

Erlanger interviewed Asher Susser, director of Tel Aviv University's Dayan Center, who said that while Hamas will complicate Israel's relations with the Palestinians, "[i]t's not like we had a deal wrapped up with Abbas and Hamas will stop it."

In the meantime, Susser "expects Israel's unilateral approach to continue" with Israel completing its security fence and taking further unilateral steps to disengage from the Palestinians.

How much instability there will be after the PA elections remains an open question. What is clear is that internecine violence is taking a high toll on Palestinians. In a *London Times* article reprinted in the *Ottawa Citizen* ("Gaza factions chase peace away," Jan. 14), Stephen Farrell cited Tawfiq Abu Khoussa, a spokesperson for the ministry of interior, who confirmed that in 2005, more Palestinians were killed "by internal feuds" than by Israeli forces.

Meanwhile, some journalists are floating the "pragmatic" Hamas theory, in which the so-called moderate wing of Hamas will act as a counter to the hardliners who reject negotiating with Israel.

To many Israelis, this is reminiscent of the naïve Western thinking that believed in a split between pragmatists and radicals in Iran. This division proved illusory. The hardliners continue in power today and – it is widely assumed – are developing nuclear weapons.

While Iran has threatened to "wipe Israel off the map," its nuclear program is also a threat to the immediate security of the Gulf's oil rich emirates, a longer-term threat to Europe, and a major test of international resolve.

On Jan. 15, the Montreal *Gazette* reprinted Thomas Friedman's *New York Times* article "Axis of Order," which, in stark terms, discusses how the world must deal with Iran's nuclear ambitions. If Iran is allowed to go nuclear, he warned, "[t]he structure of the whole post-Cold-War world is at stake."

Friedman calls on Russia, China and India to take the lead in diffusing the crisis now that their economies are growing and they are becoming major stakeholders in maintaining world order (in addition to having major business dealings with Tehran). He asks them to become the "Axis of Order" and assist the old western powers in dealing with Iran's threat.

Economic sanctions may be part of the answer. In the Jan. 17 *National Post*, a Reuters report ("Russia, West draw closer on Iran action") said that Britain, France and Germany have drafted a resolution to be brought to the UN Security Council to impose possible sanctions on Iran for continued violations of its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. However, two major parties, both with veto capacity, are resisting this move – Russia and China.

In the final analysis, several analysts warn, nothing short of military action or its serious threat will deter Iran.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Saturday, 11 February 2006 – 8:00 pm

Dr. Franz von Hammerstein
From Resistance to Reconciliation: A Personal Odyssey
A member of a prominent German resistance family and a former prisoner in Buchenwald and Dachau, Dr. von Hammerstein is a Protestant minister and a founder of the bridge-building organization, "Action Reconciliation – Service for Peace," that is active in Israel, Europe, and North America.

Film: *Silent Courage*
Silent Courage, by York University Professor Gottfried Paasche, documents the life of his mother, Marie-Therese Paasche, Dr. von Hammerstein's sister, who helped to rescue Jews from the Nazis. The film will be introduced by her granddaughter, Rabbi Sara Paasche-Orlow.

Sunday, 12 February 2006 – 2:00 pm

Dr. Stephen D. Smith, MBE
Learning and Teaching the Lessons of the Holocaust
Dr. Smith and his brother, Dr. James M. Smith, co-founded the Beth Shalom Centre in England for the study and commemoration of the Holocaust, which seeks to expose and counter antisemitism. In the new Aegis Trust, they endeavour to apply the lessons of the Holocaust to fighting genocide everywhere.

Sunday, 12 February 2006 – 3:45 pm

Panel Discussion:
Fighting Against Hate and for Justice in a Post-Holocaust Multicultural Society

Dr. Karen Mock
Formerly the executive director of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, Dr. Mock now chairs a new Ontario Government advisory committee charged with fighting hate crimes and strengthening community groups. As a teacher, expert witness, and community organizer, she has worked against all forms of bigotry

Mr. Avrum Rosenzweig
The founder of Ve'ahavta, the Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee, which pursues *tikkun olam*, mending the broken world, through aiding the homeless in Toronto, collecting funds for disaster relief in Darfur and Pakistan, organizing volunteer programs in Africa, and other initiatives.

Mr. Justice Michael H. Tulloch
An alumnus of York University, a judge of the Ontario Superior Court of Justice, and a former Crown Attorney, Mr. Justice Tulloch has been president of the Canadian Association of Black Lawyers and a member of the Commission on Civilian Oversight of Policing.

All sessions will take place in the Vanier College Lecture Hall, York University, Steeles Campus, and are open to the public free of charge. Parking is available nearby.
Contact person: Ms. Dortje Klatte (dortje@yorku.ca or 416 736-5695)
About our program: **www.yorku.ca/tfhf**

Greater Toronto Area

Our sacred duty to aid the oppressed

By JOSH SCHEINERT

Guest Voice

On Friday, Jan. 27, for the first time, the world will hold an International Day of Commemoration for the victims of the Holocaust. And while this may be a milestone for Jews and sensible action on the part of the global community, we cannot take full comfort in this measure. At this stage, we are only achieving half of what such a day entails.

Zachor, remembrance, means more than just the act of remembering. It also encompasses a proactive measure.

The second part of the UN resolution proclaiming this day calls for "member states to develop educational programs that will inculcate future generations with the lessons of the Holocaust in order to help prevent future acts of genocide." This phrase, restating the sentiment of "never again," highlights where we have fallen terribly short.

As Jews, we have a special responsibility to lead the world in this mission. It is our noble opportunity to fulfil the words of God, who in Isaiah 42:6 commands us to be "*or la govim*," a light unto the nations. Thus, when injustice, persecution and murder are taken up, on any scale, it is our sacred duty to come to the aid of those oppressed. We have to do for others what very few did for us.

Today, that verse from Isaiah calls to us with increasing urgency. Half a world away, in a remote corner of Africa that far too few of us have heard about, one of the greatest crimes against humanity since the Shoah is taking place. For some reason, the world has been unable, or unwilling, to confront this conflict in a manner that actively seeks to end it.

In Darfur, a region the size of France in the western Sudan, government-backed Arab militias, *janjaweed*, are carrying out campaigns to murder, rape and destroy the livelihood of millions of black Africans. The best estimates put the number killed since the conflict's inception in March 2003 at 200,000 to 400,000, with more than two million displaced persons, hundreds of thousands in UN refugee camps in neighbouring Chad, and countless others out of reach to humanitarian workers because the situation is too dangerous.

As a community, we need to raise our voices, together, in a call for the world to do more. We need to pressure our government to take a proactive role in working with the United Nations and African Union to help end the conflict. We should be demanding the Sudanese embassy in Ottawa to account for its government's actions. Let us bombard them with e-mails to show them that we will not rest until the situation is resolved (sudan embassy-canada@rogers.com).

Together, let us show our country that as Jews we cannot and will not sit idly by in a world where injustice reigns freely. Let it be known that in every synagogue, day school and community organization Jews are coming together to act on behalf of the people in Darfur. And on this International Day of Commemoration, 61 years after our relatives walked freely from the horrors of Auschwitz, let us remember that sacred oath we all swore, that never again would we allow the world to unleash an evil of such magnitude. Only then will we be fulfilling the true meaning of *Zachor*.

Josh Scheinert, a graduate of McGill University, is a political researcher in Washington, D.C.

COOL CREEPY CRAWLIES: Marlee Pinsker, a senior kindergarten teacher at the Toronto Heschel School, arranges slides of insects for viewing under a microscope with student Noah Wolgelerenter. Enhanced study of the natural world is part of Heschel's new preschool science program.

[Suzy Rosenstein photo]

Remember the Romanian Kristallnacht

By BARUCH COHEN

I was 21 years old. I was there. I am a witness.

The pogrom in Bucharest on Jan. 21, 1942, took the lives of 130 Jews. Gangs of Iron Guard Legionaries looted hundreds of Jewish homes and dragged their inhabitants away, and beat, tortured and killed them. They demolished and burned to the ground hundreds of Jewish stores. They desecrated and torched 25 synagogues, including the majestic ancient Spanish and Portuguese temple, and destroyed Torah scrolls.

These are the images I live with to this day. The Iron Guard criminals looted and devastated the Jewish neighbourhood of Bucharest during the three days of Romania's terrible, but seldom mentioned, "Kristallnacht," which took place from Jan. 21 to 23, 1941. They took away innocent people from their homes, their workplaces and places of worship, killed them and hung them, like cattle, from hooks in slaughterhouses with tags reading "kosher meat."

Guest Voice

Emil Dorian, another witness of the Romanian Kristallnacht, recalls the devastation in his memoir *The Quality of Witness: A Romanian Diary, 1937-1944*. "What happened in Vacaresti, Dudesti [Jewish areas] and surrounding neighbourhoods remains indescribable. Suffice it to list the destruction, the looting and the bestial crimes. But even that is impossible. The fury of the looters has not spared anybody or anything. Shop after shop with shutters wrenched off their hinges, windows smashed, walls burned, rooms emptied made it impossible to guess what had been seen before," Dorian wrote.

"The great beautiful Sephardi synagogue has been completely destroyed. They set [it] on fire with cans of gasoline placed in four corners, and looters danced by the flames. The list of beaten and tortured people is endless, and crimes cover the complete range of a demented imagination, Jews forced to drink gasoline with Epsom salts, crosses cut on the skin of their backs, torture and killing, on and on…"

The chief rabbi of Romania at the time, Alexander Safran, wrote in his memoirs: "During these days, the Iron Guard Legionaries also occupied the Malbim Beith Hamidrash [synagogue] and tortured many Jews there. They killed the cantor of the Coral Temple while he was conducting the Minchah services. They also killed Jews who had come there to say *Kaddish*. Dozens of Jews were first tortured and transported to the Jilava forest. All men were shot."

In his recent book, Radu Ioanid writes: "Severe beatings and other forms of humiliation usually preceded the murders, and indeed it was the physical abuse that constituted the favoured medium by which the legionaries and their friends expressed their aptitudes. Many Jews were abused at the Bucharest prefecture of police. The women were, by and large, released after physical abuse, which explains the small number of women's names that appears on the list of murdered victims."

Today, Romania has finally acknowledged its atrocities during the Holocaust years of 1940 to '44 and its government has promised to ensure that the Holocaust will be taught in high schools and universities. However, Holocaust education in Romania is said to be optional. It should be mandatory, and taught as an integral part of Romania's history.

Before World War II, some 800,000 Jews lived in Romania. They were a community proud of their contribution to all fields of Romanian society. Today, a mere 6,000 to 8,000 elderly Romanian Jews live in the country. They are well taken care of, receiving financial help, not from the Romanian government, but from Canadian and American Jewish communities.

Despite the promises made by former Romanian president Ion Iliescu and current Romanian President Traian Basescu after acknowledging the Holocaust, almost nothing has changed in Romania. Reparations for the confiscation and theft of Jewish properties during the Holocaust era have not been made, and Romanian politicians still have not made a firm commitment to Holocaust education.

In 2004, Iliescu rewarded two known Holocaust deniers and anti-Semites, Corneliu Vadim Tudor and Ghorghe Buzatu, with the country's highest medal of honour.

Today, there are still reports of vandalism and desecration of synagogues and Jewish cemeteries in Romania. There are also reports of graffiti denying the Holocaust, and anti-Semitic books and books that contain anti-Semitic statements are released by the state-owned publisher. In the private media, without objection or interference from the government, anti-Semitism exists.

Baruch Cohen, a Holocaust survivor, is the research chair of the Canadian Institute for Jewish Research.

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Journal gives young Jews and Arabs a voice

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Can a journal about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict ever be apolitical?

Meena Rafie, an Afghani-born Muslim, and Ran Goel, an Israeli-born Jew, believe it's possible.

"We like to think of it as a non-ideological, apolitical journal," said Rafie, a fourth-year political science and urban studies major at the University of Toronto and the executive producer of *Yalla*, a student-run literary journal about the Middle East conflict.

Despite the number of people who have called them naive, both Rafie and Goel are determined to prove the doubters wrong.

"We're not here to negotiate a political settlement, but we can reach out to people who would not bother listening to the other side," said Goel, a second-year law student at U of T and a senior editor of *Yalla*.

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"We don't pretend that if we just talk to each other then everything will be fine, but we do think that if we don't talk to each other then everything will definitely not be fine," he added.

Yalla, which means "let's go" in Arabic, was created last year by six Jewish and Arab students at McGill University as a forum for poetry, short stories, personal accounts, photography and academic essays by Canadian Arabs and Jews, ages 18 to 30, that "display a diversity of opinion" on the conflict.

Rafie, the co-chair of the Jewish and Muslim Student's Association at U of T, first became involved in the project when Dalia Rotstein, one of the former editors who spearheaded the first edition of the journal, asked her to help launch the publication at U of T.

Rotstein also commissioned the help of Goel, whom she had met in Israel when the two of them interned for the same Knesset member.

The free journal is now based largely at U of T and has eight editors – four in Toronto and four in Montreal.

Hillel helps distribute the journal at Canadian campuses as far away as Calgary and Vancouver, and *Yalla* has received funding from U of T's faculty of law and its Students' Administrative Council, among other sources.

Ran Goel, left, and Meena Rafie hope the second edition of the journal *Yalla* will create a dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians. [Mike Andrechuk photo]

With the second edition scheduled to come out in March, Rafie and Goel are seeking anyone with an opinion on the Mideast conflict to contribute. Rafie expects the new issue will be 250 pages long.

"We want to reach beyond to get people who wouldn't otherwise contribute, to contribute," Goel said.

While the editors and producers put very few restrictions on submissions, Rafie said pieces that incite violence or hatred will not be tolerated.

Rafie recalled the feedback she received from people at the journal's launch party who said that reading it was an eyeopener.

"People approached us, both Israelis and Arabs, and said, 'I had no idea that this land means as much to them as it does to us.'"

Although Rafie and Goel are encouraged by the positive feedback, they know there are people who hope the journal fails.

"Some people see it as legitimizing the other side's faults," Goel said.

"Many groups from both sides have discouraged this type of dialogue for fear that it denies their human rights by giving voice and space to their counterparts' views. Our purpose is to empower the voice of the people, both Jewish and Arab, to express how the conflict affects them personally," Rafie said.

She added that each viewpoint is valid, and the journal offers everyone a voice.

"To negate *Yalla* because it attempts to humanize the other is to stay locked in the unproductive rhetoric which has characterized the conflict from day one," Rafie said.

For more information or to contribute, e-mail yallajournal@yahoo.ca. Deadline for submissions is Feb. 20.

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Art show encourages Jewish artists to find themselves

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

Young Jewish artists on a journey to learn more about themselves have a supportive environment in which to showcase their art at the annual Jewish students' art show.

The exhibition, Jan. 18 to 29, is "an avenue for people to explore their Jewish identity and meet other people who are thinking about their identity," said Daniel Abramson, arts and culture co-ordinator for Hillel of Greater Toronto.

The title of the show, "Lech Lecha – Find Yourself," emerged from a text study discussion about identity and the journey of Abraham after he was commanded to leave his home. It was by leaving his nation, community and family that Abraham discovered his own true identity, Abramson said.

"This fit really well in terms of the arts stuff. We are all trying to explore our own identity through our work," he said. The art show is an opportunity for young Jewish artists to express themselves in a forum where they do not feel alone.

Ricky Tollman, 20, is taking his art out of his bedroom and into the public eye for the first time.

"I don't normally like people to see my art, so we'll see how it goes," Tollman said of the three paintings and two cartoons that are on sale at the show.

"This show is also important because most of the people submitting their work are not associated with Hillel or with the Jewish community. This is their chance to get involved," said Melaine Cheskes, 20, an artist who helped organize the exhibit.

Pearl Hirsh, 21, admits that she has never participated in a Hillel event, but the theme of the art show – find yourself – really resonated with her.

Hirsh's photograph of a glass of kosher wine and a birth control pill, a favourite from her 12-piece series called *The Chosen Girls*, is one of the works on display. The series explores Jewish female sexuality and the various ways gender and "girlness" are created and maintained in today's culture, Hirsh said.

"I'm very excited. It's exhilarating to have other people appreciate my work… I feel like for the first time in my life I have original ideas and insight. It's great," she said.

"I'm just beginning my journey as an artist. I'd like to continue to explore these ideas and rethink and reshape what I have to say about my Jewish culture."

In addition to showcasing the work of 10 talented student artists, the show at the Propeller Centre for Visual Arts, 984 Queen St. W., will hold a silent auction on the evening of Jan. 26. The auction will feature the work of professional Jewish artists from Toronto. The goal is to raise enough money to send one child to Camp Koby in Israel.

The Koby Mandell Foundation was created in memory of Sherri and Rabbi Seth Mandell's 13-year-old son Koby. He and his friend were stoned to death by Arab terrorists in a cave near their home in Tekoa, Israel.

Camp Koby was established to provide children of families struck by terror with a place where others understand. The welcoming environment allows these children to begin the healing process while engaging in fun programs like art, music and sports.

For more information contact The Propeller Centre for the Visual Arts at (416) 504-7142.

On Campus

WUJS
World Union of Jewish Students
ההתאחדות העולמית של הסטודנטים היהודים

Welcome to the Annual Congress of World Union of Jewish Student

From left is the Canadian Federation of Jewish Students delegation to the annual World Union of Jewish Students congress in Israel – Robert Meth, Gary Diamond, Emily Sufrin, Hagai Kuperman and Samuel Zeev Konig. [Jason Fuhrman photo]

CFJS sends delegation to world student congress

By ROBERT METH
Special to The CJN

The Canadian Federation of Jewish Students (CFJS) sent five delegates to the annual World Union of Jewish Students (WUJS) congress, held recently in Zichron Yaakov, Israel.

The students – Gary Diamond from the University of Western Ontario, Emily Sufrin from the University of British Columbia, Samuel Zeev Konig from McGill University, Hagai Kuperman from the University of Toronto and myself, from Ryerson University – spent five days networking, learning and socializing with other Jewish students from across the world.

The trip, which was subsidized by National Jewish Campus Life, was an opportunity for Canadian students to hear what Jewish students in other countries experience, while at the same time sharing some successful Canadian initiatives.

Initiatives such as CFJS' annual conference, STAND Canada, and our political involvement, are some of the ways in which Canadian Jewish students are contributing to the greater community and empowering students.

These initiatives were discussed throughout the conference, which took place from Dec. 28, 2005, to Jan. 2, 2006, and showcased during a fair in which students from each attending country set up a display that showed their accomplishments.

The conference included workshops and meetings to help students learn from one another and encourage international co-operation among Jewish students from different countries.

The CFJS delegation met and listened to Knesset member Rabbi Michael Melchior and former Winnipeg Zionist Initiative shaliach Jonny Cline, who is WUJS' new executive director, speak at the conference.

Students visited the town of Zichron Yaakov, a winery, Haifa University and a school.

"It was very important for us to attend this congress and to be able to showcase our accomplishments here in Canada. We have achieved a tremendous amount over the last two years, but we continue to strive for more as we continue to enhance Jewish campus life," says Diamond, who is president of the CFJS.

Kuperman, chair of the U of T Hillel, says, "I learned many valuable lessons at the congress that I will now be able to take back to my campus and apply. The experience was truly worth it."

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Feature

Three generations have found success as Jewish farmers

By WILF GEROFSKY
Special to the CJN

HAMILTON — A third generation member of a Jewish family who came to Canada just prior to World War II is now helping run an internationally recognized dairy farm in Southern Ontario.

The family-owned farm, called Summitholm Holsteins, is an efficient and respected model for dairy farmers and Holstein breeders around the globe. It was established 59 years ago by a young couple, Joe and Minna Loewith, who had escaped with their families from the Sudetenland area of Czechoslovakia just before the Nazis invaded their homeland.

Today, two of Minna and Joe's sons, Carl and David Loewith, run the farm, and a third generation has followed in their footsteps, as Carl's son, Ben, has joined his father and uncle in the business.

The Loewiths offer some statistics that give an idea of the scope of their operation. They produce enough milk each day to last an average family 13 years, a total of four million litres a year. Their barn houses 350 cows, about 300 of which are milked three times a day for a per capita production of 40 litres per day – the Ontario average is 30 litres.

The farm now covers about 800 acres, of which 550 are owned and 250 rented, all dedicated to producing cattle feed. Cows are bred once a year, and some days, four or five are calving at the same time. Carl, David and Ben run the entire operation with the help of only one full-time employee and a few part-timers.

Joe and Minna Loewith's story is a familiar one. Their families left Czechoslovakia in 1939, just a step ahead of Hitler's invading army after Joe, who spoke German, saw a notice sent by the Nazis to the local police. Thirty-two members of Minna's family left on the last commercial flight out of Prague, and seven others, including Joe, chartered a plane. They all ultimately sailed from Liverpool, and came to Canada to take advantage of the country's immigration policy, which required that they spend five years working the land.

Joe, who had been a textile salesman in Europe, started his agricultural career as a farmhand earning $5 a month plus room and board. Minna, who was then 15, worked after school as a soda jerk at Woolworth's in downtown Hamilton. They married in 1942 when she was 20 and he was 32. Five years later, they bought a dairy farm in Copetown from Joe's sister and brother-in-law. The farmhouse was built in 1857.

"It was muddy and primitive, and I said, 'I'll never live there!'" says Minna, who had been accustomed to a more luxurious lifestyle at home, but it was all they could afford.

Under their care, it became the model farm where she lived with her beloved Joe all his life, and where her children, grandchildren and now great-grandchildren have grown up.

Joe died in 1998. He loved his animals and believed they never let him down as humans might do. He used to say, "If there is a heaven, this must be it."

Looking back, Minna recalls a wonderful life, with healthy children, and never feeling sorry for herself. "I loved it. I'd do it all over again."

Carl and David are in great demand all over the world to speak on their methods. They have spoken in more than 20 different countries including Germany, Russia, Mexico, China and Japan. David was honoured as the outstanding young farmer of Canada in 1991, and both have held executive positions in many farm organizations. During last fall's Royal Winter Fair in Toronto, several hundred visitors from as far away as India and Saudi Arabia were bused to the farm to observe its system.

David says Israel has the record for the highest production of milk per cow and has developed much of the equipment and technology used on dairy farms everywhere, including Summitholm.

The family gets up every morning at 4:15 a.m. to work and manage the huge operation, but have still found time to be involved in the Jewish community. Carl has been president of Temple Anshe Sholom, Shalom Village for seniors, and the Dundas Rotary Club. David has also been president of Temple Anshe Sholom.

David and his wife, Bonnie, whom he met on a Young Zionist trip to Israel, have also co-chaired the JNF campaign, and she has been president of the UJA Federation in Hamilton. She received her MD from McMaster Medical School in 1984, while raising their children. She has a busy practice in Ancaster and sits on the Shalom Village Board and its medical advisory committee.

The Loewith family were the honorees at the 1999 Jewish National Fund Negev Dinner.

FASHIONS FROM ISRAEL: Fashions designed by students of Na'amat technological schools in Israel were recently modelled by Na'amat Canada's Toronto teenage chapter, Club Vered. Na'amat operates 20 technological high schools in Israel. Each year, the schools give a second chance to thousands of students who did not succeed in the mainstream educational system. Club Vered models are, from left, Elise Nusbaum, Karen Kerzman, Amanda Benatar, Tali Rosenberg, Emily Bolton, Remi Milchin, Frances Weig and Chay Kerbal.

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Family Moments

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Mazel Tov to...

Happy second birthday Emma-Belle. Lots of love and kisses from your parents Lisa & Loren Freid, your grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

Happy first birthday to Periel Shai Deltoff! We love you! Mommy, Daddy, Dovid, Yankov and Batya.

Mazel tov Dr. Michelle Goldberg on receiving your doctorate from OISE. Love, Tzippy & Eddy, Steve, Eathan and Jonah Klausz; Lori, Dale and Samantha Eisen.

Mazel tov to Dr. David Rosman on receiving the compassionate award from York Central Hospital in recognition of his commitment to making moments better for all patients.

Anne & Jack Futerman, Ruth Goldstein Futerman, Tina Furman and Julian Furman are delighted to announce the engagement of Lyn Futerman & Steve Furman.

Mazel tov Grant Sernick & Marnina Webber who were married on Sept. 4 Parents Ricki & Hart Sernick and Bonnie Katz-Webber & Henry Webber and grandparents.

Mazel tov to Sabrina & Danny Pass on the birth of their son Tyler Matthew Pass. Love, Auntie & Uncle Alana & David Silber.

Aidan Grant Zaldin was born on Sept. 9. Mazel tov to parents Sherri Schwartz & Kevin Zaldin.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos (25 words or less) and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Send all your photos to:
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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, Jan. 30, is the deadline for the Feb. 9 issue and Monday, Feb. 6, is the deadline for the Feb. 16 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Jan. 26

COMPUTER WELLNESS

Michael A. Cohen, chiropractor and acupuncturist, talks about the healthiest way to work at a computer. 7:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 416-789-3213.

Sunday, Jan. 29

WINGATE BRANCH MEETS

The Wingate Branch of the Canadian Legion holds an all-members meeting. 9:15 a.m. at 788 Marlee Ave. 416-782-5024.

THE KOMEDIANT

Friends of Yiddish present *The Komediant*, a documentary film about **Pesach Burstein** and **Lillian Lux**, and their children, **Michael** and **Susan**. 10:30 a.m. at 15 Hove St. Members free, guests $5. Reservations required. Call **Sandy** at 416-736-8073 or 416-458-1440.

DYNAMIC SINGLES BRUNCH

Adath Israel Dynamic Singles 35+ presents Sh-Boom. Enjoy barbershop harmony and brunch. 11:30 a.m. $15 Reserve by Jan. 26. $20 at the door. 416-635-5340.

WANDERINGS... A JOURNEY TO CONNECT

The Winchevsky School sponsors a screening of the documentary *Wanderings... A Journey to Connect*, 10:30 a.m. at 585 Cranbrooke Ave. $7 includes bagels and coffee. 416-789-5502.

MULTI-FAITH CELEBRATION

Join a multi-faith celebration with the Bridges Choir featuring children from St. Rose of Lima Parish, Taric Mosque and the Toronto Heschel School performing original compositions by **Ken Rabow**, with deputy mayor of Toronto, **Mike Feldman**. 2 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. Free. 416-633-3838 or www.beby.org.

SINGLES BOWLING EVENT

Join Walk and Talk Etc., a walking club for Jewish singles 50+, for an evening at Lucky Strike Lanes, in the Vaughan Mills Mall. 5 pm. To pre-register, e-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

STERN ON HEALTHY FOOD

The Upper Canada Lodge presents **Bonnie Stern** talking about "The Healthiest Food." 7 p.m. 4266 Bathurst St. 416-946-0720.

ROSH CHODESH GROUP

The Beach Synagogue Rosh Chodesh Group meets at 7 p.m. to discuss topics relevant to Jewish life. 109 Kenilworth Ave. 416-694-7942.

DEMYSTIFYING SHABBAT

Darchei Noam Congregation presents "Demystifying Shabbat: Prayer, Poetry and Peacefulness" with **Rabbi Tina Grimberg**. Study the deeper meanings in Shabbat liturgy. 7:30 p.m. at 15 Hove St. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca.

Monday, Jan. 30

BIOLOGY & SPIRITUALITY

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents "Biology & Spirituality: Does Gender Define Soul?" with **Rachael Turkienicz**. 8 p.m. 416-781-3511.

MORAL STREET-PROOFING

"Strategizing with Teens in a World of Enticement" with **Dr. Michael Kirzner**. 8 p.m. at the Village Shul, 1072 Eglinton Ave. W. To reserve, call 416-785-1107, ext. 204.

RABBI YEHUDA GILAD

Torah in Motion presents **Rabbi Yehuda Gilad**, rosh yeshiva of Yeshivat Ma'ale Gilboa, 8 p.m. at Or Chaim Yeshiva, 159 Almore Ave. www.torahinmotion.org or 416-633-5770.

Tuesday, Jan. 31

VE'AHAVTA MEETING

Ve'ahavta Chaverim, Vaughan

Continued on page 25

EXTREME SHABBAT
FRIDAY, JANUARY 27, 2006
AGES 4 - 120 • 4:00 P.M. – 11:00 P.M.

4:00 – 6:15 FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

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4:15 – 5:00	Puppet Show: "A Crowded House" (ages 4+)
5:00 – 5:30	Family Art
5:30 – 6:00	Children's Service
6:00 – 6:15	Family Snack

5:30 – 11:00 FOR THOSE AGED 12 TO 120

5:30 – 6:30	Youth Song Session	8:00 – 8:30	Snack, Shmooze
6:30 – 7:00	Adult and Youth Seudah, Shmooze	8:30 – 9:30	Extremely Musical Shabbat Service
7:00 – 8:00	Choose from: Text Study, Meditation, Adult Art, Adult Storytelling, Youth Program	9:30 – 10:00	Oneg Shabbat, Israeli Dancing
		10:00 – 11:00	Movie and Discussion, Song Session

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What's New

Continued from page 24

chapter, invites people of all ages to assist in fundraising and community awareness projects. 7 p.m. **Marleine**, 416-964-7698, ext 19.

CHUG HATANACH

Rabbi Marvin Pachino leads a study group on the Book of Proverbs, Chapter 7. Beth David Congregation at 8 p.m.

KABBALAH OF THE SPIRITS

The Jewish Russian Community Centre of Thornhill Woods presents three lectures on the Jewish view of Kabbalah with **Rabbi Chaim Hildeshaim**. Beginning tonight, Feb. 7 and 14. 8 p.m. at 8808 Bathurst St. Free. 416-222-7105, ext. 224.

TUESDAY TALMUD

"Tuesday Talmud" at Temple Har Zion begins tonight at 8 p.m. with **Rabbi Jordan Cohen**. Call 905-889-2252, ext. 5, for details.

Wednesday, Feb. 1

GIRLS NIGHT OUT!

The Tamid chapter of Toronto Hadassah-WIZO presents "From The Mouths of Babes," an evening of comedy and fun at the Gladstone Hotel Ballroom. 7:30 p.m. silent auction; 8 p.m. show. $25. For tickets, call 416-487-9211.

SURVIVAL SEMINAR

Jews For Judaism offer a six-week "Survival Seminar" beginning tonight at 8 p.m. with **Rabbi Michael Skobac** at the Lipa Green Bldg. Free. To register, call 905-761-0040.

Other news

JUDAISM & PSYCHOLOGY

A two-day conference about the psychological issues confronting the Orthodox community and the role of psychology and psychotherapy in the life of a modern Jew. Begins with a panel discussion with **Rabbi Dr. Tsvi Blanchard**, of CLAL, the Jewish Centre for Learning and Leadership in New York; **Dr. Allan Kaplan**, of the Eating Disorders Program at Toronto General Hospital; **Dr. Marshall Korenblum**, psychiatrist at the Hincks-Dellcrest Centre for Children; **Leah Malamet** and **Dr. Naomi Mark**, both psychotherapists; and **Rabbi Dr. Nosson Westreich**, adolescent psychiatrist Saturday, Jan. 28, 8-10:30 p.m. Presentations continue on Sunday, Jan 29, 9:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m. Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. $18 www.torahinmotion.org or 416-633-5770

JEWISH MEDITATION

Lech Lecha Jewish Meditation, Jews for Judaism and Beth Habonim Congregation offer a four-week series on Jewish meditation, with **Chashi Skobac** beginning Thursday, Feb. 2, 7:30-9 p.m. at 5 Glen Park Ave. $40, $12 per individual session. To register, call 416-787-9529.

THE YIDDISH CLUB

Shirley Kumove talks about her book *Drunk from the Bitter Truth: The Poetry of Anna Margolin* at a meeting of the Yiddish Club. Thursday, Feb. 2, at noon at Free Times Café, 620 College St. 416-946-0720.

50 YEARS OF STRUGGLE

Beth David Congregation continues the series "Tkuma" with *The People's Army*, a historical documentary about Israel's struggles and achievements, with commentary by **Dr. David Goldberg** of the Canada-Israel Committee. Thursday, Feb. 2, 7:30 p.m. 416-633-3988.

SHABBAT OPEN HOUSE

Join Solel Congregation in Mississauga for its annual "Invite Your Neighbour" Shabbat service Friday, Feb. 3, at 8 p.m. Refreshments. Call 905-820-5915 for directions.

GALA CASINO NIGHT

Enjoy a "Gala Casino Night," with a light dinner, dessert, live entertainment, auction and martini bar in support of Associated Hebrew Schools. Saturday, Feb. 4, at Beth Emeth Synagogue. For tickets and information, call 416-785-4547.

POLITICS AND INTRIGUE

Join **Rabbi Pinchas Brumer** for "Political Intrigue and Spiritual Reality in Shushan," a four-week course, Mondays, Feb. 6,13, 27 and March 6, at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. Call Mekorot, 416-877-2050.

EATING DISORDERS

An evening in honour of National Eating Disorder Awareness Week, Thursday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m. at the Bathurst Clark Resource Library, 900 Clark Ave. W.

LONDON CONCERT

Celebrate Jewish music with the Gerald Fagan Singers, Saturday evening, Feb. 11 at 7:30 p.m. at Or Shalom Synagogue, 534 Huron St., London. The evening includes music ranging from **Salomone Rossi** to **Leonard Bernstein** and all points in between. Proceeds support Magen David Adom of London. For tickets, call 519-438-3081.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Jewish Hospice & Volunteer Visiting Hospice 30-hour training course begins shortly. Topics include emotional and ethical issues, as well as care for the caregiver. For information, call Circle of Care, 416-635-2860.

GAN SIMCHA NURSERY

Gan Simcha, a Thornhill Woods nursery school, is accepting applications for September 2006. Call 905-762-0566 or , e-mail info@jcll.com.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Surviving Separation and Looking Ahead: A six-session group for newly separated or divorced individuals who are dealing with the feelings of loss, anger and loneliness, and want to let go of the past and move forward. Wednesday, Feb. 1, 7:30- 9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Successful Step-parenting: A six-session group for couples living in blended families who want to discuss building a solid couple relationship, the myths and realities of step-families, and helping kids to adjust to step-family life. Begins Wednesday, Feb. 1, 7:30-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Creating Fulfilling Relationships: A six-session group for single adults interested in learning more about relationships. Topics include relationship styles, myths and realities of relationships, conflict resolution and communication. Thursday, Feb. 2, 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

The Challenge of Anger For Women: A six-session group for women to learn how to express their anger in an assertive, non-aggressive way. Thursdays, beginning Feb. 2, 7:30-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

How To Talk With Your Ex: A two-session workshop for those who wish to learn effective communication skills to better deal with their ex and issues around the children. Thursdays, beginning Feb. 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

Effective Parenting: A four-session group for parents of children ages 3 to 11 years. Topics include how to nurture self-esteem, encouraging problem solving, increasing communication and setting limits. Mondays, beginning Feb. 6, 7- 9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Today's Woman: A six-session group for women wanting to discuss time and stress management, building self-esteem, assertiveness and improving communication skills. Begins Tuesday, Feb. 7, 7-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313 .

FOR SENIORS

The Association of Jewish Seniors general meeting, Thursday, Jan. 26, 1:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. **Robyn Young** on "Active Living For Older Adults." Call **Tammy**, 416-635-2860.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday dance, Jan. 29; Casino Rama, Wednesday, Feb. 15. Call 416-395-7881

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. Jan. 26, discussion. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Ethical Quandary lecture Series, Tuesday, Jan. 31, and Feb. 7 and 14, 10-11:30 a.m.

Etrog Club, Tuesday, Jan. 31, at 3 p.m., lecture.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Lunch and Learn with **Marilyn Fine** who speaks on "Travel: A Traveller's Point of View." Tuesday, Jan. 31, 11:30 a.m. $5, guest $7.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

"The Clementine Suite" by **Barbara Astman** is on at the Koffler Gallery.

Centre Camp's early bird deadline is Friday, Jan. 27.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Rosh Chodesh Series for Women with **Rabbi Yael Splansky**, of Holy Blossom Temple, a text-based discussion. Monday, Jan. 30, 8 p.m.

Jewish Meditation Orientation, a 10-week course, Feb. 5-April 9, 4:30-5:30 p.m. $90, non-members $140, drop in $15.

Intermediate Hebrew I, 6 weeks, Tuesdays, Feb. 7-Mar.14, 7-9 p.m. $154, non-members $186, $10 material fee.

Hebrew Conversation I, 6 weeks Tuesdays, Feb. 9-March 16, 7- 9 p.m. $154, non-members $186, $10 material fee.

Correction

There was incorrect information in a correction that appeared in last week's "What's New" column (*CJN*, Jan. 19). Robert Heller has started his second term as chair of the board of the Union for Reform Judaism and Rabbi Eric Yoffie has been president of the URJ for about eight years. *The CJN* regrets the error.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 42

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Helen Kirsh	Jan 3/06	100 Antibes Drive
Elsie Duman	Jan 8/06	29 Dewlane Drive
Rachel Gaertner	Jan 8/06	595 Brookdale Avenue
Eva Rappoport	Jan 9/06	111 Avenue Road
Stan Bernstein	Jan 10/06	500 Avenue Road
Jack Kamiel	Jan 10/06	76 Robinwood Trail
Murray Atkins	Jan 11/06	46 Purdon Drive
Dora Rozender	Jan 11/06	47 Park Hill Road
Lily Barr	Jan 12/06	625 Avenue Road
Percy Cohen	Jan 12/06	9 Carscadden Drive
Michael Bedder	Jan 13/06	650 Briar Hill Avenue
Anne Bluestien	Jan 13/06	3560 Bathurst Street
Susan Friedman	Jan 14/06	25 Carscadden Drive
Fanny Saunders	Jan 14/06	18 Lower Village Gate
Harold Soupcoff	Jan 15/06	3600 Yonge Street

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Singer, Joseph	Jan 5/06	Private
Greenstein, Adelle	Jan 6/06	37 Green Bush Rd
Lubart, Mordechai	Jan 6/06	Private
Bucovetsky, Carl	Jan 7/06	Private
Bilenkise, Natan	Jan 10/06	2 Mascot Place
Sidon, Sara (Sal)	Jan 10/06	60 Transwell Ave
Hunter, Eva	Jan 10/06	65 Huntington Blvd
Asody, Emerick	Jan 11/06	455 Sentinel Rd
Blakey, David	Jan 13/06	25 Canyon Ave
Finkelstein, Eve	Jan 13/06	Private
Laszlo, Zeev	Jan 13/06	39 Hungtington Park Dr
Mac, Riwa	Jan 13/06	3636 Bathurst St
Norwich, Sally	Jan 13/06	489A Whitmore Ave
Wilchfort, Ottilie	Jan 13/06	1131 Steeles Ave W
Wurman, Nachemia	Jan 14/06	131 Banbury Rd
Ordynans, Jack	Jan 14/06	3560 Bathurst St
Furman, Julian	Jan 15/06	1303 Wilson Ave
Kern, Samuel	Jan 15/06	3560 Bathurst St
Beyo, Rahel	Jan 15/06	Private
Goldstein, Russell	Jan 15/06	35 Merton St

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wishes to express our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to all of our relatives, friends and colleagues for your generous acts of kindness, expressions of sympathy, shiva meals, visits, cards and letters of condolence and generous donations made in Neil's memory. There are not enough words to describe your overwhelming kindness and support during this most difficult time in our lives. Your support and affection were a great source of comfort and will always be remembered.

Please accept this as our personal thank you!

Gail, Max, Alex and Amy and the Koven, Rudolph, Grossman and Yack families

Obituary

Community volunteer Lily Barr showed genuine interest in people

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

No matter where she was, be it the humble confines of an elevator or the grandeur of the Israeli consulate, Lily Barr took a genuine interest in all the people with whom she crossed paths.

"One of her real pet peeves was when people say 'How are you?' and don't really mean it," said Eli Barr, Lily's son.

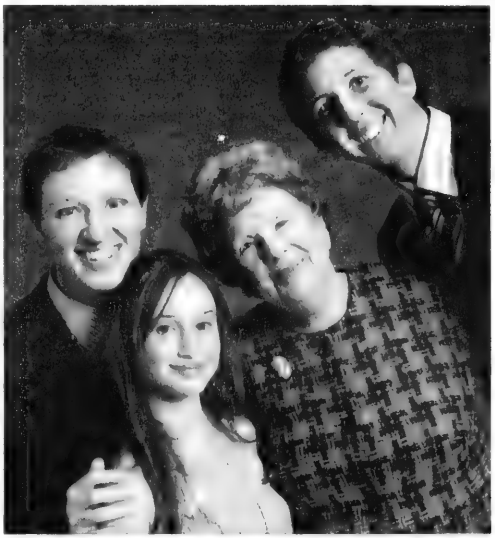
"She wouldn't just say 'How are you?' She would stop and have a conversation with anyone, and I think it meant a lot to these people, because you always feel good when someone is really interested in you."

The former president of the Canada-Israel Cultural Foundation (CICF) and an active volunteer at Baycrest died Jan. 12 after a battle with lung cancer and pneumonia.

She is survived by Eli, his wife Sandy and grandchildren Jonathan, Josh, and Laurel. Her husband David predeceased her.

Born in Riga, Latvia in 1924, Barr was raised by staunch Zionists.

"Her father was really excited by [Theodor] Herzl and what was happening in Palestine," Eli Barr said.



Lily Barr with her grandchildren.

"In the 1930s, he travelled to Palestine many times and bought property in Tel Aviv."

The real estate investment turned out to be prescient, as the deteriorating situation in Latvia during World War II prompted the family to move to Palestine in 1941.

They likely would not have survived if they remained, as many family members perished.

"She said the train leaving Riga was probably the saddest she ever was in her entire life," Barr said.

"Because she was spared, it was important for her to enjoy life and live it in honour of her family."

She served as an officer in the Haganah during Israel's War of Independence and tended to sick and wounded soldiers who were hospitalized.

Lily married David Barr (formerly Berman), a sixth generation Sabra whose family owned a famous bakery in Jerusalem.

A lawyer who earned one of his degrees from the American University in Beirut, David Barr became an Israeli diplomat and was sent with his wife to Argentina in 1961, the year Nazi Adolf Eichmann was captured in that country by Israeli intelligence.

A few years later, the Barrs moved to New York City, where Lily's ability to engage people proved invaluable while she worked for the Israeli consulate and the United Nations, under the leadership of then ambassador Abba Eban.

"She worked for Abba Eban during the Six Day War and claimed to be the first civilian who found out about the war outside of Israel," said Rabbi Roy Tanenbaum of Beth Tzedec Congregation, who delivered the eulogy at Barr's funeral.

"She went through all the drama that took place in the UN at that time."

In the mid-1970s, David took on the new job of representing the Israeli Discount Bank in Toronto.

In her new city, Lily became actively involved in the Jewish community, dedicating her time to causes she believed in, such as promoting Israeli artists as president CICF and volunteering with Hadassah WIZO.

Even as she got older, Barr didn't slow down her community work, becoming a regular face among the volunteers in Baycrest's psychology department.

"People looked at her and thought she was in her 60s," Barr relates.

"She was just full of life."

Barr's memory stayed sharp and many people marvelled at how she didn't forget their names.

"If you asked her what happened at Hadassah Hospital in 1948, she could remember people by name," Rabbi Tanenbaum said.

"Because she had this kind of personality, it helped her husband David, because as a diplomat, they met many people, and her style matched his needs."

Three years ago, Barr returned to Latvia to retrace her roots and visit the spot believed to be where family members were murdered.

"She had always felt emptiness in herself, and this was real closure," Barr said.

Coast to Coast

Israel plans on opening Montreal tourism office

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

Israel plans to open a tourism office in Montreal this spring, conditional upon the Israeli cabinet's adoption of its budget, says Dani Shahal, director of the Israel Government Tourist Office (IGTO) in Toronto.

Shahal said that if the cabinet approves the budget at the end of this month, the Montreal office could open in March or April. The initiative has been approved in principle by the tourism ministry, he added.

The IGTO has not had an office in Montreal for about 27 years, he said.

Shahal, who has been IGTO director since October, 2001, believes Israel could attract far more tourists from Quebec – both Jewish and non-Jewish – if the IGTO had a representative in Montreal. He believes there is a "huge potential" market among the non-Jewish population that Israel is not tapping into.

Shahal said his preference is to locate the Montreal office downtown, separate from the Israeli consulate, and to have it run by a Canadian.

The IGTO estimates that 7,000 to 8,000 Quebecers visited Israel in 2005, about 70 per cent of them Jewish. Approximately 50,000 Canadians in total visited Israel last year, of whom 60 per cent were Jewish, Shahal said. That's up from 42,000 in 2004. The IGTO is projecting 58,000 Canadians will visit Israel this year.

As it has elsewhere in Canada, tourism to Israel from Quebec fell after the start of the second intifadah in 2000 but has started to recover. The IGTO believes up to 9,000 people from Quebec were going to Israel per year just before the violence began.

In addition, tourism from Quebec was hurt by Air Canada's cancellation of its twice-weekly direct flights between Montreal and Tel Aviv at the end of 2000, Shahal said. He said he is trying to persuade the carrier to restore that service.

Israel's national airline, El Al, stopped its flights out of Montreal in the late 1990s. Shahal does not believe that will change.

He believes the IGTO should be making a greater effort in Quebec to market Israel as a tourist destination, as well as a destination of religious significance to Christians and Jews. In 2006, he expects that non-Jews will represent a larger proportion of the Quebec tourists.

Shahal said 400 Canadian religious groups are already confirmed to tour Israel in 2006, and almost 90 of those are from Quebec. He said that greater ease of movement between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, with the relaxing of security checks, has led to an upsurge in Christian pilgrims from around the world.

The IGTO also plans to more vigorously promote tourism in the Montreal Jewish community, including asking rabbis to impress upon their congregants the importance of going to Israel.

The renewed interest in Quebec by Israel is a major turnaround from only four years ago, when Israel was about to close its consulate in Montreal, and only relented after pressure from Jewish community leaders.

Raymond James U.S. Analysts' Best Picks for Canadian Investors

MICHAEL KORMAN B.Comm, FMA, FCSI
Financial Advisor, Raymond James Ltd., Member CIPF
Tel: 416-777-7131 • E-mail: michael.korman@raymondjames.ca

In this market, the right picks can be especially important. The U.S. Best Picks highlights individual stocks while giving investors a group of companies expected to produce superior overall results during the upcoming year. It is comprised of stocks in which the covering analyst has particularly strong convictions.

This year will mark the 10th year of the U.S. Analysts' Best Picks and since its inception it has dramatically outperformed the S&P 500 as outlined in the table opposite. However, it is prudent to remind investors that past performance is no guarantee of future results.

Since 1996 a total of 109 stocks have been recommended through the US Analysts' Best Picks list. Of this total 79 advanced (72.5%) and 30 declined (27.5%) within the recommended holding period. The holding period for each year's list is approximately 55 weeks from the inception date to 12/31 of the following year. Past performance is not indicative of future results. An investor would incur commissions to transact these recommendations. Individual results will vary and transaction costs related to investing in these stocks will affect overall performance. The market value of securities fluctuates and investors may incur profits or losses. The performance returns in 1999 were extraordinary and it is unlikely that these unrealistically high returns will be repeated.

Year	Best Picks List a.	S&P 500	Incremental Return f.	Analysts' Best Picks Calendar Year Basis c.
1996 b.	37.20%	22.60%	14.70%	33.20%
1997	53.50%	37.10%	16.40%	44.80%
1998	38.90%	30.80%	8.20%	32.90%
1999	143.90%	25.40%	118.60%	93.00%
2000	46.90%	-4.80%	51.70%	31.80%
2001	11.60%	-15.00%	26.60%	3.90%
2002	-0.60%	-22.70%	22.20%	-5.20%
2003	37.20%	24.30%	12.90%	36.40%
2004	27.70%	14.90%	12.90%	19.70%
2005 d.	12.86%	3.29%	9.57%	N/A
9 Year Avg. e.	44.10%	12.50%	31.60%	32.30%

a. Total return basis with performances averaged as if an equal dollar allocation was made to each stock at the beginning of the period and held until 12/31 of the following year. **b.** This was the first year performance of the Analysts' Best Picks list. **c.** Total return performance for the calendar years indicated. **d.** 2005 Analysts' Best Picks & S&P 500 total return performance through the close of 9/21/05. **e.** Years 1996 through 2004 with total returns averaged. **f.** Annual average Analysts' Best Picks total return performance minus S&P 500 performance

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For boys and girls, ages 3-12. Provides door to-door transportation, hot kosher lunches (COR) and basic swimming instruction. July session $625, Aug session $595, or $1095 for both sessions. For our pre-school session both $945, July $475, Aug $445. A recent innovation in the boys' division is a special baseball camp at our same low cost, and basketball clinics. Our campers are sure to enjoy this popular feature.

CAMP ESPAÑA
Marbella, Spain
Contact: Marion (USA) 1-310-475 9683
E-mail: info@campespana.com
Website: www.campespana.com
July 6-July 27 (2 or 3 week option) Co-ed ages 13-21. Unique international camp attracting Jewish students worldwide. Excellent accommodation in beautiful surroundings on the beach. Spanish language tuition (optional) Sports, arts, crafts, salsa. Excursions. Nightly entertainment. Special 18+ program. Kosher.

CAMP EXPERTS & TEEN SUMMERS
30 East 81st St., Suite 7C.,
New York, New York, USA 10028
Contact: Joanne Paltrowitz
Tel: 1-877-553-9737 Fax: 1-212-288-1069
E-mail: joanne@campexperts.com
Website: www.campexperts.com
The Camp Experts & Teen Summers is a FREE service that guides families in choosing the right summer program in the right location at the right price. We represent over 800 programs for children ages 6-18, and have successfully advised parents for almost 20 years. Call us 877-553-9737 or e-mail joanne@campexperts.com or visit us at www.campexperts.com

CAMP GEORGE (URJ)
3845 Bathurst St., Ste. 301,
Toronto, Ont. M3H 3N2
Senior Assistant Director: Karen Kollins
Tel: 416-638-2635 Fax: 416-638-8803
Union for Reform Judaism's Camp George opened its doors in 1999 and has acquired a wonderful reputation after only 7 seasons. Located just 2 1/4 hrs. north of Toronto, the camp program is designed to enhance the physical, social, and personal skills of youngsters completing grades 2-9 in a warm and friendly Jewish environment. Camp George is OCA Accredited

CAMP HATIKVAH
#1 - 5763 Oak St.,
Vancouver, B.C. V6M 2V7
Administrator: Tali Schiffer
Tel: 604-263-1200 Fax: 604-261-1209
Website: www.camphatikvah.com
Over the past half century, Camp Hatikvah has become one of our community's most prized possessions! Immersed in Jewish and Zionist culture at camp, literally tens of thousands of young people have forged lifelong friendships and acquired skills that have greatly enriched their lives. In celebration of 50 fabulous years, Camp Hatikvah invites anyone and everyone who has ever loved camp to our **"50th Gala"**, February 25, 2006 to... A night to remember!! For more information, or to purchase a ticket, please call our office at (604) 263-1200

CAMP LAKELAND
787 Delaware Ave.,
Buffalo, New York 14209
Director: Randy Comensky
Tel: 716-886-3145 Fax: 716-961-0863
E-mail: summer@camplakeland.com
Website: www.camplakeland.com
A Jewish camping experience for children 7-16 years. Activities include waterskiing, go-carting, log rolling, digital photography, arts & crafts, ropes course, drama, sailing, kayaking, windsurfing, heated pool, kosher kitchen and much, much more. Located 3 hrs from Toronto; 1½ hrs. from Buffalo, New York. Special 25% discount for Canadian campers

CAMP MOSHAVA CANADA
159 Almore Ave., 2nd floor
Toronto, Ont. M3H 2H9
Director: Miriam Allman
Tel: 416-630-7578 Fax: 416-630-8301
E-mail: office@campmoshava.org
Website: www.campmoshava.org
An Orthodox, Zionist camp embracing the Bnei Akiva ideals of Torah, Avodah and Aliyah, situated in the Kawartha Lakes region. Heated swimming pool, waterskiing, canoes, rock climbing wall, high ropes course, mountain biking, sports field, Bert Knesset and Best Midrash. Shomer Shabbat camp under COR supervision, with medical staff on site

CAMP NORTHLAND-B'NAI BRITH
1118 Centre St., Suite 202,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 7R9
Contact: Denise Harris or Ellen Nash
Tel: 905-881-0018 Fax: 905-881-9019
Website: www.campnbb.com
A residential camp for boys and girls 7-15, on 725 acres in the picturesque Haliburton Highlands. Programs are designed to meet the needs of each age group. Campers are offered waterskiing, windsurfing, canoeing, kayaking, sailing, tennis, drama, arts & crafts, nature, sports, and Judaic cultural programs. Food services supervised by COR

CAMP ROBIN HOOD
Tel: 416-736-4443 Fax: 416-736-9971
Email: crh@camprh.com
Website: www.camprobinhood.ca
A day camp for boys and girls 4-15 yrs. old. A natural camp setting where fun & skill development are by-products of successful interactions between campers & counsellors. Our 4.5 1/2 yr. olds are the basis of our growth. The care they receive and the creative programming provided by our staff keep them coming back to eventually become senior campers and leaders in training. Our swimming program, from beginner to Royal Life Saving, with twice a-day instruction, is highly regarded and fun filled. Our door-to-door transportation is efficient and safe. Ask about our new "Camper-in-Training" Parent & Child program

CAMP SHALOM
788 Marlee Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M6B 3K1
Executive Director: Malka Klein
Camp Director: Bob Cooper
Tel: 416-783-6744 Fax: 416-783-9363
Website: www.campshalom.ca
Camp Shalom (founded 1948), non-profit Zionist overnight camp, in Gravenhurst, Ont. on Lake Muskoka. 245 campers, ages 8-13 for each 4 wk session. Kosher (COR). Activities include Jewish programs, ropes course, waterski, canoe, sail, kayaks, instructional swim, tripping, baseball, tennis, landsports, gymnastics, photography, arts & crafts, jazz, drama, cooking, newspaper, singing & dance, mini-golf and media. Our 58th year!

CAMP SHOMRIA
1111 Finch Ave. W., Ste. 456,
Toronto, Ont. M3J 2E5
Contact: Shaliach Itai Ziedenberg
Tel: 416-736-1339 Fax: 416-736-1405
Co-ed, 150 campers, ages 7-16, special grade 2 & 3 program, up to 6 weeks of summer fun. Located on sandy beach lakefront. Programs focus on Jewish identity, progressive Zionism, kibbutz, building lasting friendships, group co-operation, social and community awareness. Waterskiing, kayaking, canoeing, swimming, Israeli song and dance, drama, crafts, theme days and more! Run by Hashomer Hatzair Youth Movement for over 50 years

CAMP SOLELIM
788 Marlee Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M6B 3K1
Camp Director: Risa Epstein
Tel: 416-781-5156, ext. 225
Fax: 416-787-3100
Camp Solelim, a Canadian Young Judaea summer camp, has been offering a unique summer experience tailor-made for 14-15 yrs. old for over 40 years. It blends the perfect balance between physical activity and informal Jewish education. Camp Solelim prides itself on its high quality staff and program

CAMP TIMBERLANE
192 Bloor St. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M5S 1T8
Director: Corey Mandell
Tel: 416-923-7200, Ext. 224
A residential camp in Haliburton where your child can return year after year, where someone really cares about your child as a person, a place that will be a summer home away from home, a place to learn new skills, to discover adventures and to grow as an individual. This is the incomparable experience of a summer at Timbelane

CAMP TOROLAGO
55 Glen Cameron Rd., Ste. 206,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 1P2
Director: Jack Benaim
Tel: 905-881-9355 Fax: 905-707-5444
Website: www.torolago.com
Torolago serves as a summer meeting place for Jewish children aged 3-15. Our camp's philosophy is centred on the intrinsic values of solidarity, commitment and community delivered with an underlying Zionist message that promotes peace in the State of Israel. Call for details 905-881-9355

CAMP WAHANOWIN
227 Eglinton Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M4R 1A9
Director: Bruce Nashman
Tel: 416-482-2600 Fax: 416-482-2860
***Summer address:* P.O. Box #830,**
Orillia, Ont. L3V 6K8
Located near Orillia on beautiful Lake Couchiching, Wahanowin offers the largest variety of activities including waterfront, land sports, creative arts and adventure-based programming. Caring and committed counsellors provide a nurturing and supportive environment for every camper. A Nashman Family tradition since 1955. Friendships and Memories to last a lifetime!

CHAVAYOT INTERNATIONAL
Tel: 718-363-5089; (917-753-9668
Website: www.chavayot.com
A spirited spiritual experience for girls 12-17. With 6 weeks in Israel, Chavayot provides a total immersion, an incredible journey that will engage mind, heart and spirit. Hiking, jeeping, swimming, rappelling are also part of Chavayot. Israel is a place where every blade of grass is cherished. Through Chavayot, your daughter will discover why

CRESTWOOD VALLEY DAY CAMP
411 Lawrence Ave. E.,
Toronto, Ont. M3C 1N9
Director: Eric Shendelman
Tel: 416-444-9595 Fax: 416-444-4178
CRESTWOOD KNOWN FOR UNBEATABLE SPIRIT! The Preschool Camp (2½-5) is renowned for its dynamic and challenging activities taught by expert specialists. Junior & Senior Camps (6-10) provide advanced programing. "NEW" Introductory golf/and the climbing wall (Grade 1 & up). Four heated pools on property provide top facilities for daily instructional swim. Crestwood cares - about your child & you!

DANCE PLACE, THE
885 Sheppard Ave. W.,
North York, Ont. M3H 2T4
Tel: 416-633-2726
Website: www.danceplace.ca
The Place to grow confidently. *Performing Arts Day Camps* - Junior and Senior levels, ages 5-15 yrs. *Music Theatre, Vocal, Visual Arts, Drama, Production, Recreation, Swim* and a show for the parents. Come to the **Dance Place** for a great summer. Two locations **Etobicoke** and **North York**

ELITE BASKETBALL CAMPS
Camp locations: Toronto, Etobicoke, Newmarket, Aurora and Richmond Hill
Director: Stephanie Splitter
Tel: 905-326-9214
Website: www.elitecamps.com
Elite Camps is for boys and girls 7-16. Whether your child is a beginner, intermediate or advanced player, we offer programming to meet their needs and challenge their current abilities. Elite Camps is accredited by the Ontario Basketball Association and we offer Winter, March, Passover and Summer camps. New weekly clinics now available

LUBAVITCH DAY CAMP
770 Chabad Gate,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 3V9
Director: Mrs. Ester Steinmetz
Tel: 905-731-7000 Fax: 905-731-7005
We cater to children from ages 2½-12. Our camp features trips, hot lunches, crafts, sports, door to door transportation, instructional swimming, a Torah atmosphere and a creative play ground. We offer a large discount for registering before March 15th and a further discount for each additional child

MENORAH NURSERY
4300 Bathurst St.,
Downsview, Ont. M3H 3R4
Administrator: Helen Dodick
Tel: 416-638-6910
Menorah Nursery is a place where each child has an opportunity to learn through play with other children, with appropriate toys and materials, and where their mental, emotional, and physical growth is fostered. Choosing Menorah Nursery, assures you that we will provide a warm, stimulating and secure place for your child

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Whether you are interested in traveling through Spain, Italy, and France, spending your summer volunteering or touring through Israel, we have a program just for you. We have programs tailored for teens of every background. This summer you will enjoy great trips, amazing advisors, and make best friends for life. Apply before February 15th, to receive a free iPOD!

PAR GOLF CAMPS
821 Eglinton Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M5N 1E6
Director: Graham Bridel
Tel: 416-960-GOLF (4653)
Website: www.learngolf.com
As we enter our 14th summer of providing quality golf instruction at affordable prices, we are excited about the upcoming season. We offer 2 week sessions throughout the summer for boys/girls 7-18. Our door-to-door and depot bus service runs throughout Toronto, Richmond Hill and Thornhill. We also offer weekend spring junior programs and adult camps. If you want to learn golf, this is the place!

PRIPSTEIN'S CAMP
5702 Cote St. Luc Rd., #202,
Montreal, Que., Canada H3X 2E7
Director: Ronnie Braverman
Tel: (514) 481-1875 Fax: (514) 481-7863
E-mail: ronnie@pripsteinscamp.com
Pripstein's is a traditional, co-ed residential children's summer camp situated in St Adolphe d'Howard in the beautiful Laurentian mountains about 60 miles north of Montreal, Canada. Our staff consists of 100 counsellors, specialists & program staff, plus 28 kitchen, maintenance and medical staff.

ROBIN HOOD SPORTS ACADEMY
Tel: 416-736-4443 Fax: 416-736-9971
Email: crh@camprh.com
Website: www.camprobinhood.ca
Our Sports Skills Development program has helped thousands of boys and girls improve specific abilities in baseball, tennis, soccer, basketball, golf and personal challenge sports (mountain biking, high ropes, climbing wall and roller hockey). Players choose a major sport in each 2-week clinic and spend the greater part of each day learning every aspect of that sport in fun-filled, challenging station approach. At the end of each day, players are given an opportunity to spend a recreational hour at a sport of their choice. Daily recreational swim rounds out the day. Transportation integrated with Camp Robin Hood

SHENDY'S SWIM SCHOOL
Director: Eric Shendelman
Tel: 905-763-7915
Website: www.shendys.com
E-mail: eric@shendys.com
If you are looking for experienced and well trained instructors, small classes and a friendly atmosphere in Toronto, then Shendy's Swim School is for you. We provide programs in all Red Cross and Lifesaving levels. Shendy's Swim School is a 12-year commercial member of the Ontario Camping Association, and provides many leadership and recertification classes for camp staff and C.I.T.s

SHOW BIZ KIDS CAMP
1179 King St. W., Ste. 214
Toronto, Ont. M6K 3C5
Marketing Rep.: Natalie Jurevitz
Tel: 416-536-8574 Fax: 416-536-0227
Website: torontoacademyofacting.com
Students 8-17 introduced to training in acting for the film & television industry. Students who have trained with the Toronto Academy of Acting for Film & Television are now seen in tv commercial, feature films & television series. Call 416-536-8574 or visit our website www.torontoacademyofacting.com

SHOWTIME MUSIC THEATRE DAY CAMP
45 Howland Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M5R 3B2
Director: Barbara Adams
Tel: 416-923-1234
At Showtime we create and produce an original musical every session. Join us in scripting, singing, dancing, acting. We'll paint scenery, make costumes and props, and invite our friends to enjoy the results. Mentor-based CIT program for teens 13-15. Outdoor play daily, aftercare; 1:5 ratio. The Walmer Centre, Spadina & Bloor. High fun quotient!

UPPER CANADA DAY CAMPS
Head Office: 2900 John St.,
Markham, Ont. L3R 5G3
Tel: 905-946-1113
Camps in North York, Thornhill and Markham for children ages 6-12 years. Bus trips to places like Wild Water Kingdom, Ontario Place, etc. Swimming, sports, arts, science computer. Monday-Friday, 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

ZODIAC SWIM & SPECIALTY CAMP
Summer Address: Toronto French School (318 Lawrence Ave. E.)
Toronto, Ont. M4N 1T7
Directors: Rick & Ellen Howard
Tel: 416-789-1989 Fax: 416-789-5525
6.5-12.5 year olds have 1/2 day opportunity in chosen specialty (i.e. various sports, arts, other options), 1/2 day in other activities. 2.5-6.5 year olds enjoy multi-activity, age-appropriate program. Daily Zodiac instructional/recreational swim program. 7 weeks (1/2 week options). Located at beautiful indoor/outdoor Toronto French School (Bayview/Lawrence)

Watch for the
Live 'n Learn supplement
in the March 9th issue of
The Canadian Jewish News

TOROL

OVERNIGHT

Welcome to

Torolago is a summer meeting place for Jewish youth from all over the world. Our Overnight camp is home to children from Canada, the United States, South America and the State of Israel. While we offer a wide range of activities like horseback riding, landsports, theatre arts, and watersports; just to name a a few, Torolago employs a message of Peace and Unity in an effort to better facilitate the strengthening of future Jewish networks. Your camper will have a culturally rich experience, while creating friendships that will span the globe.

Established 2004

DAYCAMP

the Family

CAMP TOROLAGO

Torolago Office
55 Glen Cameron Road, Suite 206
Thornhill, ON L4J 1P2
Tel. 905.881.9355
Fax. 905.881.5516
E-mail. info@torolago.com

www.torolago.com

The Dance Place

Dance Camp Plus (5-15 yrs.)
Explore your talent
Dance Drama Visual Art Vocal
Music Theatre Recreation
Locations: North York and Etobicoke
Office: 885 Sheppard Ave. W. M3H 2T4
416 633-2726
www.danceplace.ca

Camp Solelim

Camp Solelim is a unique Jewish environment where children aged 14 & 15 years old spend six weeks together building friendships and memories that will last a lifetime

Limited Space for campers finishing Grade 8 only.

Contact 416-781-5156 ext.221
or youngjudaea@bellnet.ca

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Register early to avoid disappointment
call: Helen at 416-638-6910

CAMP HATIKVAH SUMMER 2006

First Session (July 2-28):
Kochot & SITs – **Full**
Chalutzim & Gesher – **Open**
Second Session (Aug 2-23):
Kochot, Gesher & Chalutzim – **Open**
Giborim (5 days) – **Few spots left**
Kochavim (2 weeks) – **Boys Open**

At Camp Hatikvah you will find various water activities such as waterskiing, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, and swimming. On land you'll enjoy dancing, various sport activities, drama, arts and crafts, and out-tripping.

For more information, contact **TALI** at **604-263-1200**
administrator@camphatikvah.com **VISIT US AT www.camphatikvah.com**

Corey Mandell is back at Timberlane

Barry and Philomena Lowes founded Camp Timberlane in 1957. For two generations, it's been a place where kids have fun vacations, master new skills, make lifelong friendships, and learn respect for nature.

Corey Mandell and Timberlane go back a long way. He started there as a camper aged nine, in 1979. By 18, he was doing a lot of DJ-ing, much of it for the camp. When he founded Mandell Entertainment as a bar mitzvah company in 1990, much of his work came from Timberlane.

He ran Mandell Entertainment's bar mitzvah division personally, till he sold it in 2005. (He still owns Mandell Entertainment, which does corporate events.) In summer 2005, he returned to Timberlane as director.

When the Lowes retired in September, he bought the camp, with the Lowes still involved as founding directors. So now he's come full circle.

"Last summer," Mandell says, "was our best ever. Ninety per cent of our campers were returnees, and people brought in by word of mouth."

Camp Timberlane has its own lake, Lake of Two Islands. Fed by underwater springs, it's among the purest lakes in the Haliburton Highlands.

Timberlane is a wilderness camp, with traditional activities like campfires and singsongs. For today's sophisticated kids, there's a range of new attractions and a varied arts program.

Camp Timberlane offers sports from kayaking to rock climbing and BMX biking. It's also one of the few Ontario camps to offer scuba diving with PADI certification. And on special hiking trips, campers learn to respect the environment, and acquire basic survival skills.

Visual arts range from copper enamelling to digital photography. The musical program features plays like Cats and Les Mis; and there's a dance program.

Timberlane is co-ed, ages seven to 16. Girls and boys sleep in separate camps, with the common area between them. There are places for 200 boys and 200 girls, with one staff member for every two campers.

Campers are mainly, but not exclusively Jewish. Friday evening, there's a Shabbat dinner and service.

Staff respect each child's needs and abilities; no "templates" here. Every camper is an individual.

Ask for Corey Mandell at 416-733-0044, ext. 224. And visit the website: www.camptimberlane.ca

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BOATING • PONTOON BOATING
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ARTS
• ARTS & CRAFTS •
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FOR BOYS AND GIRLS
AGES 7 TO 16
PEANUT FREE!
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Camps

THE JEWISH CAMP COUNCIL OF TORONTO

1118 Centre Street, Suite 202
Thornhill, ON L4J 7R9
Tel: 905-881-0018 • Fax : 905-881-9019

CAMP NORTHLAND - B'NAI BRITH

- a total living experience for ages 7-15 located in picturesque Haliburton, Ontario, just 2 1/2 hours from the GTA
- a creative Jewish environment with Judaic and cultural arts programs
- offering swimming, sailing, waterskiing, canoeing, kayaking, windsurfing, tennis, basketball, landsports, drama, and dance, arts and crafts, adventure sports, tripping, mountain bikes
- no peanuts or nuts of any kind allowed in camp

ACT SOON AS SPACE IS VERY LIMITED IN MANY CATEGORIES!

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- alumni and others provide fundraising support for camp
- become a "Friend" and receive a tax-deductible receipt for your donation
- "Mini-Camp" August weekend and "Friends Day" exclusively for "Friends" and their families

DONATION CARDS FOR ALL OCCASIONS

VISIT OUR WEBSITE www.campnbb.com

All programs provide food service under the supervision of the Kashruth Council, Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto

Call now for more information regarding registration and staff positions

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- Children's House Day Camp, 22 Church St. N, Stouffville 905-640-2905
- Fenside Day Camp, York Mills & Victoria Park, North York 416-444-2441
- Rockford Day Camp, Bathurst & Steeles, North York 416-663-6286
- Rosedale North Day Camp, Bathurst & Hwy. 407, Thornhill 905-771-6820
- Shaughnessy Camp, Don Mills & Sheppard, Don Mills 416-499-6500
- Stornoway Day Camp, Bayview & Hwy. 407, Thornhill 905-707-6805
- Three Valleys Day Camp, York Mills & Don Mills, North York 416-443-9414
- William Armstrong Day Camp, Markham Rd. & Hwy. 7, Markham 905-471-4099
- Wilshire Day Camp, Dufferin & Hwy. 407, Thornhill 905-709-2273

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Specialize in either basketball, baseball, soccer, tennis, in-line skating, mountain biking and climbing wall.

New - 2006 - Golf!

- Outstanding facilities located on our 50 acre site in Markham
- Door-to-door transportation
- Instructional and recreational swim with qualified staff
- 2,4, 6 & 8 week sessions available

Ask about our new 'Camper-in-Training' Parent & Tot program!

416.736.4443 • www.camprobinhood.ca

Camp Moshava Canada – Camping above all the rest!

Camp Moshava Canada, the only Orthodox, Zionist, Bnei Akiva camp in Canada, is situated on 250 acres of beachfront property in the beautiful Kawartha Lakes region.

At Camp Moshava, no matter one's requirements, all campers' dietary needs are met with tasty and nutritious meals. Our 2nd service salad bar is extremely popular with the campers.

Moshava has a Beit Midrash and an outdoor Beit Knesset, an unparalleled indoor Recreation Centre (Matnas) featuring regulation size basketball, volleyball and floor hockey courts as well as an indoor/outdoor stage. The camp boasts a well-rounded program which includes an extensive high ropes course, rock climbing wall, biking, a ball hockey rink and water activities.

Moshava has a 2-week "splash of camp" (Nitzanim) program designed for grade 2 graduates. The camp's regularly scheduled days include informal Jewish education, instructional swimming in an outdoor heated pool, canoeing, water-skiing, a full sports program, thematic arts & crafts and drama. Special days include colour war, sports day, canoe trips, overnights, hiking, nature trips and chesed program.

What makes Camp Moshava unique goes far beyond facilities, events and personalities. The atmosphere and camaraderie that exists amongst staff and campers is truly special. Only those who have actually encountered a Shabbat at Camp Moshava Canada can truly appreciate what the experience is like! Camp Moshava is not just a summer camp experience, it's an experience of a lifetime!

Basketball • Archery • Shiarim • Chugim • Volleyball • Tubing • Ropes course • Zipline • Baseball • Soccer • Biking

CAMP MOSHAVA CANADA STILL HAS AVAILABLE SPACES FOR 2006!

Thank you for your continued support

STAFF POSITIONS AVAILABLE

For more information please call the camp office at 416-630-7578 or e-mail to office@campmoshava.org (internet: www.campmoshava.org)

Canoeing • Waterskiing • Arts & Crafts • Beit Midrash • Overnights • Drama

Camps

Advertising Feature

Top camping at low costs

Camp Eitan has been directed by Rabbis Michoel Levine and Moshe Weinberg for the past 27 years.

Both teachers at Eitz Chaim Schools, they offer the most in camping for the lowest price. The prices include door-to-door bus transportation within a designated area, hot kosher lunches (under COR supervision) and basic instructional swimming.

Also included are gymnastics, overnights, computers, arts & crafts, weekly trips and a varied sports program. The boys camp is located at 475 Patricia at Eitz Chaim Schools. The girls & pre-school camp is located at their Spring Farm Campus. They offer modern air-conditioned facilities for their indoor activities.

A big hit in our boy's division is our baseball camp, offered at our same low price. Coaching, video instruction, practice and game situations are aimed at helping campers at the lower skill levels, as well.

Our older girls' division designed to meet the needs of girls grades 3-5, also offers an optional baseball camp.

In our preschool division, special daily events, preschool classrooms, playground equipment, a weekly theme and a caring staff provide the younger child with a safe and happy summer experience.

For more information, or a brochure please call 416-781-2333.

בס"ד

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Quality camping for tots to teens

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JULY: $625 - AUG.: $595

Pre-School Both: $945 July $475 August $445

Includes: •Door-to-door transportation •Hot kosher* lunches •Computers •Sports •Gymnastics •Overnights •Basic instructional swimming •Trips •***Basketball clinics***

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**Under the supervision of the Kashruth Council of Toronto*

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Another exciting year at Camp B'nai Brith Ottawa

Camp B'nai Brith of Ottawa is a privately owned overnight camp located in the foothills of the Gatineaus, 45 minutes outside of Ottawa. We have a long and successful camping history of well over 60 years. Our camp prides itself in welcoming children from all over the world. Although we are a private Ottawa camp we treasure our many campers from Montreal, Toronto, New York, Florida, Israel and even the Caribbean.

Camp B'nai Brith has a varied program to stimulate children with many different interests. We offer an extensive number of different programs such as drama, arts & crafts, dance, tennis, basketball, miniature golf, all camp programs (Grey Cup/Super Bowl, World Cup, Colour War, etc.) and tremendous camp spirit. Our waterfront overlooking the Ottawa River has a sandy beach which is home to our vast watersports. They include waterskiing, windsurfing, knee-boarding, kayaking, canoeing, sailing and a Catamaran. Our Olympic size heated pool allows campers to enjoy swimming away from the hub of activities at the beach. Camp B'nai Brith of Ottawa is very proud of our extremely successful Red Cross aquaquest program which offers all levels of instruction up to and including Bronze Cross.

Camp B'nai Brith of Ottawa offers a kosher kitchen (Ottawa VAAD Kashruth) and is also a PEANUT SENSITIVE camp. In addition, we offer a Judaica program which is fun but yet traditional. This includes weekly Shabbat services. We also have an indoor gym, dance studio,recreation hall and an on-site infirmary which has a fully qualified medical staff.

One area we are most sensitive to is the anxiety of our younger campers coming to camp for the first time. To ease this situation we have instituted a very successful program. We offer our 2 wk. starter camp for new C.B.B. campers aged 7-12.

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"More than a chance to make friends with girls from everywhere - like England and Australia -- which was important to me, I chose Chavayot because I wanted a trip where I could have fun and grow from the experience at the same time," said Chasya.

Chasya's uncle, Tzvi, saw Chavayot's banner ad on Arutz Sheva's website and forwarded it to her. The website - www.chavayot.com - explained everything in detail. Chavayot offers a six-week adventure in Israel for girls 12-17. "It seemed like the right adventure for Chasya," said Tzvi. "She's the kind of girl that likes jeeping, zip-lining, hiking. I'm sure she will love snorkeling in Eilat"

But it was the attention to detail that won Chasya's mother, Devora, over. "Before I send my daughter to Israel, I want to know she's in good hands." Chavayot travels with IDF-trained security guards at all times. Meals are prepared to be delicious and nutritious - hotel style. Doctors visit each week. Buses are new and comfortable.

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Chavayot International is planned with the mindset of today's teenage girl in mind. "Chavayot takes the amazing fun of Eretz Yisroel and puts it in context," said Chavayot Director Chana Leah Schochet. "Chavayot's adventure is structured to enable the girls to discover their inner strengths by experiencing the power of Eretz Yisroel's sites, history, activities and its most fascinating people."

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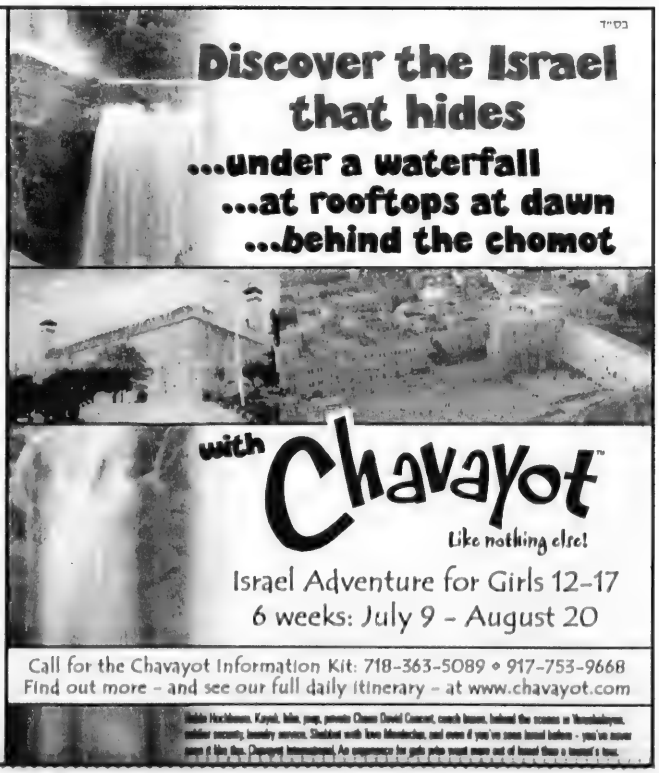
Check out www.chavayot.com - get a glimpse of all Chavayot has to offer. The application is online. Receive Chavayot's information kit by calling 718-363-5089 or 917-753-9668.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Owned and operated by the Toronto Zionist Council, Shalom is recognized as an outstanding Zionist camp for Jewish children and is proud of our high standards in having achieved this recognition. Camp Shalom is Shabat-observant, maintains a glatt Kosher kitchen and a nut-sensitive environment and is accredited by the Ontario Camping Association.

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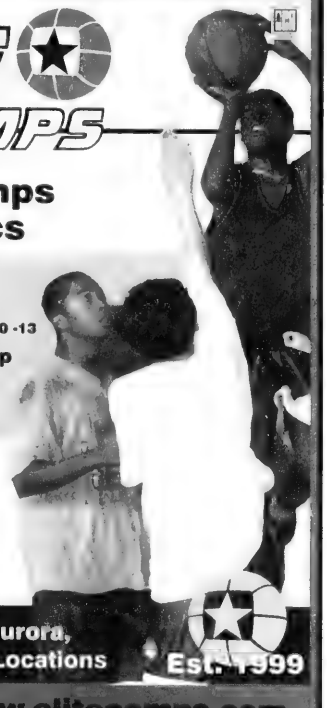

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The daily schedule runs from 9 a.m.—4 p.m. Monday—Friday, for children ages 5 1/2—12, for 3—5 1/2 year olds the camp day is from 10 a.m.—3 p.m. and our morning program for 2 1/2—3 1/2 year olds runs from 10 a.m.—1 p.m.

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Camp Shomria promotes deep love for Israel and the North American Jewish community. It's run by the Hashomer Hatzair Youth Movement, established over 80 yrs. ago, and is active within the Jewish community. There are weekly activities available throughout the school year in Toronto and a 6-day residential winter camp during December. A special one-week introductory camping experience is offered to campers in grades 2 and 3. Activities include dance, arts & crafts, a dynamic drama program, hikes, trips and a rope course (see directory). Grade 10 graduates participate in a leadership training program, "Yedid Plus", which includes an intensive 5 wk. itinerary in Israel.

Staff are dedicated and committed. Most were Shomria campers. Camp Shomria has a full-time registered nurse on site. Health and safety is our top priority. OCA standards of excellence are met and often exceeded. To learn more about Camp Shomria, please call Shlomit or Miriam at 416-736-1339.

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"Camps extend the learning process," says Joanne Paltrowitz, the owner/ director of The Camp Experts. "They enable children to get better at things they like, and learn independence and co-operation, while enjoying themselves in a relaxed atmosphere.

"We have many repeat clientele," says Paltrowitz. "We love what we do, and tailor our recommendations to individual children and parents." The service is free.
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URJ Camp George: Blending the Best of Ontario Camping with the Best of Jewish Camping

Situated on the beautiful shores of Maple Lake, two hours north of Toronto, Camp George is one of 12 residential camps in North America owned and operated by the Union for Reform Judaism. Camp George – co-educational, for campers currently in Grades 2-10 – blends the best of Ontario camping with the best of Jewish camping.

Singing songs around the campfire ... Getting up on waterskiis for the first time ... Paddling a canoe through a local park ... Reaching the top of the climbing wall at the ropes course ... Overnight camping provides both the opportunities and the nurturing environment that fosters the personal, social and physical development of campers and staff. Overnight camp fosters independence, builds self-esteem, enhances one's appreciation of the natural surroundings, and enables one to develop important individual and team physical and social skills.

The overall goal of the Union for Reform Judaism camping system is the development of a knowledgeable and Jewishly literate community for the future. Through the years, URJ Camps such as Camp George have helped thousands of campers and staff achieve development goals while also being effective complements to spiritual and congregational life, religious school, youth activities, and teacher education. Camp George provides positive frameworks within which Judaism is celebrated, compelling communities are built, and leadership and commitment is developed.

Activity Highlights Include: waterskiing, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, swimming, outward bound, mountain bikes, ropes, two climbing walls, a giant swing, tennis, soccer, basketball, softball, beach volleyball, ultimate frisbee, drama, arts and crafts, dance, pottery, photography, and more!

Camp George builds Jewish identity through a wide range of experiences, integrating educational opportunities into the fun of everyday camp activities.

* Jewish values guide programming
* Spirituality is fostered by daily prayer
* Folk songs, modern popular Israeli songs, and Hebrew songs can be heard both as part of a rousing song session in the dining hall as well as on the pathway to activities.
* Hebrew words and expressions find their way into daily discourse
* Shabbat is celebrated – a highlight!

... And the support and caring of a community that eats, sleeps, learns, competes, and plays together - creating powerful lifelong friendships and bonds.

Camp George offers two 3½ week sessions each summer, with approximately 300 campers and 120 staff in attendance each session. First-time campers in Grades 2-5 should be sure to inquire about the camp's special 12 or 15-day Wonderweeks program. For further information, visit www.campgeorge.org or call the camp office at 416-638-2635.

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Recognized as a leader in arts education, Kids Can Press commissioned the school to create *The Jumbo Book of Art*, a collection of art projects developed by the faculty. It won the prestigious *Disney Adventures Magazine Annual Book Awards Contest* and has now sold more than 40,000 copies internationally. A second book is in the works – this one entitled *The Jumbo Book of Outdoor Art*.

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Children are placed in select groups based on their age and ability. The daily routine focuses on different aspects of golf. Campers play nine holes twice a week throughout their two week session. One month and leadership training programs are also available.

In addition to junior camps, Par Golf hosts adult golf camps. One, two and three day golf camps are held throughout the golf season. On course instruction is a primary focus at all two and three day adult camps. Golfers learn in actual playing scenarios instead of just on a driving range.

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Recipe ideas from Out of the Cold

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

If you happen to be at Holy Blossom Temple on a winter Thursday afternoon, you'll be certain to notice luscious smells wafting from the kitchen.

Investigate, and you'll find a group of about 16 people peeling, chopping and sauteing in preparation for the weekly Out of the Cold dinner that feeds about 100 guests.

Sue Devor, a longtime volunteer and one of three women in charge of the dinner, says that each week they prepare, among other things, 50 pounds of potatoes, 50 to 100 pounds of chicken or meat, "lots and lots" of onions, 20 heads of lettuce, six pounds of tomatoes, eight cucumbers, two bunches of celery and three bunches of scallions.

As well, she said, they bake muffins to hand out to guests as they wait to come in.

Volunteers come to the temple in a number of shifts. As well as the cooks, a group comes early on Thursday to prepare the lunch bags, another comes in to serve the guests and clean up, and yet another comes in early Friday morning to prepare a hot breakfast for the guests before they leave.

Three women in charge of the dinner decide on the weekly menu, Devor said, "but we don't serve anything I wouldn't serve to guests at my own home. We're always looking for new ways to shmear and bake chicken."

On this particular Thursday, the menu included salad, hamburgers with sauteed mushrooms and onions, oven fried potatoes, mixed vegetables, with freshly baked tarts and cut-up fresh fruit for dessert.

"From the feedback we get we know the guests love potatoes – never instant mashed – so we try and serve them every week."

Leftover non-perishable items are donated to a food bank, Devor said, and perishables are frozen. "We have the occasional leftover night which goes over very well, and once a year a temple member donates brisket – that's the favourite night of the year."

Devor, formerly of Sweet Sue Pastries, said that when she decided to become a volunteer, she wanted a job that had a direct effect on people. "When I serve a meal to guests, I can see how appreciative they are. That makes me feel good."

She said they have a cookbook with recipes that serve a large group, but they have put together a book of Out of the Cold recipes adapted for family use. Here is a sampling of the recipes:

RIDICULOUSLY EASY BANANA MUFFINS (OR LOAF OR CAKE)

2-3 very ripe bananas peeled and mashed
¼ cup flour
1 tsp. baking soda
¼ tsp. salt
2 eggs
⅓ cup oil
1 cup sugar
½ tsp. vanilla

Preheat oven to 350. Grease muffin tin, loaf pan or 8-in. square pan. (You can also use cupcake liners for muffins.) Combine the flour, baking soda and salt. Set aside. In another bowl, whisk together the eggs, oil, sugar and vanilla and then stir in mashed banana. Add the banana mixture to the flour mixture and stir until well blended. Pour batter into muffin tin, loaf pan or square pan. Muffin will bake in about 20 minutes, loaf in about 50-60 minutes and cake in about 35 minutes. Done when toothpick stuck into centre comes out clean.

Food processor method – Process banana pieces with eggs, oil, sugar and vanilla. Add dry ingredients. Process on/off just until mixed. Pour into prepared pan. Makes 10-12 muffins.

ROASTED CAULIFLOWER SOUP

1 cauliflower cut in pieces
olive oil
coarse salt
pepper
1 tbsp. butter or margarine
1 large or 2 small leeks washed and sliced (white part only) or 1 onion chopped
salt and pepper
¼ tsp. ginger
1 potato peeled and cut up
2 cups stock (chicken or vegetable)
½ cup white wine (or ¼ cup dry vermouth or ¼ cup sherry) (No wine or spirits are used at Out of the Cold, so stock may be substituted)
pepper
¼ tsp. thyme (optional)
2 stems fresh dill or ½ tsp. dill weed (optional)

Spread cauliflower pieces in single layer in shallow baking pan. Drizzle with a little olive oil. Sprinkle with some coarse salt and pepper. Bake at 400 until cooked and golden in colour (about 10-15 minutes). If you wish, set aside some of the smaller, darker pieces of the grilled cauliflower to add to the soup before serving.

In a large pot, melt butter or margarine. Stir in leeks or onion and cook until slightly softened. Season with a little salt and pepper and the ginger. Add remaining ingredients and the cauliflower, using more or less stock. Vegetables should just be covered with liquid. Simmer, covered, for about 20 minutes until all the vegetables are very soft. Strain and puree the solids. Return to liquid. (Or puree with a wand blender.) Mix well. Taste and adjust seasoning. Add reserved cauliflower pieces. Heat and serve. If soup is thick, add additional stock or wine. Makes 8-12 servings

MUSHROOM BARLEY SOUP

1 onion peeled and chopped
2-3 carrots peeled and chopped
2-3 stalks celery chopped or sliced
1 lb. mushrooms sliced
½ cup pearl barley
2 tbsp. margarine
3 tbsp. all-purpose flour
7 cups vegetable stock
½ cup white wine (or more)
1 tsp. dried dill weed or 1-2 tbsp. chopped dill
salt and pepper

Melt margarine in large pot over medium-high heat. Add onions, carrots, celery, mushrooms and barley. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin to brown (about 15-20 minutes). Add flour to pot and stir 5 minutes. Gradually mix in stock, wine and dill weed. Bring soup to a boil, stirring frequently. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, until barley is tender and soup is beginning to thicken (for at least 1 hour).

This soup is extra delicious if made the day before. You may also add any leftover vegetables such as diced potatoes, beans, cauliflower, etc. Makes 10-12 servings.

Volunteers are seen cooking at Holy Blossom's Out of the Cold program. *[Carolyn Blackman photos]*

PINEAPPLE CHICKEN

2 chickens cut up
1 cup brown sugar
1 cup ketchup
½ cup water or juice from canned pineapple
2 tsp. dry mustard
¼-½ tsp. Tabasco or to taste
1 large can pineapple chunks drained

Preheat oven to 375. Combine all ingredients except pineapple chunks. Mix well. Spread over chicken pieces. Place chicken pieces skin side up in baking pan in a single layer. Sprinkle over the drained pineapple chunks. Pour over any remaining sauce. Bake uncovered at 375 for about 1 hour. Baste occasionally. Makes 8 servings.

APRICOT GLAZED CHICKEN

10 chicken pieces
1 cup apricot jam (8 oz.)
¼ cup Dijon mustard
¼ cup soy sauce
¼-½ tsp. Tabasco sauce or to taste
3 cloves garlic chopped
1 tbsp. fresh ginger minced

Preheat oven to 375. Mix together all ingredients except chicken and bring to boil over low heat, mixing well. Place chicken in shallow oblong roasting pans. Brush apricot glaze on chicken. Bake 40-50 minutes at 375, basting occasionally. Makes 4-5 servings.

CHINESE DRESSING

1 small green onion cut in pieces
1 dime sized piece of fresh ginger
1 large clove garlic
¼ cup white vinegar
¼ cup soy sauce
3 tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. dry mustard
½ tsp. Worcestershire sauce
¼ cup vegetable oil
2 tbsp. sesame oil

Into bowl of food processor fitted with steel blades, with machine running drop green onion, ginger and garlic. Process until very finely chopped. Add remaining ingredients and process until well combined.

This dressing has many delicious uses – for salads, for pasta, for "wokking," for marinating…

An even easier "Asian" dressing: ½ cup olive oil and ¼ cup seasoned rice vinegar. Combine together in a covered jar and shake, shake, shake!

SIMPLE, SIMPLE, SIMPLE SALAD DRESSING

½ cup mayonnaise or Miracle Whip (or more)
¼ cup oil
¼ cup red wine vinegar (or other vinegar)
¼ cup sugar

Combine ingredients very well. It is easiest to use a whisk. This dressing is most suitable on a rather robust salad (e.g. romaine or head lettuce with cucumber, radishes, sugar snap peas, cherry tomatoes, thickly sliced mushrooms).

DEEP DISH APPLE CAKE

Apples
6-8 apples peeled and sliced
⅓ cup white sugar
¼ tsp. cinnamon
2 tbsp. flour

Combine apples, sugar, cinnamon and flour and spread on bottom of 9 x 13-in. baking dish.

Cake
2 eggs
1 cup sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
⅔ cup oil
1½ cups flour
2 tsp. baking powder
¼ tsp. salt
3 tbsp. orange juice

Preheat oven to 350. Combine eggs, sugar and vanilla and beat until fluffy. Add oil and beat well. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. Add alternately with juice to egg mixture. Mix just until combined. Do not overbeat. Spread over prepared apples. Bake at 350 for 45-55 minutes. A tester inserted into the batter of the cake will come out dry.

Other fruit works very well (e.g., blueberries and nectarines or canned cherry pie filling mixed with fresh apples).

SINGLES EVENTS

DEADLINE:
Wednesday 4 p.m.
8 days preceding issue date

For rates or to place an ad call 416-391-1836

The CJN encourages readers to direct any queries on events to the event's organizers

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Self-heating kosher meals available

BY DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

The box looks like those TV dinners that people used to pop in the microwave or oven. But this ready-to-serve meal can be served up piping hot without using either a microwave or a conventional oven.

The box contains a full meal that, with the help of a douse of specially treated water, magically heats up in the box before your very eyes. No kitchen required.

Introduced two years ago, LaBriute meals, on display recently at Kosherfest 2005 in New York City, have been used by travellers, campers, students, and office workers – anyone who needs a quick kosher meal but doesn't have access to a fridge, stove or microwave oven.

Now, LaBriute meals are widely available at most kosher independents and local grocers in Toronto.

Cooking the food requires nothing more than opening a pouch of the provided liquid, pouring it over a heating pad, placing the food tray on top, then putting it back in the re-closed box.

The food heats up in about 10 to 20 minutes.

Kosher travellers won't have to worry any more about the availability of suitable food while on the road, and students in dorms with few kosher options can stock the boxes in their cupboards.

The meals require no refrigeration and remain fresh for up to 24 months.

Meat, dairy and vegetarian options are available, for a total of 11 different meals, including vegetable beef stew, chicken primavera with noodles, turkey and mashed potatoes, cheese ravioli in Italian tomato sauce, and vegetarian Honolulu nuggets with pineapple in tomato sauce. All include soup, snack, a napkin, condiments and all necessary utensils.

Meals from LaBriute, which means "to health" in Hebrew, are also being used as rescue rations by emergency relief organizations due to their compactness, portability and long shelf life.

For example, the company says the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey now uses LaBriute meals as part of its emergency security plans, to be used as needed in the field by its workers or for distribution to the public in the event of an emergency.

According to the company, as a result of more than 20 hurricanes in the past year, many Americans from the southeastern United States, along with residents in other hurricane-prone regions, have stocked up on self-heating, self-contained LaBriute meals.

Consumer demand led the company to pursue widespread distribution in Canada, said Abe Halberstam, LaBriute's founder.

To learn more about LaBriute Meals, visit www.labriutemeals.com.

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ש'שאר ע'נינו

גידי קורן וחברים

עלילות המן

נשיא איראן מודיע בכל הזדמנות שיש להשמיד את ישראל. נשיא איראן גם מתריס שזכותה של מדינתו לפתח את מדעי הגרעין, הבסיס לפצצה אטומית. אחד ועד אחד- פצצה גרעינית שמסכנת את ישראל ישירות. אני לא כל כך בטוח שאומות העולם ממש דואגות לישראל. אבל הן בהחלט דואגות מתגובה ישראלית אפשרית. וטוב שידאגו. אפילו מדינות פרו־סקיטציזיות עם קבלות שקיוו להרויח כלכלית מאיראן (צרפת, רוסיה), מתחילות להבין שמדובר לא בבדיחה מקומית אלא בזן חדש של היטלריזם. השלב הבא, שקרוב לוודאי יצא לפועל, הוא סנקציות חמורות של האו"ם, כולל סחר וידע. איראן, יצואנית נפט גדולה, מצפצפת על העולם. צריך לקוות שהעולם, ובעיקר כוחות העל, ידעו לצפצף על איראן. זה לא יהיה קל בימים שמי שמייצר נפט מחזיק את העולם בביצים. אבל שישאר בינינו.

המפה הפוליטית

המפה הפוליטית הישראלית היא אחת התופעות הכי מדהימות שיש. אתה עוצם עיניים לימימים- והכל משתנה לבלי הכר. שרון בונה את "קדימה" ממיטב הכוחות השפויים במדינה- אך לא מספיק לעמוד בראשה. טומי לפיד מ"שינוי" לועג (לפני מחלתו של שרון) שברגע ששרון יצא מהתמונה- תתפורר מפלגתו- והפלא ופלא- בלי שרון הופכת מפלגתו ליותר פופולארית, ולעומתה **מאבדת** "שינוי" של לפיד את כל תמיכתה הציבורית ומתפוררת **תודשים** לפני הבחירות.

שרת החינוך לבנת דרשת ממנכ"לית משרד החינוך להתפטר מתפקידה בשל הצטרפותה ל"קדימה", ולא עובר חודש ולבנת עצמה מתפטרת מן הממשלה בינגד לרצונה, על פי דרישת נתניהו. בבחירות הפנימיות לליכוד מצליח נתניהו לדחוק את רגלי כל השרים ממפלגתו, כמו גם את כל אלה שמרדו בשרון, ובוחר רשימה אשכנזית צעירה. התגובה? ירידה במשאלי דעת הקהל, קרוב לודאי בגלל הזנחת מצביעי עדות המזרח. פשוט מדהים איך הקמת "קדימה" על ידי שרון טרפה לחלוטין את כל קלפי הפוליטיקה הישראלית.

דבר אחד בטוח: המצביע הישראלי אינו בכיסו של אף אחד. הוא ציני, ספקן, לא מאמין למילים גדולות, ומעניש רמאים ושקרנים. ואולי זה הסממן הכי חשוב של דמוקרטיה בריאה . אבל שישאר בינינו

רגע של עברית-סיפור מתח של אבשלום קור

הנה דברים שהביא לידיעתי חברי שמחה

"יום אחד אמא שרוק קמה וגילתה שחולם חסר. היא קראה לאחיה צידה כדי לחפש את חולם, כי אבא שָׁוָא, נח. לבש צידה בגד כפת, ויצא לדרך. בדרך נתקל בשתי אחיות בומ"פ. התפתחה תגרה, צידה חטף פתח בראש.

צידה, ששם דגש חזק על אומץ, זרק עליהם חיריק וברח. בדרך פגש קמץ קטן, שסיפר לו שחולם מסתתר בקובוץ שורוק. חלץ צידה לקובוץ ואכן מצא את חולם מסתתר במוכירות החדשה של המשק. איזה בניין, התפעל.

וכשהגיע תביעה אמא שורוק תרידה לו כזה מקף, שחולם נעשה קָמוֹל.

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Netanyahu offers to make concessions for peace

By GIL HOFFMAN
Jerusalem Post

Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu promised the Palestinians on Sunday that if he is elected prime minister, he will be willing to make compromises and offer them concessions without sacrificing Israel's security.

Speaking at the Institute for Policy and Strategy's annual Herzliya Conference on the Balance of Israel's National Security, geared to Israel's political, military, intelligence, economic and social leadership, Netanyahu said he would begin by removing settlement outposts, and then he would gradually remove IDF checkpoints to allow unhindered Palestinian travel. He said a Likud-led government would not be in favour of reoccupying or annexing Palestinian populated areas of Judea and Samaria.

"In the framework of a peace agreement, a government under my leadership would agree to make real territorial concessions but will not compromise our security borders," Netanyahu said. "We want there to be less friction. We want to remove outposts to help the Palestinian population. We will not reoccupy the Palestinian population."

Netanyahu outlined five points that will be the guidelines in the Likud's platform on diplomatic and security issues: "yes to compromises within a peace agreement, yes to security borders, no to a unilateral withdrawal, yes to moving the security fence and yes to decreasing the friction with the Palestinians."

The Likud's "security borders" include the Jordan Valley, the Golan Heights, the Judean desert, an undivided Jerusalem, settlement blocs in Judea and Samaria and the hilltops overlooking Ben-Gurion Airport, the Gush Dan region and Road 443.

Netanyahu said he would be willing to negotiate a permanent-status accord with a responsible Palestinian leadership while sticking to those borders on the basis of reciprocity. Any agreement reached with the Palestinians would then be brought to a vote by the Israeli people in a national referendum.

As reported exclusively in Sunday's *Jerusalem Post*, Netanyahu said he would favour shifting the security fence to ensure that Ben-Gurion Airport, Road 443 and Road Six would not be within the range of missiles. He said a buffer zone would also be needed near the Dead Sea to respond to the security threat from the east.

Netanyahu's associates responded that shifting the fence would require legal action. They said the fence has been moved from the route recommended by security officials because the Supreme Court relied on international law in lieu of Israeli laws. Netanyahu wants the law changed to give the Supreme Court the means to accept the original route.

Lashing out at the two parties that a Likud spokesman on Sunday called the "Siamese twins," Netanyahu said both Labor and Kadima see the 1967 borders as their endgame with only minor adjustments. By contrast, he said, Likud believes that withdrawing to the 1967 borders would perpetuate the conflict.

Olmert facing many challenges

Continued from page 1

They also used threatening and insulting language. The wife of prominent settler Rabbi Moshe Levinger railed at the police, "Sharon is dying because of our curses. You are next."

Israeli commentators agree that the showdown goes well beyond the few shops being evacuated in Hebron. The settlers have two goals, they say: to cloud the memory of the successful and relatively peaceful evacuation of Gaza, and to drive home the message that any further attempted withdrawal will encounter fierce opposition.

"It is enough to look at the statements of a few settler leaders to understand that the struggle is to obscure the success of the disengagement from Gaza by standing firm against the government in the West Bank and Jerusalem," *Ha'aretz* wrote in an editorial. "Olmert, who supported the disengagement and sees himself as Ariel Sharon's heir, will not be able to explain away any weakness he shows when confronted by a group of hooligans."

Yediot Achronot's military analyst Alex Fishman added that "anyone privy to the settler scene would have known that after the disengagement, things in the West Bank would escalate, the settlers' council would lose its power and the extremist margins would expand and grow even more extreme."

Faced with the settler challenge, Olmert has been talking tough. In a government meeting Monday, he banged his fist on the table and promised zero tolerance toward the extremists, whom he described as "a particularly violent group."

The immediate result was an army order declaring the disputed market a closed military zone, and instructing soldiers and police to eject anyone who doesn't live there.

By Tuesday, most of the outside settlers had been sent packing, on the understanding that the eviction of the Hebron settlers who had taken up residence in the market would be postponed for two weeks. Whether this proves a brilliant tactical retreat – enabling the government to go in with much bigger forces next time – or a costly show of weakness remains to be seen.

Olmert's next vital decision may be what to do about Hamas. By allowing Palestinians to vote in Jerusalem and Hamas to participate in the election, he has already laid himself open to a welter of right-wing criticism. The Likud's Silvan Shalom, who resigned on Sunday as foreign minister, charged that Olmert has triggered a process that inevitably will lead to Israel's negotiating with a terrorist organization that doesn't recognize the Jewish state.

There is talk of plans for Olmert to fly to Washington soon after the Palestinian ballot to co-ordinate positions on Hamas with the Bush administration. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has said that to participate in government, Hamas will have to accept all previous Palestinian agreements with Israel, including recognition of Israel.

Israel and the United States will probably add two more conditions: that Hamas desist from terrorism and that it disarm its militia. Unless that happens, Israel could well find itself without a peace partner on the Palestinian side.

That leads to Olmert's third big decision. His position on peacemaking with the Palestinians has been to insist that the internationally approved "road map" plan is the only game in town. But if Hamas' inclusion in a Palestinian government makes talks impossible, will Olmert be ready to go into more detail than Sharon about possible unilateral withdrawals from the West Bank?

Former Mossad analyst Yossi Alpher, now co-editor of the website www.bitterlemons.org, thinks he will.

"Olmert, who, to his credit, started talking about disengagement and the need to avoid a South African scenario at least a year before Sharon, may feel a need to be more explicit on these issues to ensure that the public understands why he is different from Likud and Labor," Alpher says.

The decisions for Olmert are particularly tricky because they occur in the run-up to an election and could have electoral fallout. Moreover, whatever Olmert does will be measured against what people think Sharon would have done.

So far Olmert is riding high: polls give his Kadima party between 40 and 52 seats in the 120-member Knesset. That's more than its two closest rivals, Labor and Likud, together.

Still, mistakes on the key issues could hurt Olmert's electoral prospects – and also prove costly for Israel.

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A more detailed job description can be found at **www.kdhs.org.**
Submit CVs to **jobs@kdhs.org**. No phone calls or surface mail please.
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Pentagon mole gets 12 years for passing classified info

By NATHAN GUTTMAN
Jerusalem Post

WASHINGTON — Larry Franklin, the former Pentagon analyst sentenced on Jan. 20 to 12 years and seven months in prison for passing classified information to Israeli diplomats and staffers in the pro-Israel lobby AIPAC, will testify against those former employees when their trial begins in late April.

The sentence was part of a plea bargain between Franklin and the prosecution in which he agreed to testify against Steve Rosen and Keith Weissman in return for dismissing some of the charges against him.

Franklin's sentence may be reduced significantly if the prosecution is satisfied with his co-operation in the Rosen-Weissman trial.

At the sentence hearing of the U.S. District Court in Alexandria, Va., Judge T.S. Ellis seemed to show sympathy to the defendant, saying he was convinced Franklin, 59, did not intend to harm the United States when he passed on classified information obtained through his work at the Iran desk in the Pentagon.

Ellis said Franklin was concerned about "threats to the United States," yet he concluded he had broken the law and "we can't have that in this country."

The 12-year sentence is the lowest possible under federal sentencing guidelines.

Franklin pleaded guilty to three charges: conspiracy to communicate national defence information to persons not entitled to receive it; conspiracy to communicate classified information to an agent of a foreign government; and unlawful retention of national defence information. The maximum punishment for the original counts is 25 years and a $10,000 fine, which was rescinded because Franklin forfeited his government pension.

Franklin entered the plea bargain last fall and has since been co-operating with prosecutors. If Franklin's testimony against Rosen and Weissman is considered satisfactory, the prosecution can put in a motion to change his sentence to one that's less than federal sentencing guidelines. He won't have to begin his jail term until he finishes testifying.

The indictment says Franklin was in close contact with the AIPAC staffers and on several occasions gave them information about threats to the United States from Iran and information on Iraq. According to the prosecution, Franklin, who was frustrated by U.S. policy regarding these threats, used Rosen and Weissman to convey information to the higher levels. He also gave classified information to Naor Gilon, the former political officer at the Israeli Embassy in Washington, who is now back in Israel.

Franklin's sentencing marks the end of the first phase of the AIPAC-Franklin case, but the Rosen-Weissman trial, which begins April 25, is expected to be the more significant.

Lawyers for the defendants have been trying to force the prosecution to disclose the surveillance tapes on which the indictment was based. The tapes, which represent more than four years of FBI tracking of the AIPAC staffers, are protected as classified and the government says it can't disclose them. The defendants claim there's no sense keeping the tapes classified because they document conversations with Rosen and Weissman.

Rosen and Weissman were fired by AIPAC last April and are in a dispute with AIPAC over funds for their defence.

The prosecution and defence have contacted Israeli officials to request co-operation in the case and for possible depositions from diplomats involved. Israeli justice and foreign ministry officials have met U.S. officials, but no agreement has been reached so far. Sources close to the Israeli officials said it's unlikely the Israelis will testify.

Speaking Jan. 20, Israeli Ambassador Daniel Ayalon called the case "an internal American issue," adding "Israel has no connection to the trial and obviously no connection to its results."

Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. Stories should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 10. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office. E-mail: **info@cjnews.com.** Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Please note: submissions will *not* be returned. Only writers whose work is chosen for publication will be contacted.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual **Purim Art Contest.**

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of *CJN* employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN*'s 2006 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for $25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, 2006. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 3, 2006.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 16, 2006. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

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Pollard petition rejected

Israel's High Court of Justice rejected Jonathan Pollard's petition to name him a Prisoner of Zion. The court ruled last week that Pollard, a former U.S. Navy analyst serving a life sentence in a U.S. jail for spying for Israel, does not meet the criteria for the designation, mainly because the United States is not considered a country hostile to Israel or to Jews. Pollard and his supporters had hoped the designation would help efforts to get him released.

Exports to Ireland jump

Israeli exports to Ireland rose dramatically in 2005. Trade in chemical products accounted for a large proportion of the increase, according to figures released by Israel's Central Bureau of Statistics. Sales of Israeli products in Ireland rose 18 per cent over the first 11 months of the year to $147.8 million (US) from $125.4 million in the same period in 2004. Exports of chemical products nearly tripled to $20.7 million from $6.7 million. External trade in machinery and electrical equipment accounted for the bulk of the total at $86 million.

Sharon opens eyes

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon briefly opened his eyes twice on Jan. 16 when a recording of his grandson's voice was played, aides and relatives said. It was the most encouraging sign since Sharon was placed in a coma as surgeons treated a massive stroke he suffered Jan. 4. But doctors played down hopes of a speedy recovery, saying Sharon's eye movement may have been a reflex reaction.

Olmert takes Kadima reins

The Kadima Party's Knesset faction on Jan. 16 named Ehud Olmert, already the stand-in for the ailing Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, as acting chairman of the ruling party. Barring a sudden recovery by Sharon, Olmert will run in the March 28 election as Kadima's candidate for prime minister.

Israeli morale high: study

Israelis withstood the psychological pressure of the past five years of Palestinian terrorism, a new study says. According to *Israel's National Resilience: The Influence of the Second Intifadah on Israeli Society*, a Tel Aviv University study published last week, Palestinian terror groups failed to break Israelis' national spirit. The study cited sustained levels of optimism during the worst suicide bombing campaigns, the stability of national institutions and the speed with which the country returned to routine life after attacks.

Israir to fly to New York

A second Israeli airline has received permission to fly the premier Tel Aviv-New York route. Tourism Minister Avraham Hirchson said Jan. 16 that Israir will get "second designated carrier status" for the route, operating initially for two years. It's not clear when flights would begin. El Al, the Israeli airline that dominates the route, plans to challenge Hirchson's decision at the High Court of Justice.

Deal possible on capital: poll

Almost two-thirds of Israelis would agree to ceding areas of east Jerusalem to the Palestinians under a peace deal, according to a poll published last week by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies. Some 63 per cent of Israelis would give up Arab neighbourhoods in the capital to reach a deal, although most rule out such concessions on the Western Wall and Temple Mount, and most believe a deal won't come about under current conditions.

Jordan bars Orthodox Jews

Jordan is preventing Orthodox Jewish Israelis from entering the country, ostensibly for fear they could be attacked, Israel's Foreign Ministry said. The announcement came Jan. 18 as Jordan refused entry to eight Israeli tourists at a border crossing after prayer shawls and other religious items were found. Foreign Ministry officials told *Ha'aretz* that Israeli officials are trying to convince Jordan to change the policy.

With files from JTA

Barghouti calls for Fatah-Hamas unity

By KHALED ABU TOAMEH
Jerusalem Post

RAMALLAH — Jailed Fatah leader Marwan Barghouti on Sunday called on Hamas and other Palestinian factions to join a broad national coalition after Wednesday's parliamentary election.

Fatah and Hamas "are heading toward being partners in the field and in parliament," he said.

Barghouti's remarks were made during an interview with Al-Jazeera in his prison cell, the first since his arrest in 2002. But as the interview was being aired, the Palestinian Authority ordered the closure of Hamas' new Aqsa TV station in the Gaza Strip.

The decision was strongly condemned by Hamas, which accused the PA leadership of seeking to prevent it from winning the vote.

Some Palestinians see the interview as an attempt by Israel and the United States to bolster Fatah's standing on the eve of the vote.

"Why are they suddenly allowing Marwan to appear on television?" asked a Hamas supporter here. "The Israelis and the Americans realize that Fatah is in a very bad situation and are trying to help it."

An independent candidate who asked not to be named said there were "troubling signs" of the growing involvement of Israel, the United States and some European countries in the election campaign. "Millions of dollars are being invested in certain candidates and lists," he charged.

Majida al-Batsh, a Jerusalem-based journalist with Agence France Press who is running in the election, said many candidates and lists were buying votes with money provided by foreign parties.

"In the past, Arab countries used to buy Palestinian parties and organizations. Now, western countries are doing this," she said.

On Sunday, the streets of Ramallah and its twin city, al-Bireh, were full of supporters of various candidates and lists. Some 20 Fatah activists gathered near Manara Square in downtown Ramallah, chanting slogans and singing songs praising their party and Yasser Arafat. Palestinian police vehicles parked nearby were covered with Fatah and Arafat posters, a move that has drawn sharp criticism from human rights groups and some international monitors.

Several vans recruited by Hamas were driven through the streets flying the movement's green flags, playing Islamic songs and recordings of slain Hamas leader Abdel Aziz Rantisi saying force is the only language Jews understand.

In the interview with Al-Jazeera, Barghouti urged Palestinians not to focus on whether Fatah defeats Hamas, and to participate in the election. "From my cell, I appeal to the great Palestinian people, young and old, to take part in these elections," he said.

The elections "should be seen as one of the essential means of achieving freedom, the return [of Palestinian refugees] and independence. We should not think that the aim of Jan. 25 is the seats. There is a goal we should be prepared for: a broad national reform government with the participation of all."

Barghouti, who is serving five life terms for his role in terror attacks on Israel, hailed the "brave and courageous decision by our brothers in Hamas, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine and other factions that agreed to join the Palestinian Authority by participating in the elections."

The Palestinian people need a national salvation government, a government of national unity, he said.

Barghouti said the results of the election would be respected "100 per cent," even in the event of a victory for Hamas, which will become "an integral part of the Palestinian Authority."

Barghouti also called on Israel to end its military rule of the West Bank. "I urge the Israeli people to realize that there is no future for this occupation," he said. "This occupation is a burden. They should get rid of this burden."

Canadian hip-hop scene helped jumpstart career

Continued from page 1

who explains that his family decided to move there to reconnect with his mother's side of the family. They had moved to Canada rather than Israel when they fled Morocco. "I was supposed to go to junior high school with my friends and instead I switched my friends, my school, my language and my country. I didn't want to leave Israel.

"I spent most of my first year in Canada crying to my parents," recalls Haddad. "In retrospect, I realize that I never really let myself adjust."

It didn't help that on his first day at public school, some of the other students threw pennies at him. "I didn't understand why they threw them at me. There was another Israeli in my class who had to explain it to me," he says. "I encountered a lot of anti-Semitism in Canada. It was tough to be an Israeli student."

For Haddad, this was a far cry from the place he had come from. He remembers himself as a kid in Israel, listening to pirate Israeli radio that played hip-hop and attending Friday evening "Class Nights." "I used to bring my Mickey Mouse lunchbox full of tapes and DJ for my class," he recalls. "I was always a music freak."

In addition to anti-Semitism, Haddad experienced a different sort of rejection in Montreal – one that hit a little closer to home. "Some Jewish people also snubbed me," he says. "First, on the grounds of being Israeli. For some reason – maybe because we're loud and tend to speak with our hands – a lot of people think we're barbaric. Second, because I went to public school and I had a lot of Arabic, black and Hispanic friends," he says. "I wasn't a 'good, little Jewish boy.' I didn't dress like them, I didn't speak like them, and as a result, I was an outcast.

"In general, I never really left Israel. I had one foot in Canada. But my heart was still in Israel."

The story of Haddad's life – from Israel to Canada and back – is described in *Chapters*, the title song of his first album (2001). "It's about the chapters of my life," says Haddad of the six-minute song. "The first verse talks about my move from Israel to Montreal, the second verse talks about the adjustment, and the third talks about the move back."

His stage name, SHI 360, is representative of this metamorphosis. SHI is an acronym that stands for Supreme Hebrew Intelekt, and 360 refers to the full circle he has completed by returning to Israel and his roots, to restart his life from scratch.

Although he decided to return to Israel, Haddad is quick to point out the pluses of his Canadian experience. "I love Canada now," he says, but admits that it was only in his last few years there that he really started to gain an appreciation for the country. "I have a great advantage over most people because I have benefited from experiencing both worlds."

If not for Canada, Haddad may not have gained an appreciation for French rap. "My favourite hip-hop is French," says the trilingual rapper."

More importantly, the Canadian hip-hop scene helped to jump-start his musical career. "In Canada, I really discovered my passion for hip-hop," he says, adding that he started going to open mike nights and recording in Montreal, where he released his first vinyl single, *Linguistiks*, through his own label, Intelekt Musik, in 2000.

"In Israel, there's a real lack of knowledge about the history of hip-hop, and its foundation," he says, and "in general, hip-hop in Israel doesn't have a big street movement."

Haddad hopes to change that. He also hopes to promote the growth of hip-hop genres in the country. "The scene here really blew up with political, Zionist rap," he says, adding that the scene, which boasts only about four top rappers, lacks variety. Take his rap, which he defines as "conscious," since it deals with social issues and "things that consciously bother me." Haddad says it is the limitations of the Israel scene that led to radio's rejection of his song *Break the Silence*, from the CD *Chai*. *Break the Silence* addresses kids who are being abused at home, urging them to speak up about it. "The video is doing really well right now," he says. "But the radio didn't think it was a hit. They like fun songs… But I'm going to change that, I hope."

Haddad says he's focusing on developing other Israeli artists on his new label, Emet (Truth), which is an acronym in Hebrew that stands for art, music and culture; setting up his new recording studio; and producing his new line of hip-hop clothing, For Real, while continuing to DJ at Tel Aviv's Boca Club and Gat Rimon Monday and Tuesday nights. "It's not easy to do hip-hop full time, but I'm doing it," says Haddad, who notes that the piracy in Israel is the highest in the world after China. "It's very difficult here."

Despite that, Haddad loves Israel with his heart and soul. He released *Chai* there with good reason. "*Chai* was about getting back to life," says Haddad. "This is the only place I feel at home."

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History teacher fights anti-Semitism in France

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

PARIS — Iannis Roder stands resolutely on the frontlines in the battle against anti-Semitism in France.

The 34-year-old junior high school history teacher has been fighting racial prejudice on a microcosmic level in his classroom at least since the outbreak of the latest wave of anti-Semitic violence here about five years ago.

[Sheldon Kirshner photo]

Iannis Roder

The majority of the attackers who have targeted French Jews have been identified as Muslims. Sadly enough, their anti-Jewish animus has surfaced in Roder's classes in the form of comments uttered by a handful of his Arab and African Muslim students, aged 14 to 16.

Roder works in Saint Denis, one of the drab working-class suburbs north of Paris where serious civil unrest occurred last fall. Like the rioters themselves, most of his students are Muslims of North African and black African origin.

"Many of them have come under the influence of radical imams," he said in an interview. "Since they're in difficult social and economic circumstances, they are prey to extremism. School, therefore, is the only place where they can hear the truth."

Nearly four years ago, Roder and seven of his fellow teachers who toil in these depressed suburbs sounded an alarm about the racist, and particularly the anti-Semitic, attitudes among a small minority of their students.

Their book of essays, *The Lost Territories of the Republic*, was something of cause célèbre, as well as a best-seller.

"It was an eye opener to politicians," Roder said.

The minister of education summoned them for discussions and one of President Jacques Chirac's advisers conferred with them.

Roder believes that *The Lost Territories of the Republic*, scheduled to be published in an English edition, was a factor in the government's decision in 2004 to ban the *hijab* – the Muslim girls' head scarf – and other overt religious symbols in French public schools.

"This provision creates a neutral atmosphere and gender equality in schools," he said.

The first sign of open anti-Semitism among Muslim students in the suburbs appeared during and after the 1991 Gulf War. The eruption of the second Palestinian uprising in September 2000 and the terrorist incidents in the United States on Sept. 11, 2001, emboldened them, he said.

In an average year, Roder said, two to three Muslim students in his class of 25, where three-quarters of the pupils are Muslims, make derogatory outbursts. In a few cases, the verbal abusers are Roman Catholics. In the face of these unsettling incidents, the remaining students are usually conspicuously silent.

In a classic anti-Semitic canard, one student claimed that Jews had been forewarned to avoid the World Trade Center, destroyed by Arab terrorists on Sept. 11. This accusation was just the opening shot in a series of calumnies, Roder said.

"Jewish students were singled out as representatives of Israel. They were not perceived as French citizens. They were reproached for being Jewish. They were described as misers and as intrinsically evil. Their physical appearance was an issue. Still other students talked about the role of Jews in the media and finance."

This abuse usually bubbles to the surface when Roder teaches his class about the Holocaust, a mandatory subject in French schools since the mid-1980s.

"I remember one student saying, 'Are you really going to tell me Jews are victims?'"

None of his students has actually denied the Holocaust, but once, when Roder pointed out that six million Jews were exterminated by the Nazis and their collaborators, he heard snide comments ranging from "Hitler would have been a good Muslim" to "The Jews deserved their fate."

Some even wondered out loud whether Roder – who has a cousin in Toronto – is Jewish. In fact, he is a Jew. During the Holocaust, his grandparents, Jews of Hungarian and Romanian descent, went into hiding in France and were helped by a policeman and a prison warden. Six of his French relatives were deported and four survived. Distant relatives in Hungary were deported, too.

> ***Roder's Jewish students tormented by classmates***

Over the years, Roder has had only a handful of Jewish students, but this year, he has none.

All the Jewish students he has taught, having been tormented by their fellow students' anti-Semitic taunts, left his class and switched to Jewish and even Catholic schools.

Roder's responds to his pupils' anti-Semitism with icy detachment. "I ask them to elaborate. I want them to release their emotions. Then I demolish their arguments. They listen, but two days later, they repeat their comments."

He admits that their remarks are personally hurtful, and that he has considered asking for a transfer. "It is hard for me, but these students need me."

In general, they come from socially conservative backgrounds in which anti-Semitism is entrenched in their culture.

Since their grasp of the Arab-Israeli conflict is very shaky, they spout well-worn cliches: Jews stole Palestinian lands. Jews kill Palestinians. Jews are guilty of genocide.

All too often, their vocabularies are extremely limited, and they have trouble articulating ideas. "They don't understand the world." As a result, a disturbingly high proportion of his students fail to advance to university and become members of the underclass.

They are also convinced the world is against them. "They're locked into a psychosis of victimization," he observed.

The schools they attend tend to be wracked by violence, and bullying is a common phenomenon. Teachers like Roder have been subjected to what he calls " physical aggression," although he notes that up to now, he has not been attacked by a student.

French politicians are not only aware of the new, post-2000 anti-Semitism, but want to combat it, he said.

Roder expressed concern that last year's riots may erupt yet again, perhaps on a larger scale, if the yawning chasm between the disaffected youths of the suburbs and French society is not sufficiently bridged.

To Roder, Islamic fundamentalism is a problem that Muslims themselves must ultimately address. "But moderate Muslims are not speaking up," he said, voicing despair.

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SUICIDE BOMBING IN TEL AVIV: An injured man is taken to hospital by paramedics after a suicide bomber blew himself up in a Tel Aviv restaurant last Thursday. At least 20 people were wounded, one seriously and five moderately. The only fatality was the bomber, a man pretending to sell disposable razors who was identified as a 22 year-old resident of the Balata refugee camp near Nablus. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the bombing, which was the sixth suicide attack inside Israel in the past 12 months. Police believe the bomber triggered his device in the restaurant's bathroom, where he may have been trying to prepare it and it exploded prematurely. [Isranet photo]

Artist pays tribute to Toronto architecture

By CYNTHIA GASNER
Special to The CJN

Since as long as she could remember, Toronto artist Linda R. Goldman loved the architecture of houses and buildings.

"I am totally devastated at how quickly the landscape of Toronto is changing. Beautiful houses and buildings are being torn down," says Goldman.

To capture many existing and now-gone buildings, over the years Goldman has created these images in paintings, photographs and fabric art — tapestries and quilting.

Starting Feb. 11, the Market Gallery in the St. Lawrence Market in Toronto will exhibit her textile art, watercolours and photographs in an exhibition titled, "Windows, Gables, Gingerbread and Gargoyles".

"Some of my favourite works," says Goldman, "are the Kiever Synagogue on Bellevue Ave. in Kensington Market and Fire station #23 on Howland Avenue. And I fell in love with the glory and beauty of the Flatiron Building in downtown Toronto which I pass every day on my way to work."

Goldman, who worked in the graphic arts department of the Toronto Public Library, is now the supervisor of the St. Lawrence Library at Sherbourne and Front streets.

Goldman attended William Lyon McKenzie Collegiate and went on to study art at Central Technical Art School, graduating in 1971. She studied with Doris McCarthy, a well-known Scarborough artist.

She notes that two of her mentors were Edward Hopper, an American painter who loved buildings and Albert Frank, a Dutch artist who lived in Toronto and painted street scenes and back alleys.

"Since I was a child, I always walked around with a sketch pad. My real love of painting houses and street scenes began when I was at Central Tech. Along with still life paintings, we were assigned to do water colour paintings of houses and street scenes in the area."

Goldman traveled around Europe for a year and spent six months on a kibbutz in Israel. While at Usha Kibbutz near Haifa, she made an appliquéd tapestry, a wall hanging of the kibbutz using remnants of materials, beads, buttons, shoe laces and other scraps. She adds layer by layer creating the structures and shadows.

Kiever synagogue water colour by Linda R. Goldman

Her tapestry of the kibbutz includes some buildings, farm equipment, cows, citrus groves and an Arab village in the background.

Known as an appliqué illustrator, she has had works featured in newspapers, magazines, on television, and at numerous venues throughout the city.

Her commissions include television mogul Moses Znaimer, lawyer Clayton Ruby and former Toronto mayor June Rowlands.

A resident of the Annex, Goldman says she became aware of the beauty of the Victorian houses with gingerbread trim and the gargoyles on inner city buildings. "I began photographing their intricate details."

Goldman's art is always evolving. "It all began with watercolours. From paintings, to photographs, and then I began to do my hand sewn hangings which create a photographic-like realism."

One of her three-section appliqué wall hangings titled *Spadina Avenue*, with a streetcar, people and a man on a motorcycle, is on display at the Baycrest Centre.

Goldman taught quilting and created some of her own pieces, notably, a Holocaust Memorial quilt that features the names and photographs of members of her family who were victims of the Holocaust.

Goldman's "Windows, Gables, Gingerbread and Gargoyles" exhibition runs from Feb. 11 to March 26, The Market Gallery in the St. Lawrence Market, 95 Front St. E., Toronto. Email lindyquilt@hotmail.com, or call 416-534 2515.

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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By BILL GLADSTONE

WRITER-PERFORMER VASSA PROBES ETHIOPIAN IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

It Sounds Better in Amharic is **Yossi Vassa**'s personal account of his 700-kilometre journey from Ethiopia to the Holy Land. Written with **Shai Ben Attar** and translated by **Howard Rypp**, the 50-minute show features Vassa's nostalgic memories of his Ethiopian childhood and comedic perspectives on the adjustment to life in Israel.

Vassa prods audiences to look beyond the specific experiences of the Ethiopian immigrant family, and to delve into universal human emotions, dilemmas, and problems. Music by **Tomer Yosef**.

Sponsored by the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre and Hillel of Greater Toronto. $20; JCC members $18; Hillel students $12. Nadal JCC, Tuesday, Jan. 24. English show 7 p.m. Reception 8 p.m. Hebrew show 9 p.m. 416-924-6211, ext. 0.

* * *

Bat Mitzvah Journey: The Morris Winchevsky School presents a screening of *Wanderings... A Journey to Connect*, a Canadian documentary in which a mother and daughter travel the Diaspora in search of a connection to heritage, culture and each other. Call it a "bat mitzvah journey around the world." 585 Cranbrooke Ave. (five blocks north of Lawrence, just east of Bathurst). $7 includes refreshments. Sunday, Jan. 29, 10:30 a.m. 416-789-5502.

* * *

Names in the News: Boston-area writer **Shari Becker**, who grew up in the Montreal suburb of Cote St.Luc, will soon have her first book published by Charlesbridge Publishing. *Maxwell's Mountain* is a children's picture book inspired by the children's climbing mountain in Pierre Elliot Trudeau Park near her childhood home. Becker was educated at Solomon Schecter Academy, Bialik High School, Marianopolis College and Concordia University.

* * *

Bursteins Up Close: Friends of Yiddish presents *The Komediant*, a fascinating, moving documentary about the triumphs and tribulations of one of the first families of Yiddish show business: **Pesach Burstein** and **Lillian Lux**, and their children, **Michael** and **Susan**.

The film presents a candid look at the professional and personal lives of these extraordinary talents, utilizing excerpts from their greatest shows, clips from their off-stage lives and interviews with family members and other famous veterans of the Yiddish stage.

In Yiddish, English and Hebrew with English subtitles, *The Komediant* provides a sense of the rewards that success on the Yiddish stage brought the Bursteins and what it cost them as a family.

B'nai Brith Building, 15 Hove Street (Bathurst-Sheppard area). Free for FoY members, $5 for guests. Reservations required. Call Sandy, 416-736-8073 or 416-458-1440. Sunday, Jan. 29, 10:30 a.m.

* * *

Names in the News II: Even as its latest CD *Consensus* continues to garner praise, the acclaimed klezmer-roots fusion group **Beyond the Pale** was named "best instrumental group" recently by the Canadian Folk Music Awards. The Toronto-based band also appeared on CBC-TV's recent broadcast of the *Governor General's Performing Arts Awards*, taped in November at Ottawa's National Arts Centre. BTP paid musical tribute to one of the honorees, media maven **Moses Znaimer**.

The band is featured on CBC Radio Two's celebrations of **Mozart's** 250th birthday on *The World in Performance*, Jan. 27, 8 p.m. Afterward, band members depart for a 10-day tour of Texas, Arizona and California. www.beyondthepale.net.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• *Paradise Now*, a Palestinian-Israeli co-production about Palestinian suicide bombers, won a Golden Globe for best foreign-language film last week in Los Angeles. The Warner Brothers film has been criticized for its sympathetic portrayal of two suicide bombers, but it has also reportedly been panned in Palestinian circles for its negative portrait of terrorist groups. The film's tag line is, "Sometimes the most courageous act is what you don't do."

• Photographer **Natalie Schonfeld** exhibits her latest body of work in two shows at the Alliance Française de Toronto, 24 Spadina Rd., through Feb. 23. "Perceptions of Light" focuses on deaf-blind people from Canada, France, Nepal and Israel, while "Legally Blind" examines different degrees of blindness experienced by deaf-blind persons. 416-922-2014

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Fateless captures the essence of boy's Holocaust experience

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Like the finest films about the Holocaust, Lajos Koltai's *Fateless* captures the full range of emotions – the shuddering shock, the cold fear, the utter bewilderment, the profound degradation and the abject humiliation – felt by its hapless victims.

The film, set in Budapest, Auschwitz-Birkenau and Buchenwald, unfolds through the eyes of a cool, intelligent 14-year-old Jewish teenager who barely survives his ordeal.

Screened at the Toronto International Film Festival and scheduled to open in local theatres on Feb. 3, *Fateless* is based on Imre Kertesz's eponymous novel, which was cited when he won the Nobel Prize for literature in 2002. And because the screenplay was written by Kertesz himself, the movie is unceasingly faithful to the spirit and letter of his book.

The mood of despair that pervades *Fateless* is quickly established. In a dim flat in Budapest, Hungarian Jews speak glumly of their uncertain future.

Gyuri Koves (Marcell Nagy), the central character, must suddenly adjust to unpleasant realities. His father is on the cusp of being called up as a forced labourer. His mother, a remote figure, is divorced from his father. Across the room, an old woman wearing a mandatory yellow star sinks into despondency. "What has the world come to?" she wails.

Amid the desperation, illusions flourish. One man claims that the Nazis are persecuting Jews to squeeze concessions out of the Allies. Another says that Hungary cannot be compared with Poland, where German death camps consume Jews by the thousands on a daily basis.

Their speculative comments add up to little as rumours abound that Jews in Budapest are disappearing or being subjected to anti-Semitic laws.

Gyuri, a solemn boy with a sad demeanour, realizes that his carefree, youthful days have ended. Yet he is remarkably resilient. Responding to the bleats of a Jewish girl who hates being hated, he allows himself the luxury of believing that the wrath of the state is not personally directed against him.

Koltai distills the essence of their dire predicament with quick, efficient brushstrokes.

And he rises to the occasion in charting the mind-numbing deportations and in documenting the primitive, mean-spirited anti-Semitism of the Hungarian police, who ruthlessly round up Jews, brutally insult them, cynically accuse them of base, unfounded crimes and shamelessly try to extort their valuables.

Fateless is beautifully photographed by Gyula Pados, and that is to be expected from a film by a director who himself is a renowned cinematographer.

The closeups of the intended victims are revealing, portraying pain and puzzlement, while the sweeping shots of the countryside are simply poetic.

Marcell Nagy in *Fateless*

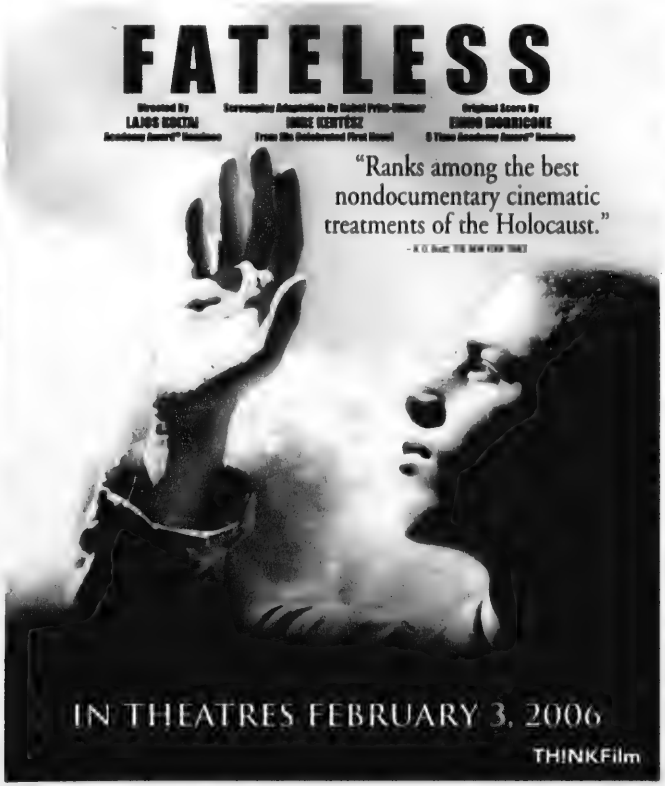
Pados' sharp evocations of the stark, ghostly concentration camps, in rain and shine, are brilliant. The images are reminiscent of those in a previous film on the Holocaust, *The Grey Zone*. The smokestacks of the crematoria belch black smoke. An overseer slaps an inmate because he has not shaved. A prisoner falls from exhaustion or sickness, plopping into a puddle as other inmates watch impassively.

Gyuri's mettle is tested to the limit in the camps. He is strong and resolute, but Bandi Citrom (Aron Dimeny), a fellow Jew from Budapest who was a forced labourer in Ukraine, helps him immeasurably, protecting him from the indignities of the guards.

Citrom's inspirational optimism is a source of strength for Gyuri, but the camp routine grinds him down, while hunger and rampant disease also take its toll. He loses his will to live as one of his knees swells and pus forms, but Citrom rescues him in the nick of time.

Finally liberated by American troops, Gyuri returns to Hungary against the advice of a well-meaning soldier (Daniel Craig, the new James Bond), who warns him that he is not welcome there as a Jew.

Gyuri, masterfully portrayed by Nagy, accepts his fate and goes back home, where life is gradually returning to normal. But after the Holocaust, nothing can ever be the same again, and this is a point that *Fateless* leaves us to ponder.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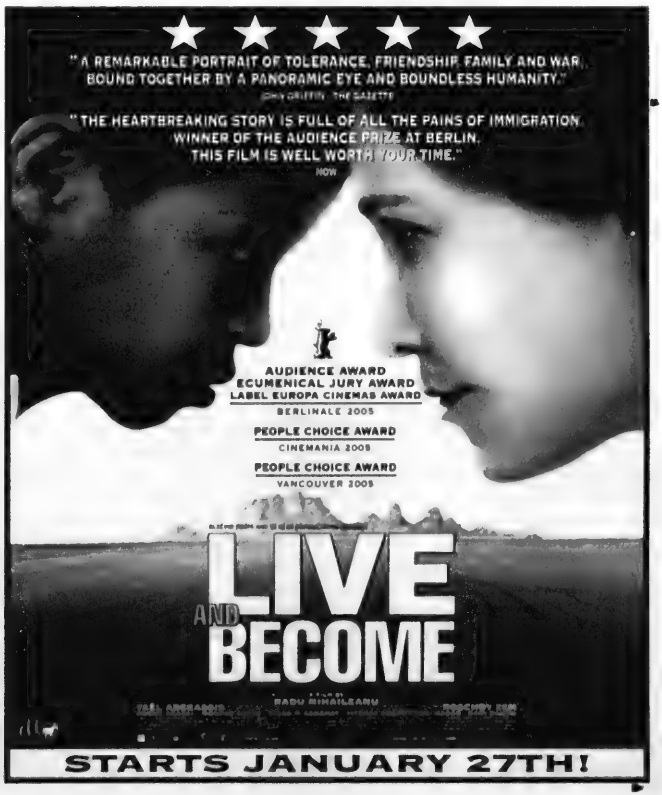
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Young producer seeks to attract his generation to musicals

By SHLOMIT KRIGER
Special to The CJN

He may have started off performing for his family in his basement, putting on shows such as *Polka Dot Door* at age three and later *Phantom of the Opera* using dressed up dolls as cast members while his sister did the lighting.

But at 23, actor/producer Mitchell Marcus has already embraced the public stage with his talents and is currently gearing up for the opening of *john & jen*, his second produced musical created under his own theatre company, Acting Up Stage.

And there's nothing he'd rather be doing, not even television shows or movies.

"Getting a response from an audience right in front of you is very thrilling," said Marcus. "I also like that theatre provides a bit of an elevated reality, and the actors only get one take.

"Being a producer is also so strangely, artistically satisfying, because I feel like the centre spoke of this wheel that keeps moving."

Marcus was hooked on performing after he won a karaoke competiton at Thornhill's Promenade Mall when he was 10, with a rendition of Bryan Adams' *(Everything I Do) I Do It For You*.

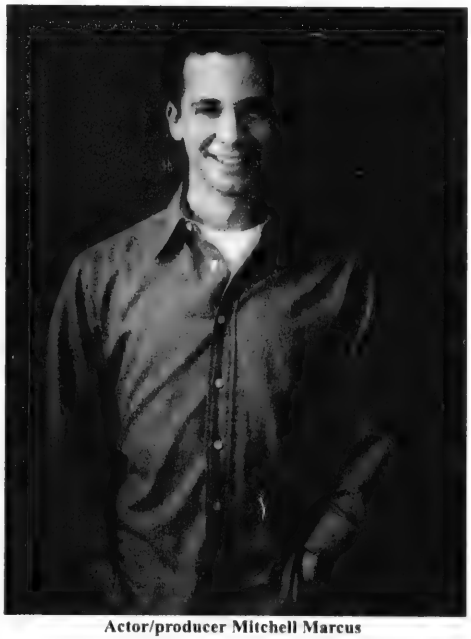
Singing seemed to come naturally to Marcus, whose father often sang and played guitar at home. He didn't take any vocal training until his teenage years.

Marcus also directed a musical rendition of *CATS* at CHAT, ran a drama program at Camp Solelim, and later served as program director for Camp Biluim in Montreal.

While majoring in the fine arts cultural studies program with a focus in arts administration at York University, he took on more professional theatre work three or four times a year with such companies as Drayton Entertainment and Sunshine Festival Theatre.

He also produced *A Thousand Clowns* with Encore Entertainment and was production assistant for the *It's Always Something Variety Show*, working with such stars as Eric McCormack, Drew Carey, and Colm Wilkinson.

With his outgoing nature and love of performing, Marcus asserts he doesn't get stage fright, as long as he feels prepared.



Actor/producer Mitchell Marcus

The only time he felt somewhat jittery was when he risked producing and starring in a production of David French's *Salt-Water Moon*, which served as a substitute for an internship he was to complete through the York program.

But the show went well, and with newfound confidence Marcus founded his theatre company in May 2004. The company is dedicated to producing intimate musical theatre productions while garnering a new generation of audiences through thought-provoking, contemporary works.

"I felt there weren't enough musicals that young people could relate to as theirs and that would challenge them and make them think," he said. "I believe the only way to sustain musical theatre is to get those people to come out."

He managed to successfully do so last year with his lively production of *tick, tick...BOOM!* The rock and pop musical by Jonathan Larson, Tony Award-winning author of Broadway's *RENT*, starred Dean Armstrong (Broadway's *RENT*, TV's *Queer As Folk*).

Marcus's latest play, *john & jen*, reveals the complex relationships between Jen and two Johns of her life: a younger brother who was killed in Vietnam and her growing son. Starring Stephanie Roth (U.S. national tour of *RENT*, Stratford Festival) and Kyle Blair (Stratford Festival), this musical is sure to leave audiences moved, contemplating life, and perhaps even reminiscing their own family ties.

> Musical speaks to the life and experiences of young people

"When I discovered the CD for the play, I loved it right away," said Marcus. "It had beautiful music, and I found the story to be very touching and accessible because it dealt with family, which is a fairly important motif in my life.

"Also, because in the bulk of the show one of the characters deals with being a teenager, it also speaks to the life experiences of the audience that I'm trying to reach."

Renowned New York writer Andrew Lippa, who spends his high holidays with his parents while serving as a cantor at Vancouver's Beth Tikvah Synagogue, wrote the music for the play and co-wrote the book with Tom Greenwald.

"He's been very kind, answering any questions and giving advice, and he's been very supportive of this Toronto production," said Marcus.

john & jen premiers Jan.26 at the Walmer Centre Theatre, 185 Lowther Ave. Toronto, where it will run until Feb. 11. For more information call 416-927-7880 or visit www.johnandjen.ca

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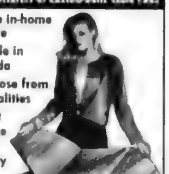
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Arts & Travel

Secret Files of the Inquisition is compelling TV

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Convert or die!

This heart-rending admonition rang out and reverberated as a wave of religious intolerance washed over Spain in the 14th century.

This development changed the course of Jewish history and is the subject of *Secret Files of the Inquisition*, an illuminating four-part Canadian series by David Rabinovitch due to start on Wednesday, Feb. 1, at 10 p.m on Vision TV.

As we learn in the opening episode, the Inquisition actually began in 1233 in southern France, when Pope Gregory IX charged the Dominican order with wiping out heresy among a dissident Christian sect known as Catharism.

This crackdown, enforced by ambitious priests, was unleashed because the church was basically unwilling to bend to the needs of the people and adapt to changing times.

The Inquisition spread to Spain in 1391, when radical Catholic priests demanded that Spanish Jews convert to Christianity or suffer the consequences.

By some estimates, half of the Jews embraced Christianity in the name of self-preservation. These New Christians, the Conversos, prospered and some became members of the Spanish elite.

But soon their world came crashing down. Old Christians, jealous of their success in trade, commerce and the professions, railed against them. Catholic zealots sharply questioned their commitment to Christianity and accused them of secretly practising Judaism.

Re-creation of a scene of a Jewish ritual in 15th-century Spain. Constanza de Perpinan and her husband, Manuel de Almazan have their child circumcised by the mohel.

It is indeed true that more than a few of the Conversos made a show of being Christians in public while hewing to Judaism in private. Branded as "Judaizers," they were accused of subverting the Catholic faith.

In 1478, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, the monarchs who dreamed of consolidating the principalities of the Iberian peninsula into a pure, unified Catholic state, persuaded Pope Sixtus IV to agree to the Spanish Inquisition.

Notorious for its cruel practices, the Inquisition was under the leadership of an ardent Converso, the Dominican priest Tomas de Torquemada. He aimed his wrath exclusively at fellow Conversos who had strayed from Catholic dogma.

During the first five years of the Inquisition, thousands of Conversos were burned at the stake and tortured. By one estimate, 15 per cent of Spain's population was affected by the Inquisition.

Among the Conversos to be persecuted were Jaime de Montessa, a respected judge, and Cinfa Cacavi, a young wife and mother. Through dramatizations, Rabinovitch illustrates their dilemmas and fears.

Such incidents prompted Conversos to launch life-saving appeals to Ferdinand and Isabella, as well as the pope, but their desperate efforts fell on deaf ears.

In 1492, Torquemada took the Inquisition to its logical conclusion, convincing the king and queen to expunge Jews from Spain in what would be a process of ethnic cleansing.

Jews were given an ultimatum: convert to Christianity or leave Spain within three months. One third emigrated and one-third converted. The rest dithered, paying a fierce price for their irresolution.

Judging by the first two episodes, narrated by the Canadian actor Colm Feore, *Secret Files of the Inquisition* is compelling TV, a window into a terrible era.

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Irving Layton's lasting legacy

By NORMAN RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

Notable amidst the outpouring of affection upon Irving Layton's death were the voices of younger poets. This went far beyond the expected heartfelt appreciation from Leonard Cohen, and though it was largely centred in Montreal, there were poets farther afield who remembered Layton fondly and with respect, as a mentor and literary ground-breaker.

One columnist in the Montreal Gazette wondered about the central role of poets in Layton's funeral service. But this should have surprised no one. It reflected a rare lack of pro forma blarney, which often smothers the memorial events of well-known people. Layton's most remarkable influence was on the poets of both his own generation and that which followed his. He asserted his ideals in the classrooms of York and Concordia universities, while mentoring young writers through his personal attentions. These efforts amounted to a second, hidden career that was not necessarily known to Layton's readers and the general public.

Norman Ravvin

His motivation to teach derived in part from a need to make a living as a literary worker in this country. But the most startling evidence of Layton's dedication to the life of literature can be found in his published letters, *Wild Gooseberries: The Selected Letters of Irving Layton*. Layton wrote mountains of letters. He inundated friends, publishers, reviewers and protégés with detailed descriptions of his own doings, alongside appreciations of the activities of his correspondents. The question of who would receive his mantle as the representative of Canadian Jewish poets came up now and again, as he changed his mind about likely recipients. Cohen, and Montreal poet David Solway were often proposed, while Seymour Mayne and Kenneth Sherman received intermittent nods.

From the other side of this correspondence, younger poets acknowledged Layton's patience and hospitality. Kenneth Sherman recalls a box of wine delivered to his apartment door when Layton discovered that Sherman's place was wineless – a poetic transgression of the highest order. Another writer recalls $50 fluttering from an envelope as an offer of support in hard times.

Early on, Layton saw the value of gathering coteries, whether to promote small-press publishing or to simply create a buzz around himself and his friends. His efforts with the First Statement and Contact presses, and at the little magazine *CIV/n*, were far ahead of their time. They preceded the small-press explosion of the late 1960s in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, and they highlighted the particularities of Canadian writing before the popularity of a national culture was affirmed by Expo 67 and the excitement surrounding Trudeaumania. These efforts were best appreciated by poets and editors as the kind of foundation work that ends up profiting a great many others.

Layton's most relevant and influential period in the public eye dated between 1956 and the late '70s, when his books, his ideas and the force of his personality made repeated waves and were routinely reported in the press. The early date marks the appearance of his collection *The Improved Binoculars*, which was anointed by the American poet William Carlos Williams in a now-famous preface: "When I first clapped eyes on the poems of Irving Layton, two years ago, I let out a yell of joy… As far as deftness in the craft of a poet, I think he can do anything he wants to… There will, if I am not mistaken, be a battle: Layton against the rest of the world. With his vigour and abilities who shall not say that Canada will not have produced one of the West's most famous poets?"

This was the crucial stamp of approval that gave Layton international credentials and linked him with the most influential poetic movement in the United States. True to form, Layton rejected the full embrace of his American admirers. As a young man, he wanted influence and attention, but not at the expense of being beholden to any senior figure.

The books of the late 1950s and early '60s were ground-breaking collections of sharp, uncluttered, often satirical poetry. In 1959, he published a selected works, titled *A Red Carpet for the Sun*, which gathered poems written between 1942 and 1958. It included a blustery foreword, which was a blueprint for the kind of missives he would attach to many of his later books: "Why are people destructive and joy-hating? Is it perception of the unimportance of their lives finally penetrating the bark of their complacency and egotism?" His 1964 collection, *The Laughing Rooster*, focuses on new work, while his success is signalled by the back-cover copy: "Irving Layton has become a legend in his own time. Canada's most widely read and controversial poet, his reputation grows with each book he publishes." McClelland and Stewart assigned Frank Newfeld, its most inspired book designer, to these projects, and the books themselves have a character all their own. They are artifacts of Layton-ness, as it was taking shape in the '60s.

The crowning works of the period between the mid-'50s and the late '70s are two slim, angry volumes, *For My Brother Jesus* (1976) and *The Covenant* (1977). At this stage of his career, Layton fully embraced difficult Jewish themes as the motivating concerns of his work. The Holocaust shifted to the forefront of his poetry, as did Layton's assertion that "Christianity is founded neither on myth nor fiction but on an ignoble lie," Jewish guilt in Jesus' death, whose centrality to the faith "has been responsible for the cruel deaths of millions of innocent people by blazing faggot, sword and hunger; most recently, by chemicals and mass executions."

These partisan books drew the interest of Jewish and non-Jewish readers, and provided journalists and reviewers with a new hook on which to hang provocative commentary. What followed was never quite so vibrant, but how much vibrancy should we expect of one man? Layton's forceful personality and influential work would be, to an extent, obscured by his tumultuous personal life, his moves between Ontario and Quebec, and more recently, his illness. But there is room now to stand back from all of this to recognize the fine and solid accomplishments of the key decades that stand at the centre of a long career. Layton's funeral in Montreal confirmed the impact of these years, as one poet after another suggested that without Layton, they might not have seen their own goals so clearly.

Norman Ravvin's essays on Jewish writing are collected in A House of Words: Jewish Writing, Identity and Memory. *In 2006, he will publish a new introduction to a rereleased novel by Henry Kreisel,* The Rich Man. *He is chair of Concordia University's Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies.*

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A wake-up call from God

By SHELLEY MILLMAN HERMAN

Two months ago, on a snowy Friday, I was involved in a bad car accident on Highway 407 as I was on my way to pick up my children from school.

I was watching the gently falling snow when a car stopped suddenly in front of me. I tried to brake, but I had no traction. As my car swerved left and right, I thought, "I can handle this. I learned to drive in Montreal winters, where the snow and ice are far more challenging and frequent!" But no matter what I did, I couldn't correct my positioning.

I remember giving up and leaving it to "fate" to determine what happens. I swerved into a large van and, as a result of the impact, did a 360-degree turn. Before I knew it, I was on the edge of the opposite lane, far away from where I started. Miraculously, my car stopped, and I was "safely" on the shoulder of the highway – facing the wrong direction, but out of traffic. I sat stunned, shaking. All I could think of was that I had to get to my children. They would be expecting me. Frantically, I called their schools to say I would be delayed, fully intending to drive my smashed car to get them.

Then I heard a loud knock on my window. A kind but frantic police officer wanted to know if I was alright. I told him I was fine, just a little shaken. He made sure I was OK before rushing off to more critical accidents up ahead, one of which, he told me, was fatal.

As I kept calling the schools, a tow truck driver knocked on my window asking if I needed help. I told him I was fine and would drive off shortly, but he insisted it would be extremely unsafe for me to drive my car. I assumed he just wanted to charge me a high towing fee. Yet, he seemed so nice and sincere, and cars were whipping by, and I really didn't want to drive at that point, so I decided to be towed. He waited patiently while I arranged alternative transportation for my kids.

Once everything was set, I got out of my car and noticed that the large white van I had hit was way on the other side of the highway. I called out to the driver to ask if he was OK. He, too, was perfectly fine. He managed to cross the highway on foot, and we exchanged the necessary information, both feeling very thankful to be alive.

As I walked over to get in the tow truck, it occurred to me that I was on the edge of a highway, and that if another car slid out of control, I could have been killed. I quickly got into the tow truck.

The driver was talking on the phone to his brother, who is also a tow truck driver. He was up ahead where someone was lying dead, legless. The man survived the multi-car accident, but was killed by an out-of-control car when he went out to check the damage. That could have been me.

The driver and I started talking, and he asked me if I was Jewish. "Yes," I said proudly, "and it's almost the Sabbath, and I have to get home to my family."

He said, "I'm Jewish, too – Moroccan. I know I don't look Jewish, but I am."

He turned out to be the kindest, most helpful tow truck driver you'd ever meet. He brought me to a reliable body shop where I was got great service. My car was badly damaged, but repairable.

I got into a rental van and drove home to my four children: my nine-year-old twins, my 11-year-old, and my oldest, who is nearly 15.

When I arrived, I looked at my husband and each of my children. I was never so thankful to see their smiling faces, and to feel the warmth of their hugs and their abundant love.

We sat down to our Shabbat meal, and once the shock wore off, I realized I had experienced a miracle, one with a powerful message: Wake up!

The Almighty made sure to send his message with impact – literally and figuratively.

He was saying, "This is your life. Make it count. Be thankful. Enjoy the wonders I have given to this world. Maximize and enrich your relationships. Know that I am close."

Since then, I've been happier, more appreciative, and more zealous in enjoying life. And I pray more. I know He is near.

I also put snow tires on my car!

Shelley Millman Herman is a life coach and an executive search consultant. She can be reached at shelley@globalrecruit.com.

Reena concert set for March 22

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

All proceeds from the upcoming concert "Hand in Hand: Special Children Helping Special Children" will go to the Reena Foundation's after-school program for special needs teenagers.

The concert, to be held March 22 at Leah Posluns Theatre, will feature such young stars as Jakie Young, Aron Swebel, Robbie Wulfsohn, Jacob Gorzhaltsam, Brittany Kay, Ashley Van Embden, Cassie Luftspring and the Rosedale Heights Jazz Band.

Kathy Laszlo, the event co-ordinator whose 19-year-old son Danny attends the Reena program, said that when it started up as a pilot project two years ago, Reena was able to keep it going four afternoons a week.

For budgetary reasons, however, the program was cut to two afternoons a week, "and they are always in danger of running out of money."

Laszlo said she called Reena president Gary Sim this past summer and proposed raising money so the program could go back to running four days a week. "He agreed, and now I have to deliver on my promise of raising the necessary funds."

The program, which runs for four hours each afternoon, offers such activities as bowling, swimming, cooking and movies, as well as dinner. All of its volunteer leaders are high school or university students.

"[The participants] are kids who need social interaction with their own peer group. We need to provide them with friends who look at them equally. It is extremely important for their self-esteem and to develop their social skills," Laszlo said.

The program also provides a respite for parents, she said, "but from the children's point of view, it is far more important."

Laszlo said that she and producer Gavin Opert chose young stars under 20 to perform in the concert because they wanted all the teens to relate to each other.

"We are so proud that these performers are volunteering their time to help out teens who are more vulnerable. The parents of special needs children are grateful that these youngsters are doing this. With so many negative things going on in today's world, this gives us hope for the future."

The program participants will be "visible" at the concert as ushers or selling popcorn, Laszlo said.

"We want the community to see that these teens are capable of doing something so when it comes time to look for a job people will know that they're valued members of society.

"These teens certainly need help, but with the proper help they can become productive."

For concert information, call Laszlo at 905-731-6606.

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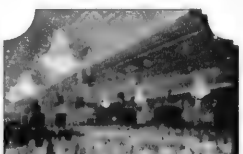

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Volunteering at Sick Kids is 'more than a job'

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Few experiences are as unnerving to a parent as taking a child to the hospital – even one as world renowned as Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children. Whether it's as an outpatient, a visitor to emergency, or an in-patient, the need for a warm smile or support is universal.

That's one reason that Women's Auxiliary president Marilyn Magerman feels so strongly about the importance of what the organization does. The mother of two children – out of four – who spent a lot of time at the hospital as youngsters, she calls her devotion to the hospital and the auxiliary "a passion."

She said that she came to community work naturally. She grew up in the tiny Jewish community of Thunder Bay (then Fort William and Port Arthur), where her parents set an example of service, not just for Jewish causes (her father used to search out Jewish boys who had been sent to work on nearby farms during World War II and invite them back for holidays), but in the general community as well. "Our responsibility was seen to not be just for 'our own,'" she said.

Magerman has been a president of B'nai Brith Women, and the founder and president of Parents of Twins, but right now her focus is on the Women's Auxiliary.

During her involvement with SickKids (as the hospital is now known), she has served in the playroom of the hematology/oncology department, the bazaar, play-park (a playroom for children waiting for appointments or for their siblings) and the surgical waiting room. She is looking forward to continuing that type of volunteer work when her tenure as president of the auxiliary ends next May.

"It is a privilege to be part of one of the best academic, medical and research centres in the world," Magerman said. "Parents expect the best care and services for their children when they come here, and they expect the same professionalism from the volunteers as they do from the staff."

That's exactly what they get, she asserts.

Marilyn Magerman at the Hospital for Sick Children

Volunteers are asked to commit to at least three hours a week and, if they can't come, are expected to find someone to replace them.

"We all take it very seriously. It's more than just a job."

The auxiliary, which is an autonomous body with its own board of directors, complements the staff in offering support, assistance and comfort, and raises funds for the hospital –$250,000 last year alone. The money comes from, among other sources, a bazaar; Bear Wear, a program selling T-shirts, sweatshirts, teddy bears and assorted memorabilia; a holiday card campaign; and proceeds from the hospital's 555 Gift Shop.

The auxiliary determines where the money will go. Among the projects funded were salaries and equipment for the play-park.

"The staff can request monies, and if we can help we do," Magerman said.

The ophthalmology department has received a RetCam from the auxiliary. The camera examines eyes in a less invasive way than used to be the case, gives results immediately, and can compare current eye conditions with previous ones. A harmonic scalpel from the auxiliary will allow the urology department to perform non-invasive surgery.

The organization has endowed a $2 million research chair in neonatology and is in the process of establishing one in hematology/oncology.

The auxiliary provides day passes to the YMCA for parents and for patients in the substance abuse program.

Magerman co-ordinates the Poster Express program. Volunteers take a cart full of posters to the rooms and each of the children chooses one to liven up his or her room. "Children really don't have a lot of choice when they are in the hospital – this gives them an option," she said.

One of Magerman's favourite projects is Bravery Beads. Patients in the hematology/oncology, immunology/allergy, cardiac and transplant departments get a different coloured and shaped bead for each procedure they undergo, which are woven into a necklace: a yellow bead for occupational therapy, a blue pearl for surgery, a small gold heart for a central- line insertion and a purple heart for an internal defibrillator. There is even a wooden face for hair loss, and an iridescent heart for someone celebrating a birthday.

"The beads serve as a journal, a documenting of a child's illness," Magerman said. "And show their bravery, not just to other people, but to themselves too."

Some women sew and knit. They make crafts that are sold in the 555 shop, as well as the hats and booties that are worn by infants in the hospital.

While some people may think that working in a children's hospital is depressing, Magerman and the other women in the auxiliary find it inspiring. "Amazing things happen here. More and more youngsters are surviving. You have to look at the positive, and see them [the children] as kids, not just as patients."

There are not many Jewish volunteers in the organization, to Magerman's regret. She would like to encourage more young Jewish women to join, although she recognizes that they often choose to help Jewish causes and is aware of the changing demographics that see women taking paying jobs rather than volunteering.

For more information, telephone 416-813-5782 or visit the website www.sickkids.ca/womensauxiliary.

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Doctors learn from each other

Continued from page 7

"[This technique] is used in the operating room for non-invasive surgeries, where small incisions are made, and the bone itself is not completely exposed and in plain view," she explained.

"It's like virtual reality, where you can see on the screen what your positioning is like, without having to X-ray over and over again, which is a big radiation dose for patients and surgeons."

After having spent time in the operating rooms with Israeli doctors, learning from them, and sharing her own research, Whyne said she hopes the exchange of ideas and information will continue.

One of her goals it to have a grant approved by the Canadian government to have Khoury, herself and doctors from Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto work together on developing computer assisted orthopedic surgery.

"The ideal is to have knowledge gained from both sides and be able to collaborate."

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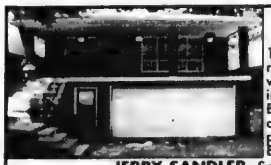

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Israel & the Jewish World

NYC health unit warns against circumcision procedure

JTA

NEW YORK — New York City's health commissioner has issued an unprecedented public warning that a controversial circumcision procedure is endangering the lives of Jewish infants.

The move came after a religious court failed to meet a deadline to conclude its investigation of a mohel linked to the transmission of herpes to three babies, one of whom died.

"There exists no reasonable doubt that *metzitzah b'peh* [oral suction of the genital wound] can and has caused neonatal herpes infection," Dr. Thomas Frieden wrote in late December in "An Open Letter to the Jewish Community" about a procedure routinely practised by mohels in some sectors of the Orthodox community. "The Health Department recommends that infants being circumcised not undergo *metzitzah b'peh*."

In *metzitzah b'peh*, a mohel orally sucks blood from the site of the genital cut he makes during the circumcision procedure. Not all haredi groups mandate the practice, and the Rabbinical Council of America, an Orthodox organization, recommends using a sterile tube and gloves to avoid direct oral-genital contact.

However, several haredi sects insist that Halachah requires the practice, and New York City officials said mohels from these sects may also use the procedure outside their communities.

As well, some leaders in sectors of the Orthodox community where the practice is common said they would continue to insist on the procedure as a requirement of religious law.

The open letter – the New York City Health Department's first official warning against the procedure – follows an apparent breakdown in an agreement the department had with a Jewish religious court in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. In September, the city withdrew a lawsuit against a mohel that the department concluded had transmitted the disease to three babies on whom he had performed the procedure, including one who died and one who suffered brain damage. It also withdrew a court order barring him from using the technique. In exchange, Rabbi Yitzchok Fischer agreed to temporarily stop performing *metzitzah b'peh*.

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Mature skaters gather in Metulla for tournament

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

"Don't call them *alte kakers* – some of them are still in their 30s.

Some may be over the hill and others overweight, but at least they're over there, skating in the first annual International Israel Ice Hockey Tournament in Metulla.

Four teams with a total of 60 to 70 skaters took part in the tournament, which ran from Jan. 24 to 26. A Canadian team joined squads from Israel and the Israeli women's team in the fun tournament, lovingly branded an "*alte kaker*" event by Alan Maislin, chair of the Israel Ice Hockey Federation.

The three-day tournament "is a dream. This is our hockey mission to Israel," said Maislin, whose family was once a part owner of the Montreal Canadiens.

Alan Maislin

Advertised primarily through word of mouth, the tournament was billed as a chance to visit Israel "and promote the [country's] ice hockey program and have fun," he said.

In addition to the on-ice games, participants toured the country and laid the groundwork for future tournaments. Organizers hope that, ultimately, as many as 1,000 skaters will venture to Israel for a fun tournament, Maislin added.

The tournament is the first event on a packed hockey agenda in 2006. Off the ice, events are unfolding as expected in a bid to construct a new hockey arena in the greater Tel Aviv area. "I expect a rink to be finished and operating in 2007," Maislin said.

Placing a rink in Israel's population heartland "will change the complexion of Israeli hockey completely."

There are 95 roller hockey teams playing outdoors in Israel, consisting primarily of sabras. "They're dying to play real hockey," Maislin said.

Regardless of the expected popularity of a centrally located rink, Metulla will remain the home rink for the national team. In addition, Israeli league games will continue to be played in Metulla and northern youth will continue to develop their skills at the Canada Centre, even if the proposed rink proves popular, he said.

Israeli teams will participate in two international tournaments this spring, Maislin continued. On March 8, the under-18 junior team will gather for training camp in preparation for the IIHF World Championships, Division III. They'll be joined by Israeli players from the diaspora on March 10.

Last year's Israeli squad won a bronze medal in Bulgaria. This year, the team will not have to travel so far. The Israeli Ice Hockey Federation and the Canada Centre rink in Metulla will host the IIHF event. Maislin said he was told by no less an authority that former prime minister Shimon Peres that this will mark the first-ever world sanctioned event in Israel.

Israeli skaters will face their toughest test about a month later in Amiens, France. That's when the senior national team will face off in the IIHF Division I Group A world championships against France, Germany and England – which boast rosters consisting of professional players – as well as Hungary and Japan.

"We're up against it," admits Maislin.

Israel will be led by the Eizenman brothers – Alon, Erez and Oren – as well as Max Birbraer, a New Jersey Devils draftee who currently plays for San Diego in the East Coast Hockey League.

Israel earned the right to compete in Division I by winning the gold medal in a Division II tournament last year.

Both the senior and junior teams will be led by former Montreal Canadiens coach Jean Perron, a Stanley Cup winner.

Former NHLer Steve Dubinsky has agreed to coach Israel's women's hockey team. He will be assisted by Billy Jaffee, a colour commentator on Atlanta Thrashers radio broadcasts. The women's team will hold a tryout camp in Toronto in June.

Perron will run a summer hockey camp in Israel and in October the Israeli juniors will embark on an eight-city North American tour that will include stops in Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto.

The hockey federation also has plans to ice a paraplegic team, Maislin said.

Israelis' singles hopes end early in Oz

By FRANKIE SACHS
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Anna Smashnova, Shahar Pe'er and Harel Levy all lost their opening-round matches at the Australian Open last week. Together with Tzipi Obziler's first-round defeat, the top Israeli players went 0-for-4 in the first round, leaving only the doubles competitions in which they can register success.

On that front, Andy Ram and Yoni Erlich, seeded sixth in men's doubles, rolled past Argentina's Jaun Monaco and Albert Montanes of Spain 6-3, 6-2. In the next round, they were to face the winner of the match between Americans Robby Ginepri and Bobby Reynolds and Australians Robert Smeets and Paul Baccanello.

The men's doubles draw is not an easy one, with accomplished doubles players Wayne Arthurs and Stephen Huss as potential third-round opponents and the top-seeded Bryan brothers possible quarterfinal foes.

Meanwhile, Levy and South African Chris Haggard bounced Frenchmen Marc Gicquel and Gael Monfils 6-3, 6-2. They were to next meet 13th seeds Jose Acasuso and Sebastian Prieto of Argentina.

In last week's singles action, Smashnova, the top-ranked Israeli at No. 40 in the world, lost 3-6, 6-3, 6-4 to Martina Sucha (96), despite winning more points than her opponent (90-87). Smashnova, who reached the third round last year, committed an uncharacteristic 39 unforced errors, including 12 double faults.

Pe'er (41), making her debut in the senior event at Melbourne, fell 3-6, 6-1, 6-4 to Shinobu Asagoe (39) of Japan. Pe'er was her own worst enemy, committing 55 unforced errors.

Levy (218), who already won three qualifying round matches just to reach the main draw, lost 6-4, 6-4, 6-0 to American Kevin Kim (99).

Team Israel heads to European Figure Skating Championships

By LIONEL GAFFEN
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Ice dancers Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovsky led the Israeli delegation to the 2006 European Figure Skating Championships, which ran from Jan. 16 to 22 in Lyon, France.

The world's sixth-ranked duo are preparing for the upcoming Winter Olympics, Feb. 10 to 26 in Turin, Italy. Their training in Moscow over the last few weeks was not affected by Sakhnovsky's treatment for tendonitis in his knee, and he continues to be monitored by doctors, according to Boris Chait, chair of the Israel Ice Skating Federation.

Final results were not available at press time, but the pair faced stiff competition in France, as their practice mates, Russians Tatiana and Roman Kostomarov, were competing against them yet again. The Russians, world and European champions for the past two years, were hoping to keep their crown. Elena Grushina and Ruslan Goncharov of Ukraine, bronze medalists at the 2005 World Championships and No. 2 in Europe, were looking to skate past them.

Isabelle Delobel and Olivier Schoenfelder of France, the hometown favourites, won the European bronze last year after many felt the Israelis had earned third place. At the recent International Skating Union Grand Prix Final, however, Chait and Sakhnovsky finished fourth, well ahead of Delobel and Schoenfelder. The French duo ended up in the sixth and last place.

Lithuanians Margarita Drobiazko and Povilas Vanagas were competing for the first time since Chait and Sakhnovsky were awarded the bronze medal ahead of them at the 2002 World Championships. The pair made a formal protest, which was denied.

Alexandra and Roman Zaretsky, Israel's No. 2 ice dancers, competed at the Euros for the first time this year. The sister-brother duo are still trying to prove to the Olympic Committee of Israel (OCI) that they deserve to represent the country in Turin, even though the Zaretskys have already met the criteria set by the International Olympic Committee.

In addition, the OCI has not informed the hopefuls exactly how well they have to perform at the Euros in order to secure an Olympic spot.

Roman Serov competed in the men's event. At his first European Championships last year, he managed a 19th-place finish while skating with a severe bout of the flu.

Tamar Katz did not take part this year in the ladies' event due to a stress fracture. Boris Chait said Katz may be able to perform at the World Junior Figure Skating Championships in March.

Go back to your wife, old-timer

There's something to be said about older men, but when it comes to them trying to get with younger women, I really don't have anything nice to say at all.

While such a flirtation can be flattering at first, it quickly becomes cumbersome once it becomes quite clear what our roles are.

As they try ever so hard to look nonchalant while leaning against the bar and scoping out the scene, the 40-year-old-plus men now crowding the trendier clubs play the role of the high-roller who could give the pretty young things a taste of a new lifestyle.

As if! Let's be honest. We're the ones giving them a taste of the lifestyle they were once a part of.

In fact, the twentysomethings in the crowd have the much more important role: affirming that their older counterparts are not too old just yet, and comforting them during the stages of their mid-life crises.

But enough is enough. To all the fortysomething men out there, I say, "Go home to your wives, your children and your regular lives." You've been there, you've done that and we're not about to babysit you down memory lane.

What is it about men at that stage of life? Right now, I'm worrying that my boyfriend will also go crazy when he reaches his fearful forties. Will he be deluded with thoughts of sports cars, designer leather jackets and hot young blondes, or will he be man enough to turn to his family for support during tough times?

I'm not that naïve. I know sports cars and blondes will occupy his mind no matter how old he is, just like hot cars and cute blonde men will always occupy mine. But please shake me if I'm middle aged and looking at men who were born after 1990. When I reach that age, all I can hope for is to be a role model, a confident woman who doesn't need to rely on halter tops to generate conversation.

Trust me, all you so-called men out there. A woman can smell desperation and, even more importantly, Rogaine – from a mile away. If she can't, that's probably because there's an even stronger smell of money that's masking it. And while that kind of relationship might suit you just fine, just know that money doesn't equal respect. It equals status and nice dinners.

It also doesn't equal a lifetime of happiness. We're at different stages in our lives, and when it comes down to it, we might have some stuff in common, but we'll always be one step apart. And let's face it: we'd only be using each other.

During our grandparents' – and even our parents' – eras, large age gaps between spouses were common, and such marriages often worked out. But it's important to remember that the intentions in those cases were very different.

When it comes to love, all the exceptions and clichés are true – age is just a number. But when it comes to older men wanting to recapture the days of their frivolous youth by chasing after younger women, age becomes a barrier that just shouldn't be crossed.

Too many marriages and relationships today are breaking up because of mindless infidelity. It's hard enough to trust men our own age – men who haven't yet reached this desperate stage – but how can we young women have faith in our relationships, and in the sanctity of marriage, when all around us are men who dismiss marriage and commitment, and dismantle their families?

These are the same people who are now chasing us in bars, and I can't run away fast enough.

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1/2 c thinly sliced green onions
3 tblsp rice vinegar
2 tblsp peanut oil
1 tbsp minced peeled fresh ginger
1 tsp oriental sesame oil
1 tsp sugar

Stir sesame seeds in small dry skillet over medium heat until light golden, about 3 minutes. Set aside.

Combine cabbage and green onions in large bowl. Add vinegar, peanut oil, ginger, sesame oil, and sugar and toss to blend. Season to taste with salt and pepper. (Can be prepared 2 hours ahead. Cover and refrigerate. Toss before continuing.)

Sprinkle with sesame seeds and serve.

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My cousin Dora runs a catering business. We're not a large family, so my husband and I try to help out when she needs it. We have been called upon to fill in for a missing waiter, to do deliveries and sometimes even to help with the cooking. We help her whenever we can.

She recently started catering shivah meals. As it happened, I needed to order one recently, so I called her. I heard from the family that the meal was excellent.

Here is what I am upset about: Dora sent me a bill charging me full retail price. I was in shock. After all I've done for her over the years, she had the chutzpah to charge me retail. I called and asked why. She said, "You know what, you're right. I'll give you a 10 per cent discount."

I am still so angry and hurt that I can't bring myself to call her or speak to her again.

Expect Reciprocation

Dear Expect Reciprocation

It sounds like you have a very nice, close family. It also sounds like Dora is completely caught up in her business so much so that she has involved all of you in it.

Dora seems to have lost sight of what's really important: her family. It sounds like her business is her priority and everything else comes second. There is no reason she should have lost money on your order, but she certainly didn't need to profit from it, either. She was thinking about her business first. She doesn't seem to think that way when the tables are turned and she needs your help.

I don't blame you for being hurt, but I also don't think this should turn into a huge feud. You called her and made your point. She heard it, and she now has to live with how you are feeling. If you didn't strike a nerve then, chances are you never will.

Don't give up on your close family. It's not worth it. However, you do have some decisions to make. Will you continue to help Dora with her business, or will you wash your hands of it? Think long and hard, because you have to live comfortably with your family and your decision.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *email: ebtaz@news.com . But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional*

Spreading Judaism

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

The Jewish world needs more *shlichim* (emissaries).

The other night Miriam and I were out for dinner at Dori and Josh's house. Josh's mom, Sheila Cohen (Engel), is a Torontonian who moved to the "Sunshine City" in the heart of Lake Country – Orillia – with her husband, Stanley.

Dori and Josh told us Sheila, a former senior Jewish community volunteer and professional in Toronto, has enlightened segments of Orillia about Judaism. A while ago, Sheila was approached by a local who said she was brought up to be anti-Semitic but now has a real interest in the Jewish people and asked for books to read on the subject. When she returned from a trip to Atlanta, Ga., she showed Sheila a picture of herself standing in front of the city's oldest shul. Sheila was delighted.

Over time I frequently hear similar accounts from people who have chosen to visit or live outside of Toronto or other metropolitan cities in environments with few or no other Jews.

Richard Ekstein frequently travels to Arab countries to sell his company's product.

He tells stories of his journeys and conversations that would often transpire with his hosts. Rick said at some point during his stay in places like the United Arab Emirates, he lets his Jewish guard down and tells his business associates that he is a Jew. Rick states that when he does so, the reception and warmth he receives does not decrease; in fact, his colleagues curiosity is generally piqued.

Geoffrey Clarfield, a development anthropologist who lived in Africa for 25 years overseeing projects in Tanzania and Kenya, has endless experiences with Africans who were interested and curious about our people and Israel. Geoffrey says that while working abroad he was regularly the only Jew for miles around and instinctively became a quiet emissary on behalf of world Jewry, conscious of his "Jewish way," and giving subtle explanations of Israel's actions.

Many Jews living in small-town Canada, Cornwall, Saskatoon, St. John or Flin Flon are appointed by fate to characterize the Jewish people, standing up for us when the situation calls for, or explaining our customs such as the Passover Seder and that "strange bread" we eat.

I grew up in Kitchener, a community formerly known as Little Berlin. Although it had its share of anti-Semites, I have dozens of memories of people asking kind-heartedly why I wore a kippah or the meaning of the Chanukah lights. As a child, my parents would invite our teachers from Shepherd Public School, such as Miss Babcock, to join us for Shabbat. They would listen carefully to my father and mother's explanation of the Day of Rest, Jewish law and stories of the Holocaust.

As Jews we have consistently faced the dark side of humanity in the shtetls of Poland and anti-Semitic Canada during World War II. It was prudent to secure ourselves from the evil of hatred insulating our families from the baton-spinning thugs of Christie Pits and the white-collar Jew haters on the boards of golf and social clubs.

Today, however, Jews from Guelph, Thunder Bay and Kenya will tell you this is a good time to aggressively introduce ourselves to the many inquisitive and friendly non-Jews who far outnumber those who would see us destroyed.

We need more *shlichim* to strengthen our position in the world by responding positively and thoughtfully to the wonderment of gentiles who genuinely want to know what it means to be a Jew. A lesson in how to do this well can be learned from those Jews who make homes in faraway lands, with few Jews – like Orillia, Ont.

If you have such experiences, please e-mail me. I will print excerpts in upcoming articles.

avrum@veahavta.org. SUDAN?

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This Week

National

No Jewish MPs in government for first time in 26 years. *Page 3*

Group raises awareness of drugs among Jewish teens. *Page 14*

Arts & Travel

A Toronto rabbi has links to Lennon's famous peace song. *Page 42*

CJN Profile

David Mirvish mounts musical *Lord of the Rings*. *Page 45*

Sports & Leisure

Israeli skaters finish fifth at Euros. *Page 50*

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Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

A Hamas supporter and his son celebrate the terrorist group's victory last week in elections for the Palestinian Legislative Council. *[Isranet photo]*

Harper stands firm on Hamas

'Must renounce any use of terrorism'

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

He won't become prime minister until next Monday, but Stephen Harper has already waded into the roiling waters of Middle East politics.

At a news conference last Thursday following the shocking victory of Hamas in the Palestinian elections, Canada's prime minister-designate affirmed his support for Israel and suggested his government will not recognize Hamas if it continues to practise terrorism.

"We've always maintained that we support a secure Israel and a democratic Palestine," Harper said at his first news conference since winning a minority government in the Jan. 23 election.

"But for a nation to be truly democratic, that nation must renounce any use of terrorism," he added.

Harper said he would have more to say about the Hamas victory after he and his cabinet are sworn in on Feb. 6.

But he had much to say in a Jan. 2 conference call with Jewish leaders on where he stands on issues of concern to the Jewish community.

Harper said the Tories have "led the charge in the past couple of years to have Hamas listed as a terrorist organization, and we experienced some significant and unexpected resistance from the [Liberals] in that, so we have taken a very hard line on Hamas."

The Liberal government did not outlaw Hamas and Islamic Jihad as a terrorist organizations until 2002.

Harper called the advocacy of terror and the establishment of a stable democracy "incompatible, and we will have to see an evolution for that to be an acceptable situation."

He noted that the Palestine Liberation Organization once advocated terrorism but tended to "shift away from that position with maturity."

Continued on page 23

See page 26

Philanthropist buried on Mount of Olives

By MORDECHAI BEN-DAT
Editor

Andrea Bronfman
[file photo]

JERUSALEM — More than 500 people gathered last Friday morning under a white canvas tent in Gan Hashoshanim, the Garden of Roses, a small verdant park in the Talbieh neighbourhood of Jerusalem, to bid a last farewell to Andrea (Andy) Bronfman.

The 60-year-old philanthropist, community activist and wife of Canadian philanthropist Charles Bronfman died shortly after being hit by a taxi on Jan. 23, while walking her dog near her Upper East Side home in Manhattan.

As rain fell intermittently, former Israeli cabinet minister Rabbi Michael Melchior led the poignant 60-minute memorial service, in which a number of friends and family members eulogized Bronfman.

"To speak about Andy in the past is impossible," Rabbi Melchior said. "Thousands of people received hope in their lives because of Andy."

Among the many public causes in Israel to which Bronfman had dedicated her life was Taglit birthright israel, the highly successful program that brings Jewish young people to Israel, which she and Charles co-founded with Michael Steinhardt; the Karev Foundation (CRB Foundation), which deals with social and educational projects; and AIDA, the Association of Israel's Decorative Arts, whose purpose was to give young Israeli artists an opportunity to showcase their works throughout the world.

The park where the memorial ceremony was conducted was established by Bronfman's parents many years ago. Her sister, Marcia (Kappy) Flanders, said Bronfman had taken over its cultivation after their parents died.

Continued on page 36

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IDF prepares for violence in Hebron evictions **... page 36**

The News in Brief

CANADA

New Museum Cash

WINNIPEG — The Asper Foundation said last week that it's chipping in an additional $12 million to the Canadian Museum of Human Rights project. The foundation had already pledged $8 million to the museum, slated to open in Winnipeg in 2010, bringing its total donation to $20 million. About $60 million in private funds have been raised so far for the $311-million project, which was the brainchild of the late media mogul Israel Asper. Ottawa has committed up to $100 million to the museum, while Manitoba has earmarked up to 10 per cent of the cost, and the City of Winnipeg has pledged $20 million.

WORLD

Brit Milahs OK: Panel

DUBLIN — An Irish government committee recommended that circumcisions carried out by mohels should be permitted to continue. All other cultural and religious circumcisions should be performed by trained surgeons under the direction of the health authorities, the panel ruled. The recommendations appear in a report to the Irish health minister, who set up the committee to address ethical and medical concerns raised by circumcision practices in Ireland after a one-month-old Nigerian boy died following a home circumcision in 2003. Outside the small Jewish and Muslim communities, elective circumcision is rare in Ireland.

OU Tackles Tuition

NEW YORK — The Orthodox Union (OU) has launched an initiative aimed at helping North American Jewish parents pay for day-school and yeshiva tuition. The plan includes the group's participation in a Feb. 14 rally in Albany, N.Y., that will press for making educational expenses for private-school tuition deductible on New York state taxes. It also aims to change how schools are run, as well as develop fundraising, increase access to government funds and increase partnerships within the Jewish community, the OU said.

Demjanjuk Appeals

CLEVELAND — Ex-concentration camp guard John Demjanjuk last week appealed a recent deportation decision against him by Chief U.S. Immigration Judge Michael Creppy, who rejected his contention that he would be tortured if returned to Ukraine. Demjanjuk, 85, was a guard at the Sobibor, Majdanek and Flossenburg camps, but lied about his past when he applied to enter the United States in 1952. The Cleveland resident was acquitted in Israel in 1993 of being "Ivan the Terrible," a notorious Nazi guard.

Shul's Roof Collapses

NEW YORK — A roof collapsed Jan. 22 at the historic First Roumanian-American Congregation on New York City's Lower East Side. It was unclear whether the 150-year-old building could be salvaged, though shul leaders have vowed to rebuild. No one was injured and the shul's Torahs are reportedly safe.

Bread Backlash

MINSK — The production of a new kosher bread in a city in Belarus spurred a string of anti-Semitic newspaper articles. A recent editorial in the *Mogilev Register*, a local daily, warned people of the Russian Orthodox faith to avoid kosher "products in the same way they keep away from idol sacrifice," claiming the blood of sacrificed animals is used in kosher rituals. The *Evening Mogilev*, another daily, said the act of making food kosher is "sacrilegious and anti-Christian."

Men Charged

PARIS — Two men were charged Jan. 20 in connection with the April 2004 desecration of a Jewish cemetery in eastern France. The two men, 36 and 27, allegedly scrawled anti-Semitic and neo-Nazi phrases and symbols on 127 graves in Herrlisheim. Police said one man has neo-Nazi connections. The desecration, for which a former member of the far-right National Front was found guilty in 2004, was apparently timed to coincide with the anniversary of Hitler's death on April 30, 1945.

Ukrainian Officials Blast Private University

KYIV — Ukrainian officials have condemned the anti-Semitic activities of the country's largest private university.

On national TV on Jan. 23, Boris Tarasyuk, Ukraine's foreign minister condemned the activities at the Interregional Academy of Personnel Management, or MAUP.

"I think that all positive forces in Ukraine must evaluate the activities of MAUP. There is no place for anti-Semitism and xenophobia in Ukraine," Tarasyuk said on air. In a statement, Ukraine's education ministry asked Ukrainian law enforcement bodies to analyze the extent to which the school's actions can be prosecuted or punished.

North American Jewish leaders praised the actions.

MAUP has been responsible for a slew of anti-Semitic publications, and in a recent statement, school officials asked the United Nations to shut down the State of Israel.

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On behalf of the Board and the Weizmann Canada family, we express our sincere condolences to Charles Bronfman and Family on the sad and untimely passing of

ANDREA BRONFMAN ע"ה

May her memory provide comfort to you in this difficult time.

H. Thomas Beck
Chairman of the Board

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National President

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The Canadian Jewish news

Vol. XXXVI, No. 6 (1,733)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation: 38,949 copies.
Total paid circulation: 38,099 copies

CCNA verified circulation Sept. 7, 2005

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada: $35.95, 1 yr. incl. GST
$63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST
U.S.A.: $100 U.S funds, 1 yr
All other countries $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr.

Postmaster: Please return 29Bs and changes of address to Toronto office

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
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No Jewish MPs in new government

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

While Canadian Jews mull over the impact of the Conservative victory in the Jan. 23 federal election – including the hope it will mean warmer relations with Israel – they are also realizing there will be no Jewish MPs on the government benches for the first time since the brief administration of Tory prime minister Joe Clark.

Jewish representation in the House of Commons will decline from six to four MPs – all of them Liberals: Irwin Cotler (Mount-Royal), Susan Kadis (Thornhill), Raymonde Folco (Laval-Les-Isles) and Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre).

Richard Marceau, who represented the Quebec City-area riding of Charlesbourg for the Bloc Québécois and who converted to Judaism last summer, lost to his Conservative rival, while Jacques Saada, who had served in Paul Martin's cabinet, was defeated in Brossard-La Prairie by the BQ candidate *(see adjacent story)*.

Non-Jewish Liberal incumbents in ridings with high concentrations of Jewish voters were re-elected. And all Jewish Conservative candidates were soundly defeated: Neil Drabkin in Mount Royal, Sam Goldstein in Trinity-Spadina and Michael Mostyn in York Centre.

While "it is important to have voices representing Jewish and other ethnocultural groups, you don't have to be Jewish to bring forth the issues," Kadis told *The CJN*.

Liberals, she said, will continue to make the case for the Jewish community's concerns as the official Opposition.

"I do not believe that the lack of Jewish representation on the government side is going to markedly affect issues with respect to the Jewish community or Canada-Israel relations," said Ira Robinson, professor of Judaic studies at Montreal's Concordia University.

"From everything I've heard from the Conservative Party, particularly from [foreign affairs critic] Stockwell Day, I do not think Canada-Israel relations will at all be adversely affected," Robinson told *The CJN*.

Canadian Jews may indeed be buoyed by the past staunchly pro-Israel statements of such Conservatives as Day, Jason Kenney, and, on occasion, leader Stephen Harper himself.

The Jewish community "has a good friend in the Conservative Party," Harper told representatives of the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) in a Jan. 2 conference call.

"I was raised by my father to recognize both the contribution that Jews have made to Canadian life and also to recognize that being Jewish in Canada has not always been an easy path," he told Jewish leaders, including Canadian

Continued on page 5

Marceau, Saada defeated in Quebec

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

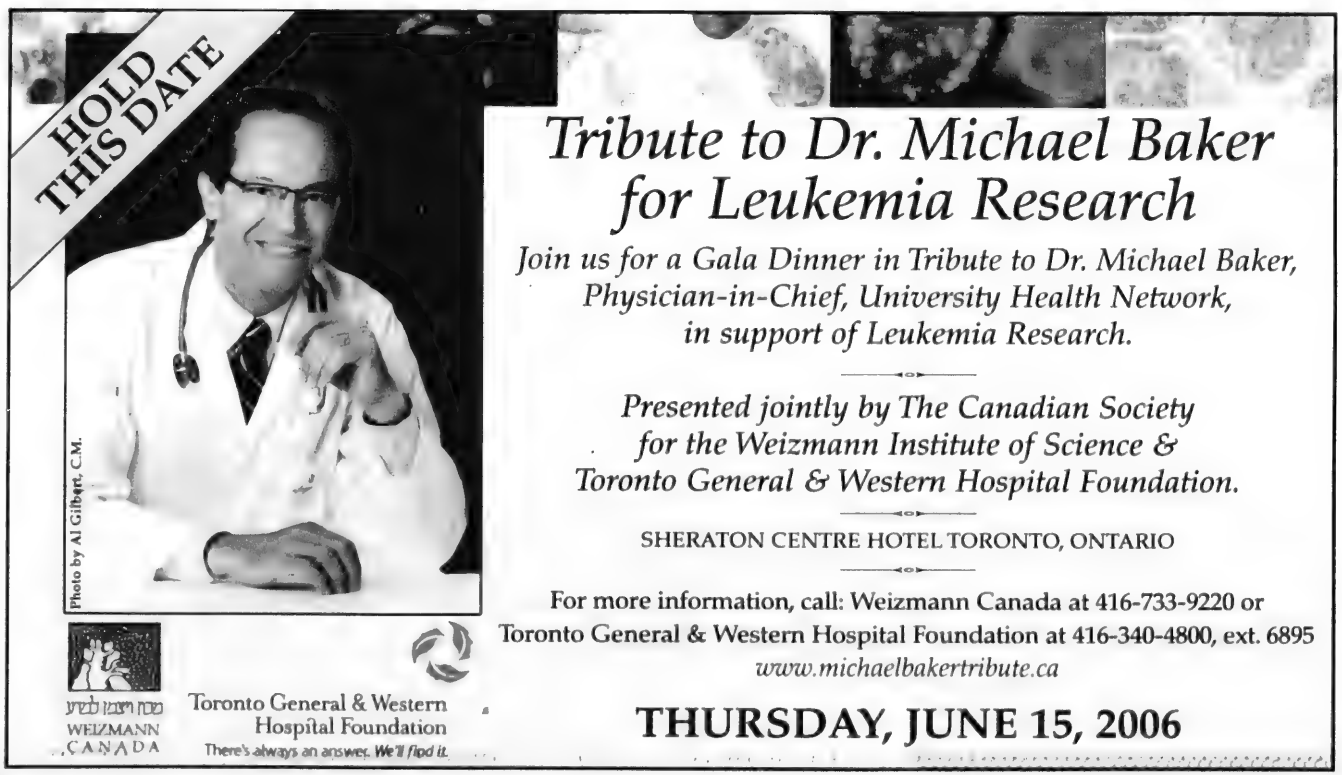
Two of the four Jewish MPs from Quebec went down to defeat in last week's federal election: cabinet minister Jacques Saada and the Bloc Québécois's Richard Marceau, who converted to Judaism last summer.

Saada, first elected in 1997, lost in Brossard-La Prairie, on Montreal's South Shore, to the Bloc's Marcel Lussier by about 1,100 votes, while Marceau, also in Parliament since 1997, was beaten by 1,400 votes by Conservative Daniel Petit in the Quebec City riding of Charlesbourg-Haute-Saint-Charles, which Marceau won by 12,000 votes in 2004.

Saada, 58, is the outgoing minister of the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the regions of Quebec, as well as the minister responsible for the Francophonie. He had previously served as government house leader.

The Muslim vote became an issue during Saada's campaign, when the online Montreal Muslim News.net

Continued on page 6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Due to an error, The Director of Staff at Camp Shalom was omitted in last week's Camps section directory.

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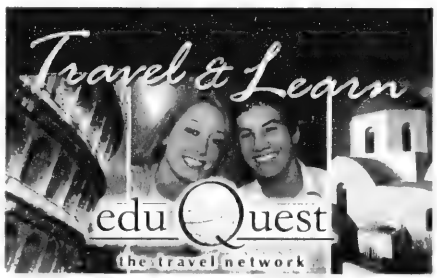

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Herzliya conference (2)

Since its inception six years ago, the high-profile Herzliya conference on the balance of Israel's national security, organized by the Institute for Policy and Strategy at the Interdisciplinary Center (IDC) Herzliya, has concluded with a much-publicized, much-anticipated address by the prime minister of Israel.

From the editor's desk

In the absence this year of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who lay in Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem, unable to awake from a medically induced coma, acting prime minister Ehud Olmert delivered the closing address.

The security precautions that accompany an appearance in Israel by the country's prime minister are a thing to behold. He is enfolded by his personnel the way a cocoon enfolds a butterfly. Entirely.

A very large cadre of specialized personnel descended upon the venue – in this case, the Daniel Hotel in Herzliya – some 24 hours before his scheduled appearance, to begin securing the place at all the points of access and egress.

By the time the acting prime minister arrived at the hotel the next day, the building was in "lock-down" format. Each of the more than 300 guests invited to hear the prime minister's address had to pass through rigorous, airport-like, individual inspections before entering the room where the prime minister was to speak. The mild personal irritation that arises from the inconvenience of having to submit to the security procedures gives way to a larger feeling of respect for the people and the society that go to such great lengths to protect the leader of their government.

Olmert's speech last Tuesday was his first major policy address as acting prime minister. There was a triple-edged poignancy to its context. Though alive, Ariel Sharon was now no longer part of the political scene. The Palestinian elections for the national assembly were being held the very next day. And Israeli elections were scheduled for two months hence on March 28.

Speaking slowly and deliberately, and looking directly into the television camera, Olmert read from a prepared text. The 30-minute speech was a statement to the nation and to the Palestinians.

At the outset and at the conclusion, Olmert paid tribute to Prime Minister Sharon. And, significantly, as a way of immediately establishing the bona fides of the policies he would shortly enunciate, he also cited the teachings of Ze'ev Jabotinsky, the ideological father of Israel's political right wing.

"Ze'ev Jabotinsky defined the importance of a Jewish majority. 'The term Jewish nation is absolutely clear: it means a Jewish majority. With this, Zionism began, and it is the basis of its existence.'"

And then Olmert presented the essential point of his address.

"The existence of a Jewish majority… cannot be maintained with the continued control over the Palestinian population in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. We firmly stand by that historic right of the people of Israel to the entire Land of Israel. Every hill in Samaria and every valley in Judea is part of our historic homeland. We do not forget this, not even for one moment.

"However, the choice between the desire to allow every Jew to live anywhere in the Land of Israel and the existence of the State of Israel as a Jewish country obligates relinquishing parts of the Land of Israel… In order to ensure the existence of a Jewish homeland, we will not be able to continue ruling over the territories in which the majority of the Palestinian population lives."

Olmert described in general terms how he intended to secure the existence of the Jewish homeland, making reference to the need to adhere to the precise obligations of the U.S., EU., UN and Russian-sponsored road map peace plan; to have clear boundaries between Israel and any Palestinian state; and to ensure Jerusalem will forever be the capital of the Jewish state.

He also appealed to the Palestinians, who in less than 12 hours would be voting for a new Palestinian Authority government.

"In 1947, the Palestinians rejected the offer to establish a country. History has provided them with another opportunity to establish an independent state. The fulfilment of this opportunity involves relinquishing some of their national dreams, just as we have relinquished some of our national dreams.

"We are interested in neighbourly relations which are good, productive and progressive. We support the establishment of a modern, democratic Palestinian state that respects civil rights and is economically prosperous. Their welfare is our welfare; their well-being is our well-being; their stability is our stability.

"I hope that the results will allow the elected government under the leadership of Mahmoud Abbas to move forward towards a settlement."

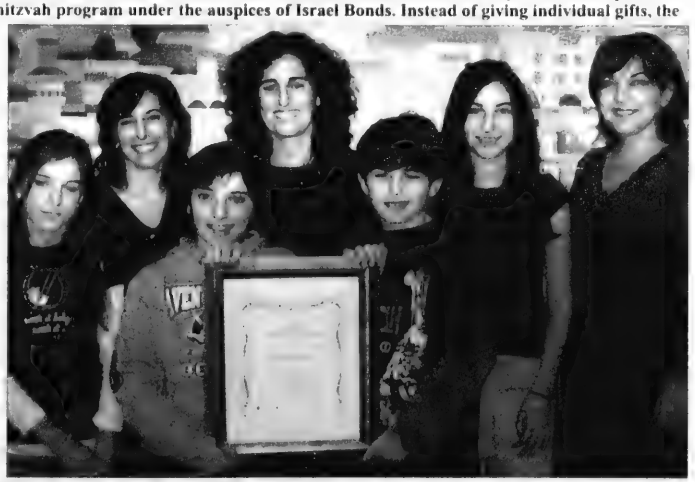
A day and a half after the acting prime minister delivered these remarks, the government of Prime Minister Ahmed Qureia resigned. President Mahmoud Abbas' ruling party, Fatah, lost the election. Hamas – religiously, ideologically and politically committed to the elimination of a sovereign Jewish state in the Middle East – won 76 of the 132 seats in the PA legislature.

The Palestinian electorate turned a deaf ear to the pleas of Israel's acting prime minister. In doing so, it appears, they may have also turned a blind eye, once again, to the beckoning path of independence and prosperity.

—MBD

See]N

STRONG BONDS: For the last three years, Grade 7 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School have participated in a bar/bat mitzvah program under the auspices of Israel Bonds. Instead of giving individual gifts, the parents of program participants purchase an Israel bond for each child. This year, Bialik parents purchased $75,000 in bonds. Pictured at a celebration lunch are, from left, Greta Epstein; Laura Orczy of Israel Bonds; Paul Sladovnik; Bialik bond program coordinator Rosemary Greisman; Amir Fleischman; Debra Torok; and Raquel Sarvatti Benzacar of Israel Bonds.



Harper calls comments from Iran 'unacceptable'

Continued from page 3

Jewish Congress president Ed Morgan and Marc Gold, chair of the Canada-Israel Committee.

He expressed concern about the spread of anti-Semitism "under the guise of opposition to policies of the State of Israel," adding that he's "quite troubled by a different public discourse on anti-Semitism.

"There is an intellectual discourse which tends to justify some types of anti-Semitism that has become more prevalent on campuses and other places in the last couple of decades or so," he said.

"I'm deeply troubled when I see modern forms of anti-Semitism that seek to legitimize something that I thought maybe some years ago we were starting to put to bed," Harper continued. "I'm tremendously appreciative of the contribution that Jews have made to Canada and look forward to dialoguing with, not just with the organizations, but with all Jewish Canadians on a range of public policy issues in the future."

Those issues include considering changing public policy to recognize anti-Semitism, and other particular forms of intolerance, as unique. Harper said he's also "open to [the] suggestion" of allocating federal funds to help at-risk communities, including Jews, to upgrade security at communal institutions and buildings.

Harper called the anti-Semitic statements of Iran's president "completely unacceptable and indeed highly shocking… I don't think we can overstate the degree to which we should be worried about Iran."

On the Mideast, the prime minister-designate praised the decision of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon to quit the Gaza Strip as "an important step, one our party supported and one I believe the State of Israel should be congratulated on."

He said Tories would continue working toward the implementation of the "road map" peace plan, adding that a resolution to the Mideast conflict "is going to ultimately require a territorial compromise on both sides."

As well, a Conservative government "will not support resolutions at the UN that are aimed specifically at Israel or designed to create a bias in the resolution of the Middle East conflict – and I think we have a pretty consistent record on that."

He said his government would place more emphasis on relations with key allies and like-minded nations such as Israel than on the views of the United Nations.

"Israel is the only [full]-fledged, developed democracy in that part of the world, and… we share a unique relationship with Israel that we believe all freedom oriented, democratic countries should share in."

Historian Michael Brown, a professor emeritus in the Jewish studies program at York University, believes a Conservative government will not necessarily be more supportive of Israel or reject more anti-Israel resolutions at the United Nations.

"There's no reason to think that once in office, the Tories will act differently than the Liberals," Brown told JTA.

"That's a historical view, because the last time the Tories made a political campaign promise about Israel [in 1979], they were going to move the Canadian embassy to Jerusalem. They were not in power more than a couple of months before they decided they weren't going to do it."

But there is an "expectation" that the Conservatives will take a more forceful stand on "encouraging the kind of reforms that would allow the UN to fulfill the objectives it was initially designed to address," said Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee. That includes moves to "end the annual cycle of Israel-bashing" at the world body.

"The Jewish community is no longer monolithic," said Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress. "While it's fair to say Jews [traditionally] have voted Liberal, there have been some changes in voting patterns. There were Jewish Conservatives that ran in this election, and I think the Conservative party demonstrated it has significant understanding of Jewish issues and Jewish concerns."

In a statement, B'nai Brith Canada said it intends "to hold our politicians to account for promises made and policies articulated during the election period."

– With files from JTA

Neville wins third term in Winnipeg riding

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — Against the backdrop of polls suggesting she might be in trouble, Anita Neville, the Liberal MP for Winnipeg South Centre, was easily re-elected to a third term by a 3,000-vote margin over Conservative challenger Michael Richards.

Winnipeg South Centre is the federal riding with the largest number of Jewish voters in the city. The 2001 census reported that Jewish residents in Crescentwood, River Heights and Tuxedo – the areas that comprise much of Winnipeg South Centre – number about 7,600. Neville has represented the riding since 2000.

In the last Parliament, Neville was parliamentary secretary to the minister of heritage and culture, and she was also responsible for the status of women. She was the only Jewish MP from Manitoba in the last house and was the only Jewish candidate running in the province this time out.

In Parliament, she has been a strong advocate for Israel and Jewish causes. She co-chairs the group Liberal Parliamentarians for Israel and was involved in the drive to have Israel's Magen David Adom accepted into the International Red Cross organization.

In her election night speech to supporters, after it became clear she had won, she thanked the many volunteers who worked for her re-election. "It wasn't easy," she said. "And now we still have a lot of work to do."

She expressed her regret that Paul Martin was not going to be returning as prime minister. "We accomplished much under his leadership," she said.

"I look forward to continuing working for the people of Winnipeg South Centre and promoting the values we all cherish. We will continue to make a difference."

In the riding of Kildonan-St. Paul, which includes most of north Winnipeg on both sides of the Red River, Conservative incumbent Joy Smith easily won re-election, defeating her Liberal opponent, Terry Duguid, by about 3,000 votes.

Kildonan-St. Paul is the other riding in Winnipeg with a sizeable Jewish population. Garden City, on the west side of the river, was reported to have a Jewish population of 2,535 according to the last census, with another 1,200 Jewish residents living west of the river elsewhere in the riding.

The contest in Kildonan-St. Paul was a rematch for the two candidates. In the 2004 election, Smith, a former member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, squeaked out a 275-vote victory over Duguid, a former city council and mayoral candidate, in a riding that had traditionally gone Liberal or New Democratic.

For many years, the district – known as Winnipeg North – was represented by a Jew, the late David Orlikow of the NDP. He was defeated in 1988 by Liberal Rey Pagtakhan, who held the seat for the next 16 years.

Prior to the last election, the riding was split, and the eastern portion was merged with a more Conservative area east of the river. Pagtakhan ran in the western half of the riding and lost to NDP MP Judy Wasylycia-Leis, a strong supporter of Israel who was also easily re-elected this time around.

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Election 2006

Cotler returned in Mount Royal with large majority

Continued from page 3

published a posting from a constituent urging his co-religionists to not vote for Saada because he is a self-declared Zionist.

The riding has 3,800 Muslims, and Lussier received a public endorsement from the anti-Israel group PAJU (Palestinian and Jewish Unity).

Saada, who was re-elected in the riding by 2,500 votes in 2004, maintained before the election that there was no erosion of the strong support he had received in the past from the riding's Muslim community.

He did not return repeated messages from *The CJN* at his office and home.

Marceau, 35, officially the justice critic, was the Bloc's point man on Jewish affairs, co-chairing the Canada-Israel Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group and sponsoring the bill establishing a national Holocaust remembrance day. In November, he wrote an op-ed article in the *Ottawa Citizen* describing himself as a "pro-Palestinian Zionist." He deplored that Israel is "consistently held to a higher standard than other countries." The article drew criticism from pro-Palestinian activists in Quebec.

Marceau told *The CJN*, however, that no one should be left with the impression that his loss had anything to do with his position on Israel or his conversion.

"That is not at all the case. In fact, I had the strongest showing of all the Bloc candidates in the Quebec City region."

He described Quebec City as having a "micro-climate, that is quite peculiar" in its political tastes. "Thanks to the media, especially radio, the Conservatives were able to relay their message."

Marceau is married to Toronto native Lori Beckerman.

As expected, Justice Minister Irwin Cotler was returned to office, winning 65 per cent of ballots cast, one of the highest majorities in Canada, but down from Cotler's 75 per cent in 2004. Turnout in his riding of Mount Royal was low, however, at under 50 per cent.

Cotler, 65, first elected in a 1999 byelection, told *The CJN* he will stay on indefinitely, likely serving as justice critic.

Raymonde Folco, 65, was re-elected in Laval-Les Iles, one of only two ridings off the Island of Montreal to go Liberal, with a comfortable edge of 3,300 votes over Bloc candidate Christiane Pichette. Folco, a backbencher, has been in Parliament since 1997. Only about 3.6 per cent of the riding is Jewish.

Cotler's Conservative challenger and second-place finisher Neil Drabkin said he was delighted with the more than 6,000 votes he received compared to Cotler's 22,000-plus.

"The Conservatives have doubled their votes in Mount Royal from 2004 to 18 per cent. That's the best showing of any riding in the west end of Montreal, and Mount Royal is the safest Liberal seat in the country," he said.

Drabkin, 45, said he believes he made inroads among "enlightened" Jews in the riding, where Jews represent about 35 per cent of the electorate. The rest he chided for not being able to break the Liberal "habit."

"I will play as a active role as possible with the new government to make sure the agenda of the Jewish community is advanced," he said without elaborating. "Nothing has been decided."

Drabkin, now an immigration lawyer, was an aide to cabinet minister Gerry Weiner through the Mulroney years, and ran three times previously since 1993 for the Progressive Conservatives and Canadian Alliance.

He criticized the Liberals under Martin for being "unresponsive to the Jewish community and trampling on Israel... I'm quite confident that the safety and security of Israel will be reflected in our foreign policy."

Cotler said he looks forward to pursuing his priorities in opposition, including such foreign policy matters as the threat posed by Iran, the genocide in Darfur, Sudan, and United Nations reform, as well as proposed legislation that died with the election call related to women's rights, legal aid, and cruelty to animals.

Cotler said he did not believe he would become restless as an opposition member. "There is a lot of work to do. I think we can be effective, and I intend to be very active."

Cotler said he had not thought about the consequences of the new Harper cabinet being without any Jewish members. "If the government pursues the right causes and agenda, it will not make a difference. I never saw myself as a Jewish representative, but as the MP for all of Mount Royal and minister for all of Canada."

He said he found this campaign his most satisfying because of the ethnic diversity of his volunteers, coming from the Filipino, Vietnamese, Sri Lankan and other communities.

"When the historians look back on the 18 months of the Liberal minority government, they will see that we left an effective legacy, despite the three-pronged opposition attack...We were never really able to get out from under the sponsorship affair because of the opposition's ongoing indictment, and they would not take no for an answer, even when the Gomery report cleared the government of any blame or liability," he said.

"They never allowed us to really showcase, not what we wanted to do, but what, in fact, we had got done."

Cotler did give Conservative leader Stephen Harper credit for a "focused, disciplined and effective campaign."

In the riding of Outremont, the Jewish community apparently helped give outgoing Transport Minister Jean Lapierre the votes he needed for a victory by about 2,500 votes over the Bloc's Jacques Leonard. Alex Werzberger, president of the Coalition of Outremont Hassidic Organizations, said the community was split 80-20 between the Liberals and Conservatives, respectively. "In fact, we may have given the Liberals more votes than in 2004 because the turnout was higher this time," he said.

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Head Office.
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Elections in Canada

Canadian voters last week changed our federal government. Stephen Harper and the Conservative party, which he leads, won the people's mandate and constitutionally sanctioned trust to form the new government.

Given the distribution of party seats in the newly configured House of Commons, however, Harper's task may prove to be especially challenging. Even if the NDP becomes a coalition ally, the two parties do not control a majority of seats. Yet, with inter-party goodwill as a governing ethos – we hope – and the best interests of the widest possible number of Canadians as the governing imperative, the federalist parties in the House should be able to act co-operatively and constructively, as necessary, on an issue-by-issue basis.

That the prime minister is from the West, in itself, augurs well. It is a possible harbinger of reduced western alienation and increased western invigoration in the Canadian federalist compact.

That the Conservative party won representation in Quebec also augurs well. The party can truly claim national representation in the House of Commons. Moreover, it may lead the way to further federalist political inroads in Quebec in the future.

And that the separatist forces in Quebec were reduced in number of seats and in popular support is also a good result. As long as its sustaining purpose is the separation of Quebec from Canada, the Bloc Québécois cannot be a fitting ally for government legislative initiatives. We therefore urge the prime minister-designate not to undertake any legislative coalitions with the Bloc.

We congratulate Stephen Harper and the Conservative party on their victory and wish for them the wisdom to govern our highly regionalized country with wisdom, prudence, compassion and courage.

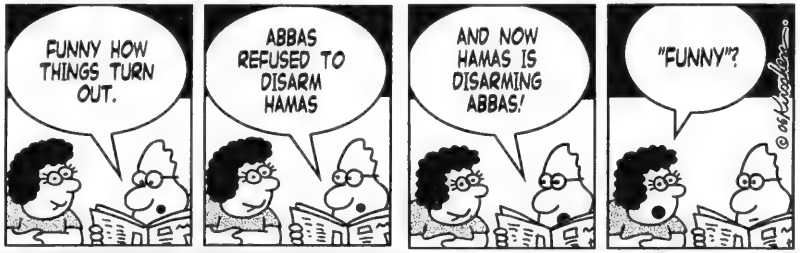
And in 'Palestine'

Two days after Canadians voted, so did Palestinians. They too voted for a change in government. But the results may soon prove to be a disaster for the Palestinians themselves. The terrorist group Hamas won a resounding victory, capturing 76 of the 132 seats in the Palestinian Legislative Assembly.

The future of Palestinian-Israel relations is murky. But one thing is for certain, even without bright light: Israel cannot and will not sit at the table with any party publicly, proudly and, most tellingly, religiously, opposed to the existence of a sovereign Jewish state in the Middle East. Given that Hamas' murderous designs upon Israel are theologically based, there is hardly room to be optimistic about any imminent change in its views of the Jewish state. We must now brace for the next developments in the Palestinian Authority.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• Rabbi Z. Aaron Grossbaum, executive vice-president of the Lubavitch Youth Organization, announced that a 24,000-square-foot Lubavitch community centre would be built in a new development in Vaughan, in southern York Region, that was expected to become predominantly Jewish.



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Harper is not 'an appeasing wimp'

Canada's prime minister-designate Stephen Harper has always spoken out emphatically against United Nations resolutions that are anti-Israel. He also takes the Iranian threat to Israel and the world seriously. Canada's new federal government will be more proactive in countering this threat. As his is a minority government, I hope that the other parties in Parliament will not force Harper to be silent on these matters. He will not sit back and be an appeasing wimp.

Harry Grunstein
Hampstead, Que.

* * *

What would Bubbie think?

Yasher koach to Israeli researchers on their extensive report and impressive findings, as reported in the article "40% of Ashkenazim share 'founding mother,'" (*CJN*, Jan. 19)

Now that we have scientifically determined that so many of us are direct descendants of four women from way back when, let us all learn tolerance for our "cousins." I am, of course, speaking of the intolerance that various sects of Jews today show toward one another. We should attempt to put aside our differing opinions and practices and think of how "Bubbie" would have wanted it!

Sarah Turk
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Sticking together

Jews in our community must admit that, although there are highly observant, Orthodox Jews and secular Jews, and many in between, one fact remains: *we are all Jews* ("The importance of sticking together," *CJN*, Jan. 19). And it has always been this way. Furthermore, anyone who points their finger and says, "Well, you're not very Jewish," might also be considered to be "not very Jewish" by others who are even more observant then the ones pointing their fingers. Let's remember that secular Jews need observant Jews to carry the ritual torch. But observant Jews need secular Jews just as badly, to intercede on their behalf with the gentile world – a world they have little contact with. It's a shame that Jay Solomon has been forced to date outside the faith, but it's clear that observant Jews have, for all intents and purposes, not assisted non-observant Jews in that they have not provided them with any social networks in which single Jews might meet.

Bob Natanson
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

UJA Federation supports birthright israel

On behalf of the 99,000 Taglit-birthright israel alumni from 45 countries around the world, we are proud that Leo Davids has noted Taglit-birthright israel as an example of an organization whose strong communal leadership uses new and innovative methods to resolve the problems faced by world Jewry – namely, population decline ("World Jewry today: a demographic snapshot," *CJN*, Jan. 5).

As Davids points out, while the Jewish population in Israel continues to grow, the population of Diaspora Jews is steadily declining. It is with this in mind that our leadership has continued to develop new methods to attract both participants and donors and inform them of the incredible importance of uniting Jewish youth through a trip to the Holy Land.

Over the past six years, we have sent more than 99,000 Jewish young adults on 10-day, all-expense-paid trips to Israel. Not only do these trips enable participants to build intensely personal relationships with other Diaspora Jews, the trips also give participants the chance to interact with Israelis (nearly 20,000 Israelis, mostly soldiers from elite units, have participated in the trips).

As we approach the arrival of the 100,000th participant in Israel this summer, we acknowledge that Taglit-birthright israel's accomplishments would not be possible without the support of our partners: the Government of Israel, private philanthropists and Jewish communities around the world (North American Jewish federations through the United Jewish Communities, Keren Hayesod and the Jewish Agency for Israel).

Contrary to what Davids implied, and what he failed to point out, is that UJA Federation of Greater Toronto has been a steadfast and enthusiastic supporter of the program since its inception six years ago. In addition, the Toronto federation and other federations across Canada have gone above and beyond their investment in the trips and created vibrant pre-trip and post-trip programming for the thousands of Canadian trip participants, most of which are run through new and innovative mediums and programs. We are proud of our partnership with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the entire UIA Canada system.

Shimshon Shoshani
Taglit-birthright israel

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Volunteer at Zimbabwe hospital experiences Judaism profoundly

By SARAH ZELCER

"Sarah, can you sing *Shalom Rav* for me?" I looked up. The request had come from Pedrinah Thistle, a local Shona woman living at the Howard Hospital, a small Salvation Army hospital in rural Zimbabwe.

We were standing in Pedrinah's kitchen, making dinner. I stopped for a moment and thought back to my summer camp days and I began to sing: "Shalom rav/ Al Yisrael amcha/ Tasim leolam." Then I stopped because I forgot the second half. Pedrinah's sweet, clear voice filled in the gap: "Ki ata hu melech adon/ Lekhol hashalom."

I looked at her, eyes wide, and she laughed, explaining that she had been taught by a volunteer who had travelled on behalf of Ve'ahavta: The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee to the hospital some years before.

Since I began working with Ve'ahavta three years ago, I have curiously experienced my Judaism at profound levels in some of the most unlikely places. At times, it has happened while I was driving volunteers home from our Homework Club in Regent Park in Ve'ahavta's van, which is covered in Torahs, hearts, and the phrase "Repairing the World." My heart always dances when I get a thumbs up from strangers or realize that the person in the vehicle next to me at the light just got honked because he was lost in reading the side of our colourful tikkun-olam mobile.

At other times, it has happened in the middle of the remote Amerindian rainforest of Guyana, in villages with names like Waramadong, Kamarang, Kako or Jawalla. It is Erev Shabbat and a Ve'ahavta team of doctors, nurses, lab technologists, pharmacist, physiotherapist and social worker are squinting over a small travel siddur as the sun sets, while making kiddush over kosher grape juice.

This time, I experienced my Judaism profoundly in Zimbabwe, in a rural Salvation Army mission hospital where my colleague Geoffrey Clarfield and I spent three weeks last December.

Zimbabwe is a country in turmoil. It is magnificent, beautiful and seemingly lush during this rainy season, but is suffering the social and economic devastation of disease and poverty. Foreign aid has dwindled in Zimbabwe because of its political leadership. Within these challenging circumstances, Ve'ahavta and the Salvation Army have managed to maintain a committed and productive partnership.

Ve'ahavta has worked in Zimbabwe since 1998. Over the years, our support, partly through the Canadian government's Canadian International Development Agency and our donors in the Jewish community, has transformed the hospital from a palliative facility devastated by the AIDS pandemic to an institution that is quickly becoming a model in Zimbabwe for its treatment of patients who are infected with HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis. The Jewish community, through Ve'ahavta, has supported initiatives focusing on prevention of transmission of HIV from mother to child, as well as contributing a steady flow of supplies and providing volunteer personnel to Zimbabwe.

Sunset in the countryside

Rural home and sky

Canadian Jews have been travelling to Howard Hospital through Ve'ahavta since our joint partnership was born, lending their skills and expertise to patients. The 144-bed hospital is solely responsible for health care for approximately 250,000 living in the rural farmland that surrounds its compound.

Sarah Zelcer, left, and Elizabeth Mufuka

Before we left, I was experiencing high anxiety. This was my first trip to Zimbabwe. I felt as I imagined *klal Yisrael* may have felt as they readied themselves for their journey through the desert – about to embark upon a journey as *garim b'eretz nochria* (strangers in a strange land). I had with me my 18 cents of chai money and a *Tfillat Haderech*, both given to me by colleagues.

As guests, Geoffrey and I were warmly welcomed. As Jews, we were celebrated. When walking in the community and meeting hospital workers, patients and volunteers, we would explain that we work with Ve'ahavta. A wide smile was generally the response. The Shona pronounce every syllable Ve'ahavta – "and you shall love" in Hebrew – clearly and gently.

In truth, we had come into the community with friendships already formed. We had known Dr. Paul Thistle and his family for years. We had also been privy to a unique experience in Toronto that helped us feel as though we were coming home.

Last year, Ve'ahavta helped some special visitors, the twins Tinashe and Tinotenda Mufuka, their mother Elizabeth and midwife Grace Chirinda, during their exceptional stay in Toronto. The formerly conjoined twin boys awaited separation surgery and later, cleft lip and palate repairs. The powerful role the Jewish community played in their story has received little mainstream publicity.

A group of dedicated Jewish volunteers gave these four Zimbabweans support and brought them into their homes, invited them for Shabbat and read Tehillim in tense moments in hospital during their eight-month stay. When Geoffrey and I arrived at the the Hospital for Sick Children (now SickKids), we were thanked over and over again, and told: "It is a privilege to meet people like you, who can welcome strangers."

A local newspaper article described the scene at Harare International Airport when the twins arrived home. "I would like to thank the Jewish community for their support," Elizabeth Mufuka told the paper.

Elizabeth is a rural Shona single mother who works her small plot of land and raises poultry for income to feed her family. To read of her standing in front of the Zimbabwean national media to thank the Jewish community was surreal and soulful.

We were welcomed into Elizabeth and Grace's homes. It was a beautiful experience to have the reciprocity of *makdimim shalom l'chaverim* (welcoming of friends in peace) and to meet these wonderful families in their homes in this beautiful land.

> Canadian Jews have been travelling to Howard Hospital through Ve'ahavta since our joint partnership was born, lending their skills and expertise

One day, I visited Grace, who was hard at work in the maternity ward where she is "sister in charge." At midday, there had already been several deliveries. I was struck by these women – those I saw in the ward on the cusp of giving birth and those I saw in the fields, nine months pregnant and still working, their great big bellies sticking out and occasionally stopping to stretch – who were so quietly strong. *Eizeh hu chacham lomed mi kol adam* – a wise person is one who learns from every person.

It was the rainy season and the steady rainfall triggered many blackouts. Sometimes in the evenings, the sky would clear to make way for a beautiful sunset. There was a perfect view of the sunset from the Thistles' window. Before the sky turned flaming orange, I would walk down to the compound boundary to get a closer look. One night a local woman asked me what I was doing. I said, "I am looking at the sky" and we both laughed. The next night she came again and we talked. I spoke to her about her life, her fears and her dreams. I learned much from her as we looked at the sky together.

In Harare, we met with Maj. Robert Ward, the head administrator of the Salvation Army and a Canadian. He had fond memories of past visits to Toronto's synagogues. His genuine delight in welcoming us as Jews to Harare was palpable.

Later that same day, we met the leaders of Harare's small but dedicated Jewish community. We were greeted like long-lost friends and were ushered into their homes in the true spirit of *hachnasat orchim* (welcoming of guests).

We toured one of the Ashkenazi synagogues, a beautiful building with a gorgeous Aron Kodesh and a distinguished library of Hebrew books. There is also a stunning Sephardi synagogue in Harare. We visited the Sharon Private School. The School once attracted many Jewish students. Now, there are only a handful in attendance. However, the school has maintained its Jewish studies program and is now renowned for the quality of its interfaith education. We were told that a young Shona child took home the Hebrew-language prize last year.

We left our Jewish friends in Harare, knowing that we will see one another again, and feeling emboldened and strengthened by the anticipation of renewed connection.

The mitzvah of bikur cholim (visiting the sick) is in constant practise at the Howard Hospital. Before the end of our stay, we went out with the hospital chaplain who is involved with a home-based care program there. The area around the hospital is large and rural, and many patients cannot afford, or are too ill, to travel to the hospital. Community caregivers are responsible for the large rural area and small villages surrounding the hospital. These caregivers direct the chaplain to visit those most in need on the days when a vehicle and petrol are accessible for home visits.

I left Howard Hospital on the third day of Chanukah. On my last night, I taught a few of the local kids how to play the dreidel game. I lit Chanukah candles in the window of my little round thatched-roof guest cottage. Paul tried to create a festive atmosphere for me by playing the *March of the Living* CD, left behind a number of years ago. I explained that the music was beautiful but not quite in the spirit of the chag. Paul seemed disappointed, then asked if we could turn the CD off after the song *Lay Down Your Arms*. I nodded and laughed.

When saying goodbye, I left behind my mini Shabbat bencher, my travelling chanukiyah and candles for future Ve'ahavta volunteers. Pedrinah carefully placed them in a cupboard in her living room, which already contained Shabbat candles. "It's the Judaica cupboard," she explained.

Sarah Zelcer lives in Toronto.

Acacia tree

Chanukah in Zimbabwe

Opinions

Responsible death

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's recent medical emergency should alert us to extreme medical situations. Deciding on proper treatment, appointing representatives and making decisions in times of crisis are all issues we seldom face. Shouldn't we, as responsible adults, make these decisions ahead of time? Shouldn't we discuss "what ifs" with family and doctors? The reality is complex and frightening, and we shy away from them. But is it fair to our loved ones?

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

And where can we find guidelines?

Judaism has a very intense commitment to healing and saving lives. It mandates all sorts of legal imperatives to enshrine the sacred reverence for all life. Yet there are also competing principles. Most importantly, there is a real appreciation for the complexity and intricate nature of the life-death nexus.

There are no easy universal answers to all medical situations. Thus, interfacing with the obligation to save a life is the legal tradition of how to treat a *goses*, one who is at death's door. For a *goses*, there are no doubts about the immanence of death. One may not prolong such a life, since that would prolong suffering, delay death and not save a life. But how are we to differentiate between saving a life and letting someone die? When is life support mandatory and when does it become an impediment to death? Judaism does not permit starvation, but respirators are not always compulsory.

These are not simple topics, nor are they easy to discuss. And though medical issues make us reliant on doctors, these should not be their decisions alone. We must follow the famous dictum of Hillel: go out and learn.

Many years ago, my father "died" during surgery. He was scheduled for a simple medical procedure (as though any surgery is simple – they cut you open). When the doctors were ready to proceed, they found no life signs and pronounced him dead. Providentially, a new doctor entered the room and revived him. My father lived another 35 years. Needless to say, the man became our doctor.

But my father's reaction always struck me as startling. He told me that he heard the doctors say: "This man is dead." "Daddy," I cried. "Why didn't you tell them you were alive? Why didn't you shout 'Save me?'" He looked at me as though I was the stupidest person in the world. "Norma, when the doctor says you're dead, you're dead!"

We could have easily lost him. I understand that he probably could not have said anything. But he didn't even try.

In his world, the doctor was always right. But not in our world. There are too many factors to consider, too many decisions. We need to take responsibility for our lives, and our deaths.

Torah shows us that the personal is political

As I write, Canada is about to choose its next government. By the time you read this, we will have a new one. Today we ask, "What makes someone fit to lead a country?" Our current crop of politicians does not inspire me to hope for great things, given the culture of patronage and entitlement that we've had since Confederation, but there you are. Between their personal peccadilloes and their political pieties, our politicians are a sad lot. None inspires confidence, neither in their personalities, nor in their politics. None exhibits the qualities of a statesman.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

However, what I want to address here is the way the Torah stories of Joseph, Judah and Moses combine the personal and the political.

In our yearly Torah cycle, we have completed the story of Joseph and his brothers. That narrative revolved around the family of Jacob, one torn by jealousy, hatred, intergenerational sibling rivalries, and violence.

It would make a great TV miniseries. Each of the characters is so vibrant and their motivations so visible, if tangled. The final frames deal with the fraught relationship of Joseph and Judah, the two brothers who are most intimately connected. While Joseph seemed to be the bright and rising star both in the family and politically, I think the hero of this saga is Judah.

Why? Because it falls to Judah to rescue the family of Jacob through his last-minute confession to Joseph of the sorrow that Benjamin's enslavement would bring to Jacob, and Judah's acknowledgement of the evil deed done by the brothers so long ago. Thus Judah earns the right to become the ancestor of the royal house of David, through Perez, his child with Tamar.

Earlier in the story, Judah was on the same downward path as Esau – Judah sold his brother, broke with his family, married a Canaanite woman, gave in to his passions, while maintaining the deceit practiced on Jacob.

Then, when Benjamin's life hangs in the balance, and by extension his father's life seems forfeit, Judah approaches Joseph in his disguise as a regal Egyptian and pleads for Benjamin's life.

It is the moment of Judah's ennoblement. He has learned the hard way how he embittered his father's life for 20 years. Now, self-sacrifice is the only way to save his brother and he is ready to pay the price of deception.

With his actions, Judah earns the right to be the ancestor to the kings of Israel, to establish the lineage that will rule the combined kingdoms and carry the promise that "the scepter will not depart from Judah" until the messianic era.

I hate to leave the personal, the story of Joseph and Judah, as there is something so real and so timeless about their story. But we are now at parshat Bo, deep into the story of the Exodus. Memory of Joseph's political savvy has waned, and slavery's dark night of the soul has fallen over his descendants.

With Moses, the personal gets lost in the shadow of his momentous political mission, leading us from slavery to freedom. We get only glimpses of his personal life – and it doesn't sound happy– and little insight into his feelings. We know he pleads for Miriam when she is struck with leprosy, but we have absolutely no insight into his feelings for any other human being – not for his parents or his brother Aaron, not for his wife Tziporah, not for his sons.

Moses is the quintessential "father of his country." And like statesmen and politicians everywhere, his life will be forever sacrificed to his mission, forging a people out of a ragged bunch of whiners. Forbidden from seeing the fruition of his work, he dies looking toward the land that he will never enter.

I eagerly await next year's reading of the Joseph story, because in it I find vivid human beings with real flaws, real nobility, real passion, real atonement and real forgiveness. In the sphere of the political, as our new leaders can attest, there seems to be only punishment and personal disappointment.

To our new government, I can only say,"Good luck. You'll need it."

And so will we.

Human rights education in Canada

Although the protection of human rights has occupied significant attention in recent years, it is not a new phenomenon.

When asked to summarize the Torah in just a few words, the great sage Hillel said: "That which is hateful to yourself, do not do unto others. That is the heart of the Torah; all the rest is commentary."

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

This statement of the "golden rule" along with the "Holiness Code" found in Leviticus, outline the basic principles that have established the traditional Jewish commitment to social justice, fairness and the principles of human rights.

Throughout history, legal codes ranging from the Code of Hammurabi in 1750 BCE to the present age have all underscored the importance of human rights as a guiding light in ordering the affairs of societies, governments and individuals.

In the recent federal election campaign, there was much discussion by our political leaders about the importance of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in the Canadian political and legal landscape. Particular attention was given to the so-called "notwithstanding" clause in the Charter.

Our judges and lawyers are charged with the responsibility of advancing the message of human rights and the protection of civil liberties.

Are our lawyers and judges equipped to fulfil this responsibility? Are we providing the legal profession with the tools to take on this task? What formal training do the members of the legal profession have in the area of human rights?

Basic training in human rights is rather limited in our education system. Various ideas are introduced through the social studies curriculum from kindergarten through Grade 12. Recent revised curricula do contain units on citizenship and global citizenship, and junior as well as senior high schools teach a limited amount about our Charter of Rights.

At the post-secondary level, students are able to take a few courses that refer to the protection of human rights.

At law school, students learn about the Charter in basic constitutional law courses. They also study about fairness and natural justice in respect of governments, their boards and agencies in mandatory administrative law courses.

A typical law school does offer other courses that specialize in human rights, but all of these courses are optional. For example, at the University of Alberta, optional courses are offered in civil liberties, human rights law, constitutional litigation, elder law, European human rights law and international human rights. Recently, a practicum opportunity with the Alberta Human Rights, Citizenship and Multiculturalism Commission was added.

Upon graduation, lawyers are expected to participate in continuing legal education programs. Those programs generally emphasize the more pragmatic areas of legal practice, although occasionally a course relating to the Charter of Rights or anti-discrimination legislation may be offered.

Ultimately, some lawyers are appointed to the judiciary. Programs of judicial education have expanded dramatically over the past 30 years. These courses are offered under the auspices of the Canadian Judicial Council, a body created under the federal Judges Act. Other organizations, including the National Judicial Institute and the Canadian Institute for the Administration of Justice, administer these educational programs.

In the area of human rights, the council has created a Social Context Education program administered by the National Judicial Institute. This program emphasizes the importance of our judiciary experiencing a heightened sensitivity to issues of race, gender and related human rights issues.

With all of the educational opportunities available, should we assume that our lawyers and judges are sufficiently informed and cognizant of human rights issues?

Clearly, their formal training combined with their collective experience has been significantly enhanced in recent years. Lawyers and judges occupy a special position in society, and their sensitivity to and promotion of human rights is vital to the integrity of Canadian society and the values we hold dear.

Of course, it is important for all Canadians to be knowledgeable about, promote and embrace the message of human rights. Human rights education should be available at all levels of the school system in Canada. But, in order to have our legal system accurately reflect these values, it is especially important that our judges and lawyers be well versed in the relevant law, including any deficiencies.

This will enable them to take a strong and independent leadership role in the pursuit of Canada's human rights agenda.

The Kirshner File

Survivor recalls Holocaust in France

Two French policemen came for Roger Fraenkel on Dec. 12, 1941. Summarily arrested, he was instructed to pack a blanket, food and water. He and his family, residents of a fine house in a fashionable neighbourhood near the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, were shocked and bewildered. A French citizen, dental surgeon and World War I veteran, Fraenkel knew that the Jews of France had been placed in jeopardy by Germany's 1940 invasion, the collapse of the Third Republic, the division of France into occupied and unoccupied zones and the formation of the authoritarian and pro-Nazi Vichy regime headed by Marshall Philippe Pétain.

Sheldon Kirshner in Paris

By then, Pétain's government had promulgated anti-Semitic laws and wiped out the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man, which had emancipated French Jewry on the basis of three tenets: liberty, equality and fraternity. But Fraenkel, whose German and Russian ancestors had settled in France in the mid-17th century, did not truly understand that his arrest was a slippery slope. Thinking he would be back in a few hours, he did not even bother to kiss his wife, Jeannine, goodbye.

Nor did he realize that his fate had been irretrievably sealed. The police handed him over to the German authorities, and they, in turn, interned him in a detention camp near Compiégne. In March 1942, Fraenkel was deported to Auschwitz on what would be the first of 80 transports from France, and a few months later, he was murdered. Fraenkel's wife was not spared either. She was sent to Auschwitz in November 1943, on the 63rd transport, and gassed on arrival.

The Fraenkels, who left behind two children, Jean-Jacques and Josette, were among the 75,721 Jews of France deported during the Holocaust. Of those, only about 2,500 returned. A further 3,000 Jews were killed by the Germans and the French police, some in internment camps originally built to accommodate the wave of Spanish refugees who poured into France in the late 1930s, according to Jean-Marc Dreyfus, a professor at the Institute for Political Science in Paris.

Some 24,500 of the deportees were French citizens, while the rest were foreigners, mainly Polish, Russian, Romanian, Dutch and Belgian Jews. Of the group of Jews holding French nationality, 8,000 were children whose parents had not acquired French citizenship.

Prior to this disaster, France had a Jewish population of 350,000, of whom roughly 200,000 were French by nationality and 150,000 were stateless or held foreign passports.

Before she was rounded up and deported, Jeannine Fraenkel tried to save herself and her children. Working on the assumption that the so-called Vichy Free Zone was safer than Paris, where Jews were forced to wear the dreaded Nazi yellow star, she, Jean-Jacques and Josette moved to the French Riviera city of Cannes in August 1942. But since even Cannes was not entirely safe, Jeannine – a member of the French resistance movement – tried to send her children to neutral Switzerland. She made two such attempts in October 1942, near Chamonix, but the Swiss border guards turned them away.

Shortly afterward, the German army invaded the Free Zone and, suddenly, the Fraenkels were at the mercy of the Nazis yet again. "The Gestapo visited us," said Jean-Jacques, a young-looking 75, in an interview. Jeannine convinced the Gestapo that they were Christians, and the ploy worked because the Fraenkels had obtained false documents under the Gallic surname of Francell.

Fraenkel's Nazi yellow star

But due to that unsettling visit, Jeannine dispatched Jean-Jacques to Paris in 1943 to live with an Italian Catholic man and his Jewish wife. Josette remained with Jeannine in Cannes. By that juncture, the Jewish community in France had been marginalized, isolated, impoverished and subjected to deportations.

"The objective of Vichy's anti-Semitic laws was to exclude all Jews from civil society," explained Henry Rousso, a scholar at the Institute of Contemporary History in Paris and the author of, among other books, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France Since 1944*. "There was no German pressure on Vichy to pass this legislation."

On a personal level, Pétain was not particularly anti-Semitic, nor was he obsessed by Jews, like other officials in his government. But he made anti-Semitism a cardinal pillar of his collaborationist regime, the better to assert French independence from the Germans, Rousso said.

The Vichy government, whose authority was challenged by the Free French Forces led by Charles de Gaulle, established a special department – the Commissariat aux Questions Juives – to render French Jews pariahs. It co-operated closely with the Germans. Even French Jews in Algeria, France's colony, were affected by the new order. The Cremieux decree, which had conferred French citizenship on Algerian Jews in 1870, was cancelled by Vichy in one stroke. French public opinion, meanwhile, was basically indifferent to these events, Rousso said.

Two of the Vichy regime's salient features – the imposition of the yellow star and the deportation policy – were foisted upon Vichy by the Germans, but Vichy was deeply implicated in Nazi crimes. Since the German occupying army in France was stretched thin, the Nazis had to rely on French co-operation to carry out anti-Jewish measures, especially the deportations.

The first convoy to Auschwitz pulled out of Drancy – a transit camp on the outskirts of Paris that originally had been an unfinished housing project – on March 27, 1942. Opened in 1941, Drancy was designed to hold 700 people. At its peak, more than 7,000 Jews were packed into its confines.

Half of the convoys bound for Auschwitz during the war departed from Drancy in the summer of 1942, Rousso noted. The last convoy, consisting of Jews and resistance fighters, left in August 1944, just before France was finally liberated by the Allies.

"Vichy accepted the deportations," observed Rousso. "The collaboration was complete." But French Catholic bishops, while virtually turning a blind eye to Vichy's anti-Semitic laws, denounced them.

The most infamous roundups took place on July 16 and 17, 1942 – when 12,800 Jews from Paris and its environs were arrested and taken to a sports facility known as the Vélodrome d'Hiver – and in mid-August of the same year, when an additional 7,000 Jews were arrested.

When Jeannie was caught, having been unmasked as a resistance fighter by a hairdresser, Josette found herself alone in her mother's flat. Neighbours, having heard Josette crying, helped her. Then, thanks to the French resistance, Josette survived the war in hiding in a Carmelite convent in Paris.

Since these nuns hew to an oath of silence, Josette did not utter a word for six months after the war. As Josette gradually accustomed herself to the rhythms of convent life, Jean-Jacques lived in fear in Paris, sheltered by the half-Jewish couple, never quite knowing when the Gestapo would knock on their door, burst into their apartment and arrest them all.

[Sheldon Kirshner photos]

Jean-Jacques Fraenkel

He spent the last 18 months of the war in a juvenile boys' institution, where he was repeatedly molested by a priest. Tormented by this pedophile, Jean-Jacques tried to commit suicide.

With the German occupation over, he returned to the couple who had previously hidden him. In 1948, Jean-Jacques tried to immigrate to Palestine on the Altalena – a ship carrying illegal arms to the Irgun militia – but he was stopped by the police.

Continuing his studies, he graduated from university as an engineer. In 1997, Beit Lohamei Haghetaot in Israel published his memoirs of the Holocaust, *L'Abus de Confiance*, or *Breach of Trust*, which has yet to be issued in English.

To this day, Jean-Jacques is bitter that his parents were betrayed by fellow citizens. "Without the French police, they would not have been killed," he said.

Eager to turn a new page, he immigrated to Canada in 1975. Now retired, he lives in Victoria, B.C., for part of the year. He has two sons: Eric, a pilot, is a resident of Calgary, while Marc, who fought in the Israeli army during the Yom Kippur War, is a caterer in Cordoba, Argentina.

After World War II, Jean-Jacques received a nominal sum of money to compensate him for the murder of his parents and the loss of their possessions. In the 1980s and 1990s, he launched unsuccessful lawsuits against the French government and the railway company on behalf of his family and other survivors.

These days, he devotes a great deal of his time to helping French Holocaust survivors who have not been properly compensated for their suffering and material losses. Otherwise, he lives contentedly in Victoria.

As he put it: "I can breathe the air in Canada. I can sleep soundly."

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Beth Tzedec cantor is ordained as rabbi at age 62

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Congregants at Beth Tzedec Congregation are still getting used to referring to their chazzan sheni as Rabbi Gabriel, instead of the more familiar "Cantor Gabriel."

Rabbi Tobias (Tobi) Gabriel was ordained from the Jewish Theological Seminary on Dec. 15, an accomplishment all the more impressive for the fact that he kept up with full-time synagogue duties while commuting by plane twice a week to classes in New York, just over 800 km away. Not to mention that, at age 62, the father of three and grandfather of seven is decades older than most of the students in his graduating class.

The new rabbi said there were a number of factors involved in his decision to enter rabbinical school, including "a thirst for learning," but above all he sees it as professional development.

"When you're building community and you are in a clergy capacity, you owe it to yourself to get as much knowledge as possible."

In a way, he is also returning to his roots. A native of La Paz, Bolivia, Rabbi Gabriel was raised in an Orthodox home in a small, tightly knit Jewish community by German immigrant parents who fled Europe in 1938. As a young teenager, his parents sent him from Peru (where they moved when he was 7) to New York to get a Jewish high school education.

[Frances Kraft photo]

Rabbi Tobias Gabriel

A graduate of Yeshiva University where he attended cantorial school and also took some classes in the rabbinical school, Rabbi Gabriel distanced himself shortly afterward from an Orthodoxy that he felt left little room for questioning.

"I found my niche in Conservative Judaism, which allowed me to learn and to query...in an an environment where I was still able to follow the halachic tradition."

He earned his MBA in International Marketing at the City University of New York in 1968 and embarked on a business career that took him and his family to Mexico, Peru and Israel before they immigrated to Toronto in 1990. A constant thread, however, was their involvement in local Jewish communities.

In Lima, Rabbi Gabriel served as president of the Zionist Federation of Peru for two years, and – in the absence of an Ashkenazi rabbi for almost 12 years – led services and served as cantor, religious affairs director and bar mitzvah instructor.

Following his arrival in Canada, he was involved in Shaar Shalom Congregation in Thornhill, volunteering as cantor, Torah reader and ritual committee member until he left the business world and took on the position at Beth Tzedec in 1994.

He credits family – Sara, his wife of 41 years, and their children – as well as Beth Tzedec congregants, friends and colleagues at the synagogue for making his studies possible, including scholarship funding from the synagogue and the donation of air miles by congregants.

Although it took "a bit of imagination and hard work" to convince JTS to accept him as a student while he was holding a full-time job, faculty members ended up being very supportive, he said.

Technology also "helped quite a bit," he added, referring to distance courses included in his curriculum and also his ability to use the Internet for research.

But his schedule was "brutal, to say the least," he said of the two-year endeavour. Although he was exempt from some courses because of his experience and background, he was considered a full-time student with courses two half-days a week, some distance courses, and a full-time intensive course load over his four-week summer vacation.

"There were a lot of sleepless nights and weekends," said Rabbi Gabriel. Occasionally, he noted, if a flight was delayed by weather, his colleagues at Beth Tzedec would cover for him. Likewise, faculty members at JTS were "very understanding" if he was snowed in and arrived late to class. If he couldn't make it at all, someone would tape the classes for him.

While he will maintain his ongoing duties at Beth Tzedec, where the clergy includes three other rabbis, "the congregation will dictate" any new directions Rabbi Gabriel may take in the synagogue. He will also become involved with Camp Ramah in his new capacity as a rabbi.

"It was hard going back to school," he admitted. "But I adapted rather quickly... I always loved doing research."

No matter what stage of life you're in, he said, "if you want to go for professional development, you can do it." The right attitude, time management, and "a little help from friends" ease the way, he added.

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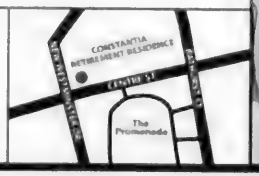

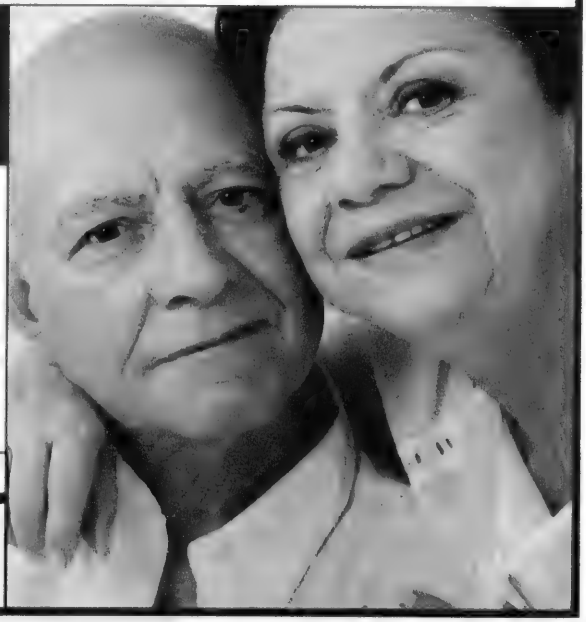

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JACS forum discusses drug use among teens

'Parents are in total denial'

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

JACS and Camp Solelim held an open discussion for parents and teens last week to raise awareness about alcohol and drug dependency among Jewish adolescents.

"We need to stop sweeping this issue under the table," Marla Goldman, executive director of JACS Toronto, told a gathering of roughly 35 people at the camp's office.

Chemical dependency, whether it is alcohol or drugs does not discriminate, and Jews are affected as much as any other group, Goldman said.

JACS – which is short for Jewish Alcoholics, Chemically Dependent Persons and Significant Others – is a voluntary mutual self-help organization founded in April 2000 by a group of recovering and concerned Jews in Toronto. It encourages and assists Jewish alcoholics, drug addicts, their families and friends to explore recovery in a nurturing Jewish environment.

As a recovering addict, Goldman understands the importance of receiving help in a safe environment.

Jews are often afraid of attending meetings in church basements, she said.

"At JACS, people feel at home," Goldman added.

This past September, JACS established the Benji Hayward Teen Program, held every Sunday at 7:30 p.m., to provide support for the growing number of teens addicted to drugs and alcohol.

"Parents always think they know everything their children are doing. They think addiction will never happen to their kids," Goldman told the gathering.

Gord Hayward, Benji's father and chair of outreach and education with JACS, admits he thought he knew everything about his son, but he was mistaken.

On May 13, 1988, Benji, 14, and his friend attended a Pink Floyd concert at Exhibition Stadium.

"He gave me a high five and went to the show," Hayward said.

Benji did not return from the concert that night.

His father phoned police and filed a missing persons report. He distinctly remembers the police officer asking if his son was involved with drugs.

"No, we are Jewish. That stuff is for rock stars," Hayward recalled telling the officer.

An autopsy and inquest determined that Benji died from taking two hits of LSD. His body was found in Lake Ontario.

"Parents are in total denial. I was in denial. It's the 'Your kid, not mine,' syndrome," Hayward said.

For the past 2½ years, Hayward has been working with JACS to raise awareness about teenage chemical dependency. He has spoken along with Goldman at various schools and summer camps.

Risa Epstein, director of Camp Solelim, invited JACS to speak to her teenage campers last summer.

"It went so well, both the kids and staff benefited from it," Epstein said.

She organized last week's open discussion to help parents understand the pressures that teens are under and how to identify the warning signs of teenage addiction, she said.

"I wish I could get more parents out and stop thinking it's not their kids," Epstein said.

At the age of 10, Michelle, whose name has been changed to protect her identity, turned to drugs to mask the pain of her father's death.

"I loved my daddy more than anything, he was gone and I was sad. I felt numb. I was daddy's little girl," she told the group.

"This was the beginning of my hell, the beginning of my destruction," she said.

On her 13th birthday, her older brother gave her a line of cocaine. "I was hooked. I started sleeping around. I did anything for that white powder," Michelle said. "My mother didn't know the extent of my problems."

At 15, Michelle was encouraged by her boyfriend to sell her body for drugs.

"I thought this sounded like a good idea. I was 15, walking the streets at 2 a.m., and I didn't care because I had cocaine," she said.

This past October, Michelle's friends tricked her into attending a JACS meeting.

"You can't help me, I'm so far gone," she said at the meeting.

Michelle returned the following Sunday, and, to her surprise, the counsellors remembered her name.

"That was a lightning flash. It meant so much to me that they remembered my name," said the teary-eyed 17-year-old.

"JACS has brought me a completely new life. I have sober friends and I can actually say I like who I am. Today, I am three months sober," she said.

JACS conducts a resource meeting to help families and friends on Thursdays at 8 p.m. People in crisis, and their friends and families, can also call the JACS Helpline at 416-410-JACS (5227).

Corrections

In the article "Remember the Romanian Kristallnacht" (*CJN*, Jan. 26), the date given for a pogrom in Bucharest was incorrect. It actually took place on Jan. 21, 1941. *The CJN* regrets the error.

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In the article, "New egalitarian minyan aimed at young Jews" (*CJN*, Jan. 19), Kehilat Or Hadash was incorrectly referred to as egalitarian. *The CJN* apologizes for this error.

TAGLIT · תגלית
birthright israel
www.birthrightisrael.com

Taglit-birthright israel mourns the passing of

Andrea M. Bronfman ז"ל

On behalf of the entire Taglit-birthright israel family, including the birthright israel Foundation and thousands of alumni from Israel and around the world, our thoughts and prayers go out to her husband, Charles, our Founding Chairman, their children, and the Bronfman and Morrison families. May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion.

Andy's tireless advocacy and support of Jewish peoplehood and improving the quality of life in the State of Israel will live on for years to come. Her personal involvement will be deeply missed.

Thousands of young people represent legacy of Andrea Bronfman z"l

Jewish world mourns co-founder of birthright israel

By YONI GOLDSTEIN
UJA Federation

There are 100,000 reasons why Andrea Bronfman, who was killed in a New York car accident last Monday, left such a deep impact on the Jewish world. That's the number of Jewish young people who have benefited from *birthright israel*, the popular, pioneering initiative that she and her husband Charles conceived and founded with a handful of other philanthropists in 1999. The program, backed by the Jewish Federation network, provides a free, structured visit to Israel for qualifying students. Since *birthright israel* began, 13,000 Canadians have taken part – two thousand of them from Toronto.

"These thousands of young people, many of whom would not have experienced Israel without the support of Andrea and Charles Bronfman, will be one of her most enduring legacies for generations to come," observed David Engel, who chairs the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto Board of Directors. "We extend the deepest condolences to her husband Charles and to the large family to which she was devoted."

Toronto's Corey Segal, who once cared little about Jewish life, is typical of *birthright israel* participants for whom the experience will have lifelong impact.
"It just touched something inside that I feel vibrates really deep in me," said Segal.

"Andrea Bronfman was a remarkable pioneer in all the endeavours she undertook," said Dr. Shimshon Shoshani, chief executive officer of Taglit-*birthright israel*. "She was unique in her out-of the-box thinking; she was never satisfied with the status quo and always pushed those around her to do better. Her dedication and enthusiasm for so many projects in Israel and around the world was endless."

Known as "Andy" to her friends, Mrs. Bronfman was a strong backer of the UJA Federation system. She was a committed supporter of United Jewish Communities (UJC), the umbrella organization of North American Jewish Federations, a Lion of Judah, honouring women who make at least a $5,000 annual Federation gift, and a member of the Prime Minister's Council, which includes North America's most generous donors. One of her sons, Anthony Cohen, who lives in Toronto, is also active in the Jewish community.

"The Jewish world has lost one of its best friends, a woman who exemplified Judaism's highest values and whose vision led our community into the future for generations to come," said UJC chair Robert Goldberg.

Mrs. Bronfman was a former chair of Beth Hatefutsoth, the Jewish Diaspora Museum in Tel Aviv. On the museum's behalf, Mrs. Bronfman created and directed a national cultural project called "A Coat of Many Colours: Two Centuries of Jewish Life in Canada." The project, documenting the history of the first Jewish inhabitants of Canada, was exhibited across North America and in Israel. It included a traveling presentation with religious and cultural artifacts, historical documents, a companion book and an hour-long film.

For decades Mrs. Bronfman was instrumental in supporting Jewish communities and a wide-range of Jewish causes worldwide.

The Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies (ACBP), a family of charitable foundations operating in North America and Israel, has contributed millions of dollars since the couple founded it 20 years ago. The foundation helped to establish the Institute for the Study of Canada at Montreal's McGill University and the Association of Israel's Decorative Arts (AIDA), designed to raise awareness for Israeli artists by exposing their work to North American galleries.

"Andy's philanthropic endeavours were many and varied," said Judge Ellen Heller, president of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), with which she was very involved. "Working quietly, but with fervor, she helped devise innovative ways to make our world a better place."

As well, Andrea Bronfman was a noted human-rights activist who fought hard to alleviate the plight of Jews caught inside the Soviet Union during the 1970s and 1980s. When the Communist government refused to allow Soviet Jews to immigrate to Israel, she was instrumental in forming the "Group of 35s," a Montreal-based faction of women who campaigned to support Soviet Jews and organized Canada's Jewish communities to pressure politicians to stand by Soviet Jewry. Many activists and Jewish historians remember her well for leading a protest march outside the Soviet consul in Montreal.

Her unwavering compassion was dramatically illustrated in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 when she founded and acted as deputy chair of "The Gift of New York." The not-for-profit initiative provided free admission to the families of 9/11 terrorist victims for a wide variety of events. By the time "The Gift of New York" program ended in the spring of 2003, more than 12,000 families had participated.

Andrea and Charles Bronfman shared a passion for Israel and generally spent about a quarter of each year living in the Jerusalem neighborhood of Talbieh. In 2002, Ehud Olmert, Israel's acting prime minister and the city's mayor at the time, awarded the couple honourary Jerusalem citizenship as well as a key to the city.

Mrs. Bronfman is survived by her husband, three children from a previous marriage, two stepchildren and six grandchildren.

(Clockwise) Andrea Bronfman z"l; Andrea and Charles Bronfman; birthright israel participants celebrate their experience in Israel.
Photos courtesy of Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies, Canada Israel Experience and Robert Cumins, United Jewish Communities.

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Jewish Life

Putting tikkun olam into practice

By JOANNE FRISCH

Guest Voice

"Way beyond!" is a phrase that best conveys the gist of what I experienced last year.

On Jan. 16, 2005, I travelled to rural South Africa and arrived in Ndawana, a Zulu/Xhosa village in the province of Eastern Cape that's built along a long dirt road.

Ndawana, population 3,800, has no electricity, plumbing or telephone network. Many villagers live in extreme poverty, and half of the residents between ages 18 and 40 are HIV positive. I went to Ndawana to work with Edzimkulu, an Edmonton-based non-governmental organization that helps children affected by AIDS, to help build a community centre for the people of Ndawana.

On my first day there, I was greeted warmly by a community development team, construction crews, the village chief and random passers-by. I also went to the Edzimkulu site, a 450-square-metre piece of land set aside for the centre by the chief.

The centre we built comprises a health clinic, a learning centre, a craft centre, a community kitchen, meeting rooms and a community garden. The site is where I spent most of my days – Monday to Friday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. – as architect and construction supervisor.

During the five months I was in Africa, I was continuously amazed.

Edzimkulu, which I discovered on the Internet, was conceived by a Canadian couple, Jim and Chris Newton, in their retirement to help fight the devastating AIDS virus.

Canadian volunteers, ranging in age from 21 to 87, have made huge efforts to work side by side with the people of Ndawana in an inspiring grassroots way so that villagers will have lasting leadership and enjoy ownership of the project. They focused on what was essential for the community in the short and the long term.

At the age of 23, I had skill, insight and technical experience that was actually helpful half way around the world to people of ages, nationality, religion and race far different than me.

After completing my first university degree, a bachelor's in architecture from McGill University, I didn't think I would have the opportunity to design and build a structure this early in my career. Moreover, I certainly didn't anticipate being able to do so in Africa using wheelbarrows, thatch, recycled materials and bricks made on-site with a team of 20 workers who spoke little, if any, English. Drawings and hand gestures proved to be essential, and remarkably effective, for communication.

Pictured above and below are workers on the building site for a new community centre in the South African village of Ndawana. At bottom right, architect Joanne Frisch, a McGill University graduate who designed the centre, supervises construction.

The residents of Ndawana, like millions of other Africans, live day to day without many of the amenities that are so easily accessible and so much a part of our lives in the Western world, including all manner of material goods, as well as education and health care.

Their lives are very different from our own.

For example, I saw African women carrying huge loads – a wooden sewing machine or chopped-up trees for fire wood on their heads. Men walk for hours – often barefoot and often in the dark of the early morning and evening – to get to work on farms or in neighbouring towns. For their labour, they are paid barely enough to cover the basic costs of shelter, food and clothing.

But despite their physical challenges, people have tremendous energy and spirit. Singing and dancing break out spontaneously everywhere – at home, at school, on the road and at work. On the building site where I was working, the roof crew would often bop around the rafters while keeping up a complex harmony in a traditional song.

I was inspired by the Edzimkulu project in Ndawana and remain so today. We were reaching way beyond to give to, and take, from one another.

To contribute in a positive way to building a sense of community – be it local, national or international – is to actualize the values of tikkun olam that we cherish so much.

For more on the Ndawana project, contact me at jojofrisch@hotmail.com.

Joanne Frisch is completing her master's degree in architecture at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

Jewish Life

Where is God?

By RABBI MENDEL KAPLAN

RABBINICAL REFLECTIONS

In the latest anti-Semitic attacks there, a skinhead stabs and attempts to kill some Muscovite Jews whose sole sin is the desire to pray. Despite the remarkable rapport Russia's chief rabbi enjoys with the country's president, the Jewish community feels impelled to create its own self-defence apparatus. They can no longer rely on the state's protection.

On the brink of achieving nuclear capability, Iran's hatefully twisted president denies the Holocaust and threatens Israel's annihilation. The UN's unusually deliberate reaction is mild at best. In this international crisis of epic proportion, Israel alone feels the brunt of the pressure.

Despite its hollow promises, the ruling infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority does nothing to hinder the murderous activities of the terrorist organizations in its jurisdiction. Instead, they warmly welcome these groups onto the political stage and include them in the upcoming democratic process. The world says little or nothing in protest other than to emphasize that Israel must learn to be more "tolerant and accommodating."

The fashionable, politically correct and morally smug left readily acknowledges the European Holocaust by villifying Nazis and fascists, but refuses to call their new Islamic incarnation anything more than "freedom fighters."

Has anything really changed in 2,000 years? It seems that the Galut (Diaspora) odyssey, punctuated by the same, age-old pattern of anti-Semitism, continues. Why does God allow this to happen again and again?

The midrash (Bereishit Rabba 16) tells us that the spiritual origin of all exile is the biblical Egyptian exile. Accepting this premise means the Torah's narrative of the first Jewish bondage and exodus should offer us a clue.

In the second chapter of Exodus, the scripture tells us about a humble shepherd who sees a bush that is on fire but isn't burning. What ensues is a fateful meeting that will forever change the world's destiny. Moses meets God and is charged with redeeming his brethren and establishing a chosen people.

"When they ask me your name," queries a distraught Moses, "what shall I say to them?"

God's cryptic answer: "Tell them: I will be as I will be." Rashi expands the sentence by quoting the Talmud's words for clarification. "Imo Anochi betzara" (I will be with them in their present suffering just as I will be with them in their future suffering).

This enigmatic exchange begs for explanation. Why is Moses so sure that the people will ask for God's name? And why is the location of the Divine presence the answer?

In the winter of 1983, as Israel was suffering heavy casualties in Lebanon, the Lubavitcher Rebbe explained these verses in an emotionally charged address. A kernel of that moving, scholarly rumination goes like this: names are more than ID tags. Names define relationships. A person may be a child, sibling, spouse, parent or professional. The different names characterize and reveal those various persona.

"'Ma Shmo [what is His Name] – what type of strange God is this?' the people will ask. If He is omnipresent and cares for us, where has He been for the last 90 years of slavery, degradation and death? And what shall I tell them?" Moses demands.

God's answer: "Imo Anochi betzara – tell them I have been with them all along, I didn't forget or turn a blind eye. Whenever they suffered, I was in pain with them.

"My ways forever remain mysterious… there are some things humankind can never comprehend, but tell them that nonetheless I am not aloof."

The bush is on fire, but flames cannot consume it because God is in the fire. The Jewish nation is threatened with annihilation time and again, but it will never die because God is always with them. Then, now and forever.

Rabbi Kaplan is the founder and spiritual leader of Chabad@Flamingo in Thornhill, and serves as a chaplain of the York Regional Police.

Jewish podcasts, Part 3

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

What are you listening to on your iPod? If you have space to spare on your MP3 player, there is wonderful free Jewish content that you can download and enjoy anywhere. From practically any flavour of Israeli music to Jewish culture, the podcasts are waiting for you

When Israelis turn on the radio, do you think most of them are listening to *Erev shel Shoshanim* or *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav*? Then you're in for a surprise Those classics have their appeal, but like music lovers everywhere, Israelis have wide and varied tastes. That's why the Kol Cambridge – Music from Israel podcast is a great find. This weekly, two-hour, student-run show from England airs songs from various genre, including pop, rock, jazz, hip- hop, klezmer and chassidic – as well as some oldies thrown into the mix. The only thing these songs share in common is that they are all in Hebrew. The show's hosts are pleasant and knowledgeable and the Kol Cambridge website provides a playlist of songs aired, so you can always double-check what you're listening to. **[http://tinyurl.com/ey3h8]**

On Sameach Music presents everything from traditional boys' choir music to the sounds of the duo Dachs and Dov, and tunes from veterans Avraham Fried and Moshe Yess. This site is a showcase for Sameach Music, a large distributor of Jewish music, video and songbooks. The podcast is professionally done and never sounds like an extended commercial. **[http://sameachmusicpodcast.libsyn.com/]**

As you might gather from the title, don't expect to hear klezmer tunes on the Rock 'n' Roll Jew show. "The best podsafe rock 'n' roll from Israel and beyond" is hard-hitting and almost entirely in English. Producer David Jacobs features bands from Israel or with Jewish heritage as well as other bands that interest him. **[www.rockandrolljew.com/]**

The Oy Mendele! podcast does play some music but excels with its varied – and often provocative – look at Jewish culture. Hear the story of the Abayudaya Jews of Uganda, an interview with a Jewish filmmaker who is critical of the labour practices of Wal-Mart, and an "unorthodox, unauthorized history of the Jewish people and the Barbie doll." The podcast is based in Berkeley, Calif., and comes out every month or so. **[www.fixler.com/blojsom/blog/default/Audio/]**

Nextbook, "a gateway to Jewish literature, culture, and ideas," has created a podcast to complement its impressive website. I listened in on a fascinating interview with award-winning author and clinical professor of surgery at Yale, Sherwin Nuland, on his biography of Maimonides. There is a look at how organs, long associated with churches, became staples of synagogues of 19th-century Germany. And Fiona Rosenblum speaks about her young-adult novel, *You Are SO Not Invited To My Bat Mitzvah!* – and why the author never actually had a bat mitzvah herself. **[www.nextbook.org/cultural/podcasts.html]**

For more on books, check out the inaugural podcast of The Book of Life. That show is produced by Heidi Estrin, chair of the committee at the Association of Jewish Libraries that presents the award for the best in Jewish children's literature. **[www.jewishbooks.blogspot.com/]**

What is the quintessential Jewish beverage? Many people might answer wine. Or perhaps a shot of shnapps or vodka. But Brooklyn's Barry Joseph has no doubts it's seltzer. Joseph, the self-proclaimed Effervescent Jew, has created a blog and a podcast titled Give Me Seltzer. There are interviews about the history of the drink, a look at its current popularity around the world, comedy from Allan Sherman and a marvellous theme song sung to the Beatles' *Helter Skelter*. **[www.givemeseltzer.com/]**

And the Jewish and Israeli content? It's there – like the video podcast that includes a clip from the 1966 film *Cast a Giant Shadow*. Frank Sinatra, flying on behalf of the fledgling Israeli air force during the 1948 War of Independence, bombards Egyptian troops with his weapon of choice – seltzer bottles. Why? According to the film, the poorly equipped Israeli army used seltzer bottles to scare the enemy because they made a lot of noise as they dropped.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com

Yechezkel "Chezi" Scotty Goldberg

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Treasures in Jewish Literature

THE DARK ROOM

Rachel Seiffert's debut novel, was short listed for the Booker Prize. It explores the legacy of Nazi guilt in Germany through the related stories of three twentieth-century Germans.

Harriet Morris

holds a doctorate in English Literature and has taught at the University of Toronto and York University and speaks to book clubs throughout the city.

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UJA FEDERATION

SENIOR SHABBATON: Grade 8 girls at Netivot HaTorah Day School enthusiastically prepare for their annual senior Shabbaton, under the direction of their teacher, Lori Grysman. Pictured clockwise from top right are Sarah Ohana, Adi Farzalla, Nicole Rosenblum, Ilana Shiff, Chana Posluns, Ariel Dayan and Devorah Jacobs.
[Rebecca Ansel photo]

כולל
KOLEL

The Board of Directors, Board of Governors, staff and students of Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning mourn the untimely passing of

Andrea Bronfman z"l

We extend our deepest condolences to her husband, Charles Bronfman; her son Tony Cohen, President of Kolel's Board of Directors; his wife Moira Cohen, valued Kolel Board member, and to their entire family.

May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Letters to a Buddhist Jew

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

A Zen Jew struggling to resolve these two identities sought counsel and direction from South African-born physician and author Rabbi Akiva Tatz.

Letters to a Buddhist Jew documents the conversations between David Gottlieb and Rabbi Tatz. They discussed the book in front of a packed audience at the Minsker Shul last week.

Gottlieb's journey into other traditions started late in life. He began learning about Buddhism after marrying his wife, a cantor at a Reform synagogue.

While a member of a Conservative synagogue in Chicago, Gottlieb did not feel a connection with Judaism.

"If this was Judaism, I didn't get it," he said.

It was this realization that encouraged Gottlieb to begin meditation at a Zen Buddhist centre and accept the basic Buddhist precepts, similar to the Ten Commandments, as a code of living.

"My wife was beside herself. She thought this was being unfaithful," Gottlieb said.

Soon after beginning meditation, Gottlieb brought his wife, Galit, to see the centre and meet his teacher.

He read a passage from his book about this encounter.

"'Why are there statues everywhere?' my wife asks."

"'Well,' my meditation teacher says, 'the statues of the Buddha are there as reminders of the essence of what we call Buddha nature. They represent a certain kind of centred aware, solid presence that we each have and can cultivate within ourselves.'"

"'In my religion,' my wife says acidly, 'we call that idol worship. It's strictly forbidden.'"

As Galit's discomfort with his Buddhism grew, Gottlieb decided to contact Rabbi Tatz, a Torah scholar and lecturer based in London, England, to discuss the obstacles that frustrated his approach to and observance of Judaism, he said.

In 2003, Gottlieb sent Rabbi Tatz 15 questions in an e-mail, titled "A Jewish Buddhist's complaints about Judaism and comparisons of Judaism with Zen."

The e-mail and the increasing number of Jews who are drawn to eastern religions intrigued Rabbi Tatz and he began a two-year correspondence with Gottlieb.

In his address, Rabbi Tatz attempted to explain the concept of idolatry. He said that Buddhist Jews do not see the statue of Buddha, in a Zen centre, as an idol.

"It is obviously much deeper than that," said Rabbi Tatz. Instead, they see it as a meditation aid representing the calm self.

According to Rabbi Tatz, idolatry is the idea of relating to the channels that bring down energy into the world rather than to the supernatural source of all existence.

Through Buddhist meditation, the encouragement of his wife and her desire for a Jewish home, and the assistance of Rabbi Tatz, Gottlieb turned away from Buddhism. He came to feel strongly that he was and always would be a Jew.

"I found my Jewish soul through meditation. It made me a better Jew, in the end," Gottlieb said.

Canada Israel Experience and our alumni community
wish to extend deepest condolences to
Mr. Charles Bronfman and the
Bronfman, Cohen and Morrison families on the tragic loss of

Andrea M. Bronfman ז"ל

An inspiration to us all,
a woman who exemplified generosity and kindness,
dedicated her life to the education of
young Jews all over the world.

CANADA ISRAEL EXPERIENCE

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Lorne Klemensberg, *Director Israel Programs*

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The Officers, Board and Staff of UIA Federations Canada

extend their deepest condolences

to Charles Bronfman, UIAFC Honorary President, and family

on the tragic passing of

Andrea Bronfman ז"ל

A great leader of the Jewish community,
she made a profound and lasting contribution to World Jewry.

"She shall be praised in the gates by her own deeds."

- Eshet Chayil

Stanley Plotnick
President

Maxyne Finkelstein
Executive Vice President

Jewish Toronto

This edition of Jewish Toronto is devoted to the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto whose mission is to ensure the future of our community.

Jewish organizations seek Foundation expertise

Community organizations benefit from partnership with the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto

By MARGI OKSNER
UJA Federation

UJA Federation of Hamilton has become Canada's first Jewish Federation to transfer responsibility for its endowment fund assets to the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, the planned giving arm of Toronto's UJA Federation. In so doing, Hamilton's Federation officials are confident that its endowment fund will be the best managed in Canada.

Hamilton UJA Federation president, Leslie Lasky, believes that the transfer of his city's Legacy Endowment Fund to the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto will provide greater incentive for the fund to grow.

"Successful endowment fund programs are a key mechanism used throughout North America to ensure the future financial security of Jewish institutions," says Lasky. "Our Legacy Endowment Fund will now benefit from the investment and management expertise of the largest Jewish community endowment program in Canada. This, in turn, will go a long way toward ensuring the financial viability of every agency and program currently receiving Hamilton Federation's funding. I am convinced this will make a major difference in our future success."

Gerald Fisher, executive director of Hamilton's Federation shares Lasky's positive outlook. "This new arrangement with the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto will make it possible for us to re-institute an ongoing endowment fund campaign with the assistance of one of the largest and most successful endowment funds in Canada. This puts us in a very strong position to go forward."

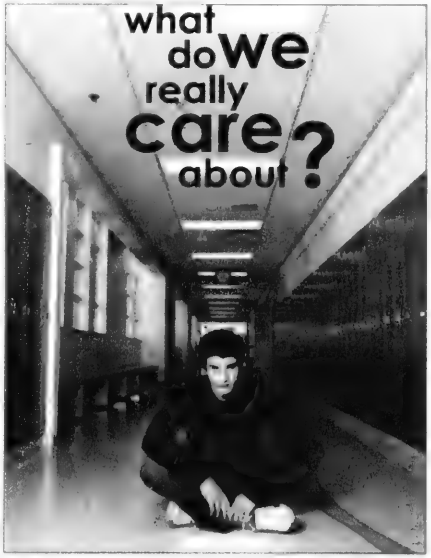
Many other organizations have already entrusted the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto with the management of their endowment funds. These partnerships include: Bialik Hebrew Day School, Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School, Toronto Hebrew Memorial Park, Miles Nadal JCC, the Israel Cancer Research Fund and JIAS (Jewish Immigrant Aid Services) Toronto, just to name a few.

"By utilizing the outstanding community resource of the Jewish Foundation, JIAS's money is being invested wisely, in a very cost effective manner and its interests are being protected by a team of experts who understand the community and JIAS's needs." says Don Bennett, JIAS treasurer.

If you would like more information about this service, please contact Carol Kassel, vice president of Planned Giving and Endowments at jewishfoundation@ujafed.org

(l-r) Elizabeth Wolfe, chair, Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto; Gerald Fisher, executive director, Hamilton Federation; Carol Kassel, vice president, Planned Giving and Endowments; Maxyne Finkelstein, executive director, UIA Federations Canada; (seated, l-r) Ted Sokolsky, president, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto; Leslie Lasky, president, Hamilton Federation.

Foundation's B'nai Tzedek Youth Philanthropy Program



Pre-teens and teens care about making this a better world. Through the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto's youth philanthropy program you can learn more about Bar and Bat Mitzvah Funds, and how to become a youth philanthropist by contacting Angela D'Aversa at adaversa@ujafed.org or call 416-631-5833.

Partnership creates much-needed respite care program at Miles Nadal JCC

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

When Sandy Keshen, executive director of the Reena Foundation, was looking for a centralized location to provide services to families living south of Lawrence Avenue, she contacted the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, UJA Federation's endowment arm. A partnership was quickly established between Reena, the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre and a generous Foundation donor.

The result of that fortuitous relationship is the Miles Nadal Social Club, which, since its inception in September, provides 16 families with some much needed respite care. Catering to developmentally delayed children and young adults by providing a meaningful Sunday afternoon program to build on their social and physical skills, the Social Club also enables parents to drop their youngsters off at the Nadal JCC confident that they will be receiving first-rate care, while the parents take advantage of some quality time for themselves.

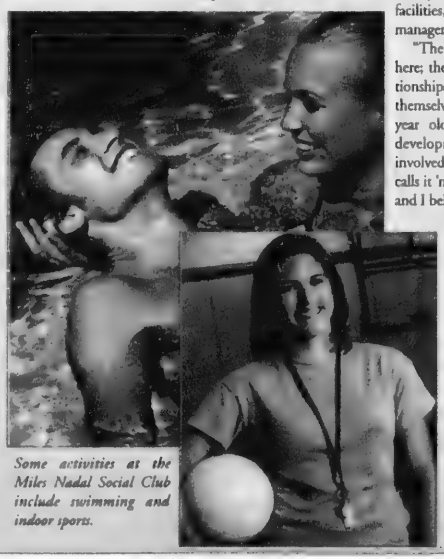
The Howard and Donna Winick Philanthropic Fund at the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto provided the finances needed to get the program rolling with a generous donation of $10,000 in memory of Helen Unger.

"We initiated this program for parents who live further south, parents who wanted to be able to take advantage of this type of initiative, without having to schlep their kids up to the Toby and Henry Battle Developmental Centre in Thornhill," says Keshen. "I contacted Ellen Cole, the executive director at the Miles Nadal JCC and she was extremely receptive and has been tremendous, as has the entire staff there."

Currently in its winter session, the Miles Nadal Social Club – for clients from two age groups, 8 to 13 and 14 to 21 - provides aquatics, sports, art, drama, music, community living skills, use of community facilities, public transportation, money management and more.

"The youngsters feel so comfortable here; they make friends, establish relationships, and make a real social life for themselves," says Keshen. "I have a 10 year old grandchild myself who is developmentally delayed and he's involved with Reena in Thornhill. He calls it 'my place where my friends are,' and I believe the kids at the Nadal JCC will feel the same way. It's wonderful to see the looks on their faces when they greet one another. It's tremendous to see this incredible response to a population that had previously been so isolated."

"We were delighted to be approached for this program because it gave us the opportunity to help create such a valuable partnership," says Cole. "It's just been a tremendous experience for all of us, the clients, the staff – it's a total win-win scenario."



Some activities at the Miles Nadal Social Club include swimming and indoor sports.

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Jewish Foundation produces above average returns

Investment return of managed portfolio reaches 13.4%

By DANIEL HOROWITZ & MARGI OKSNER
UJA Federation

The average rate of return on the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto's investments at 13.4% for 2004-2005 increased by nearly three percent from the previous year, when it was 10.5%. To put this into perspective, the CPP (Canada Pension Plan) reserve fund assets showed a rate of return of 8.5% in the same year.

"We were very fortunate last year," says 2004 Investment Committee chair Ira Gluskin. "With a first rate committee and conservative managers, our job was to achieve absolute rates of return and not worry about relative rates of return. Most of the money was invested in Canada, which is the best of any market around the world."

Since its inception, the assests of the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto – UJA Federation's planned giving arm and Jewish Toronto's philanthropic resource centre – have grown from $21.2 million in 1994 to over $134 million today. This rapid growth has allowed the distribution of over $8.5 million in 2005 to more than 135 organizations.

"From both an investment and administrative point of view, the Foundation is very attractive," says Elizabeth Wolfe, chair, Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto.

"On a day-to-day basis, the Jewish Foundation offers donors personalized support by providing customized information and identifying funding opportunities in specific areas of interest; by facilitating the grant making process from proposal to funding to evaluation; and by providing timely financial reporting," says Carol Kassel, Jewish Foundation's vice president, Planned Giving and Endowments. "We develop tremendous partnerships between our donors and the beneficiaries who rely on the support of the community. Our mandate is to provide leadership in identifying and addressing community needs, and assisting donors in achieving their philanthropic objectives. I believe that no other organization in Toronto can fulfill this role as effectively."

(above, l-r) Carol Kassel, vice president, Planned Giving and Endowments Jewish Foundation and Elizabeth Wolfe, chair.
(left) Al G. Brown accepting the 2005 Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) Award of Excellence from Elizabeth Wolfe.

"There are so many options, so many organizations knocking on doors looking for donations, that people often need a filter," says Wolfe. "That's why so many look to the Foundation now, because of our expertise and our international accessibility. Our professionals have the resources to assess and evaluate the priorities, the needs in the community and the wishes of the donor. That partnership defines today's new philanthropy."

The growth in popularity of the Foundation can also be attributed to accountability, essential for today's sophisticated donor.

"We offer accountability in a variety of areas," says Wolfe. "The Foundation assures donors that grants from their funds are being applied to the projects they have identified to be supported. But more than that, the Foundation also takes on all the administration related to the management and distribution of the funds which is a huge advantage for donors."

According to Wolfe, another attractive benefit of dealing with the Foundation is that it is "almost impossible for an individual to duplicate the level of expertise offered by our investment committee and our professional administrators."

"UJA Federation is the heart and the soul of our Jewish community and through its endowment arm, the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, we established a donor advised fund," says fundholder Ab Flatt. "The money is being directed to a number of important initiatives, helping to ensure the future of our vibrant Jewish community."

"The impact of the dollars we distributed for social services, education, assisting the vulnerable and, of course, supporting many initiatives in Israel is tremendous. We are very proud of our achievements and of our ability to make charitable giving easy and rewarding," remarks Wolfe.

Better climate dawning for stock donations

By JAMIE GOLOMBEK
UJA Federation

Assuming the recently-elected Conservatives follow-up on their pre-election promise to eliminate the capital gains tax on donations of listed shares to a registered Canadian charity, this new rule should provide a huge impetus for a flood of sizable stock donations in 2006. Before discussing the Conservatives' proposal, let's review the basic donation credit rule.

Jamie Golombek

The Donation Credit

Donations to a registered charity in Canada are eligible for the donation tax credit. For the first $200 of donations made by an individual in the year, the federal donation credit is 16 percent of the amount given.

The Ontario provincial credit is an additional 6 percent, for a combined total credit of approximately 22 percent. In other words, when you file your tax return, you would be entitled to about $44 back from the first $200 of annual donations.

But it gets even better. Once you've made at least $200 of donations in any year, the donation credit jumps to 29 percent federally, plus between 11 and 18 percent provincially, depending on your income tax bracket and whether you are subject to the Ontario high-income surtaxes.

So, for donations in excess of the first $200, you would get back, at a minimum, 40 percent of the amount you donate. Given that the donations are in the form of tax credits (a credit is a reduction of tax owing) as opposed to tax deductions (a reduction of taxable income), the credits are essentially worth the same for low-, middle- and high income earners (ignoring the effect of the Ontario surtax).

The Conservative Proposal

The Conservative proposal to eliminate the capital gains tax on donations of appreciated publicly traded stock to charity, which was also endorsed by the Liberals, will surely be a windfall for philanthropy in the community. The current inclusion rate on donations of such stock is 25 percent.

For example, let's assume that a donor, who currently owns $100,000 of publicly-traded stock that he purchased many years ago for $20,000, is considering a donation of these shares to charity. If he simply sold the shares first, he would realize a capital gain of $80,000 and pay tax of about $18,000 on the gain, assuming a top marginal rate of about 45 percent.

Under the Conservative proposal, if he donates the shares directly to charity, this $18,000 of capital gains tax will be eliminated and he would still be entitled to his full tax receipt for the $100,000 contributed.

Finally, keep in mind that this proposal is not yet law so be sure to get some professional advice to ensure that this is passed before assuming it's a done deal.

Jamie Golombek is vice president, Taxation & Estate Planning at AIM Trimark Investments in Toronto and a member of the Jewish Foundation's Professional Advisory Committee.

Top money manager leads investment committee

Catherine (Kiki) Delaney, president of investment counselling firm C.A. Delaney Capital Management Ltd., is the new chair of the Investment Committee at the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, following in the footsteps of former chairs Ira Gluskin and Austin Beutel.

"The Jewish Foundation and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto are such tremendous organizations and it is so important to give back to the community," says Delaney. "I was flattered to be asked to chair a committee that is populated by a group of people, each of whom is both an expert and a success in his or her own field and totally motivated and committed to sharing their knowledge."

Delaney says her primary goal is to produce above average returns with below average volatility by tapping into the knowledge base of the top ranking specialists who are members of this committee. "They bring such varying expertise to the table," says Delaney.

Catherine (Kiki) Delaney

The Foundation's return on investment for the 2004-2005 fiscal year was 13.4%.

Delaney sees the highest priority of the Investment Committee as preserving capital of over $134 million in assets held by the Jewish Foundation. "These assets comprise the legacy and endowment funds of many donors in support of our Jewish community and we want to ensure they are there in perpetuity," she says.

"I'm following two of the smartest money managers in Canada," adds Delaney. "I would never presume to change the outstandingly successful policies they put into motion. However, every investment counselor has his or her predisposition. With my equity bias, over time and when it is appropriate, I would like to see the Foundation develop a policy that reflects a high equity proportion."

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

PA election puts Hamas under a microscope

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

As of this writing, the results of the Jan. 25 Palestinian elections seem to indicate that Hamas has handily beaten Fatah and will likely form the next government. Meanwhile, most of the coverage in the run-up to the election focused on Hamas. While some reporters seemed to buy in to the new, "moderate" Hamas, others were more skeptical, portraying Hamas as a terrorist organization committed to Israel's destruction.

In "Hamas's road to politics" (*Toronto Star*, Jan. 23) Olivia Ward wrote that the Hamas covenant "ruled out any compromise with Israel, declared all of Palestine a Muslim state and announced a holy war against the Jewish state." Yet, without examining the implications of these statements, Ward said that Hamas "may be the principal partner for negotiations for the future of Middle East peace."

In the *Globe and Mail* ("Defusing Hamas," Jan. 21), Mark MacKinnon accurately predicted that "Hamas is on the verge of handing the ruling Fatah party a lashing that could radically alter the Palestinian political landscape and derail prospects of a peace settlement with Israel."

But MacKinnon was off the mark in claiming that Hamas insists on using violence "to end Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza." Hamas's goal, in fact, is to "liberate" all of historic Palestine – including Israel.

There are many quotes from Hamas leaders such as Mahmoud al-Zahar who, prior to the election, declared outright: "Hamas will not negotiate with Israeli occupiers and will not recognize Israel's appropriation of a single inch of our land" (UPI, Jan. 19). By "our land" al-Zahar is including Israel along with the West Bank and Gaza – everything from the Mediterranean Sea to the Jordan River.

What journalists should consider is how an organization committed to the destruction of a UN-member state can ever be thought of as a possible partner for future negotiations.

On NBC News (Jan. 24), Martin Fletcher profiled a female Hamas candidate who was proud that three of her sons were "martyred" in terrorist attacks against Israel. Fletcher asked her: "Standing for Parliament means that's an end to the military struggle, doesn't it? Democracy means no more terrorism?"

Her answer: "No, our strategy is to continue with military action. It is parallel: the political plan and the jihad plan."

Fletcher's conclusion summarized what's at stake: "Fatah in the present government agrees to a Palestinian state alongside Israel, while Hamas wants a Palestinian state instead of Israel."

On *The National* (CBC, Jan 24), Adrienne Arsenault described how Hamas was campaigning on being able to deliver social services and run a "clean" government, as opposed to the corruption and inefficiency of Fatah. Arsenault said: "Its carefully managed campaign stresses charity work. But this is not a gentler Hamas. Its campaign ads make its values clear: Destroy Israel and hang on to 'the weapon.'"

Arsenault interviewed Hamas's No. 2 candidate, Sheikh Abu Tir. Described by Bradley Burston in *Ha'aretz* as the "poster boy" for the moderate face of Hamas, Abu Tir contradicted this image, telling Arsenault: "Palestine is occupied since 1948. This is our right to fight," meaning that the armed struggle must continue until all of Palestine is liberated.

Statements such as this show just how unsuccessful Hamas's efforts to soften its radical image in the West are likely to be. In "Hamas launches media war," (*Toronto Star*, Jan. 21), Mitch Potter wrote about the lengths to which Hamas has gone to "rebrand" itself, going so far as to hire Ramallah-based media consultant Nashat Aqtash, paying him $180,000 (US) for "a month-long campaign leading up to [last week's] Parliamentary elections."

The Canadian federal election closely preceded the Palestinian election, which means the new government in Ottawa might immediately face a Middle East issue, a topic explored by Anna Morgan in the *Toronto Star* ("Elections here and there pose a Mideast dilemma," Jan. 22). Morgan wrote: "If Hamas wins, the new Canadian government will have to confront the dilemma of how to deal with democratically elected candidates committed to terrorism."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Coast to Coast

Hamilton ceremony honours survivors

HAMILTON — More than 300 people came to the Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Pavilion at the Art Gallery of Hamilton to pay tribute to local Holocaust survivors on the United Nations International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust last Friday.

The City of Hamilton marked the occasion with a dignified and deeply moving program that reached across all ethnic, racial and religious lines.

The event was sponsored by the Hamilton chapter of the Canadian United Nations Association, the City of Hamilton, the Hamilton Jewish Federation, the Hamilton Culture of Peace Network, Hamilton Police Services, the Strengthening Hamilton Community Initiative and the Hamilton Interfaith Group. The public and separate-school boards of the Hamilton-Wentworth District also participated.

Dan McLean of CHTV was the moderator of the event and guest speakers included Hamilton Mayor Larry Di Ianni; Hamilton Centre MP David Christopherson; president of the United Nations Association of Canada, Kate White; Hamilton MPP Maria Bountrogianni; Sandra Wilson of Hamilton Police Services and Rabbi Daniel Green of Adas Israel Synagogue.

Performances were given by Jack Mendelsohn, principal cellist of the Hamilton Philharmonic, and the Kehila Community Day School Children's Choir. Grade 8 students from the Hamilton Hebrew Academy served as ushers for the dignitaries and Holocaust survivors attending.

In what was the most moving element of the commemoration, representatives of six different faith and cultural groups, Muslim, Hindu, Bahai, First Nations, Buddhist and Rwandan, each read a biography of a local Hamilton survivor. After each reading, the survivor and his or her family were invited to place a stone in memory of one million of the six million Jewish Holocaust victims on top of a pillar.

The event was organized in response to a UN resolution, passed on Nov. 1, 2005, calling for an "international Day of Commemoration to honour victims of the Holocaust." The resolution "rejects any denial of the Holocaust as a historical event, in whole or in part"; "condemns without reserve all manifestations of religious intolerance, incitement, harassment or violence based on ethnic origin or religious beliefs"; and "calls upon civil society to mobilize for Holocaust education and remembrance, in order to help prevent future acts of genocide."

Initiated by Israel and drafted by Australia, the United States, Canada and Russia, it was the first resolution ever put forward by Israel at the UN. The resolution was cosponsored by 104 countries and passed by consensus.

Madeleine Levy of the Hamilton Interfaith Group said that "since the events of 9/11, the City of Hamilton has provided every ethnic, cultural and religious group an unparalleled opportunity to come together and to develop much greater awareness and sensitivity to each other."

She said that the event was of deep personal significance to her and her family because so many of her relatives were lost in Romania during the war.

CIC commends Harper

Continued from page 1

However, "if institutions committed to terrorism are playing a role in the Palestinian state, whether elected or not, that's an indication to me that the road to democracy has not been travelled very far."

Harper declined to say whether his government would continue to support Palestinians under Hamas. Under the Liberals, Canadian aid to the Palestinian Authority has totalled $310 million since 1993.

Critics of the Liberals have complained that Ottawa has never confirmed that the Palestinian leadership was doing what the aid has been contingent on, namely, disarming Palestinian terrorists and ending incitement in textbooks and the glorification of suicide bombers.

The Canada-Israel Committee commended Harper's remarks.

"With [his] comment, Mr. Harper has aligned himself with the international consensus as expressed by numerous world leaders throughout the course of the day," stated Marc Gold, the CIC's national chair.

Palestinians "have a democratic right to choose their leadership," Gold went on, "but they must accept the consequences of those choices. As long as Hamas supports terrorism, it cannot be a partner for peace. Israel cannot be expected to negotiate with a party that calls for its destruction and pursues a program of terror to achieve its political objectives."

He said Israel will continue "to advance the cause of peace independently."

The Canadian Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies also applauded Harper.

"We now call on [Harper] to ensure that Canada suspend all financing and contacts with a government declared by this country as a terrorist group," stated the Friends' director of national affairs, Leo Adler.

In a telephone interview from Israel with the Toronto *Star*, B'nai Brith Canada executive vice-president Frank Dimant expressed hope that Harper would appoint Stockwell Day, known for his pro-Israel views, as foreign affairs minister.

The victory by Hamas represents "a setback for Palestinian and Israeli moderates seeking a negotiated solution to the conflict, but it should not serve as a pretext for Israeli hardliners to oppose further steps to end the occupation," said the Canadian Friends of Peace Now.

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Sunday, 12 February 2006
2:00 pm
Dr. Stephen D. Smith, MBE
Learning and Teaching the Lessons of the Holocaust

Sunday, 12 February 2006
3:45 pm
Panel Discussion:
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Canadians apathetic about terrorism, says general

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL – The highest ranking Jewish officer in the Canadian Forces warned that Canadians are "sleepwalking" in the face of the potential threat of international terrorism on this country's soil.

This has become "a dangerous world – more so than in the recent past – but Canadians are generally unaware of the hazards and done little about them," Maj.-Gen. Ed Fitch told a Congregation Shaar Hashomayim audience last week.

"I'm not here to frighten you, just alert you," he said.

Fitch, a Montreal native who grew up in Shaar Hashomayim, said that "our enemies are looking to exploit what they see as the weaknesses in Western civilization: our belief in the sanctity of life, our open society, democracy, our adherence to the Geneva Conventions.

"Their greatest delight is the apathy of our population."

Avoiding the word 'terrorist," he described these enemies as "by and large, anarchists, criminals and thugs," who are lightly armed, relying mainly on a sophisticated use of explosives, and with minimal infrastructure such as bases and airfields.

"Yet they are capable of bringing war close to us," he said.

"Are the threats that have been made against Canada credible? You can decide for yourself. Because we have not been attacked yet is no reason we won't be."

Canada's military is being put on an operational footing abroad and at home, he said. "The chief of defence staff has said that Canada itself has become a theatre of operation… We are preparing to fight an undeclared war."

Similarly, the RCMP, CSIS and the border and immigration services have been put on the ready, Fitch said.

"But we don't know if it is enough. No one can give you a guarantee on security."

Internationally, Canada's goal is to "stop the instability before it is sent to Canada." During this month and next, Canadian troops in Afghanistan will be increased from 600 to 2,000, he said.

"This is not the peacekeeping that we have been so good at… This is a Taliban hunting.".

Fitch stressed it's a "myth" that our troops are being sent into operations poorly equipped. "In Kandahar, of all the national contingents, including the U.S., none are better equipped… It is hurtful to our troops to open the papers and read that they are poorly equipped. It's demoralizing."

What Fitch does find "pitiful" is the lack of civil planning for a possible attack at home.

He said every Canadian can contribute by being alert to their surroundings. "Don't be apathetic. The enemy will be delighted. Don't panic. This is, in many respects, a psychological war."

He advised each person to be aware of their neighbourhoods, the routes they regularly travel, the stores they frequent.

"Observe any anomalies and report them. You are going to notice them before others, would because it's your habitual area."

He said everyone should consider what skills they have that might be mobilized in the event of an emergency. "The police and fire departments, even the armed forces, may not be enough when it happens.

"Shake off the sleep. Walk aware and alert. Prepare to contribute, in no matter what small way, the variety of skills you have. If we are strong, the democracies will prevail against this threat."

He also urged those present to call upon the government to "take effective measures" against terrorism, "not just window-dressing."

Fitch, who has served for 39 years, is currently project manager of "land force reserve restructure," based at National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa.

Born in Montreal in 1949, he graduated from the Royal Military College in Kingston in 1971 with a degree in civil engineering.

He has spent most of his career in Canada, but did a one-year tour in the former Yugoslavia, for which he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal. He was promoted to his present rank in December 2001.

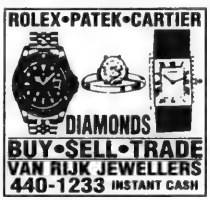
Fitch guessed there are probably a "few hundred" Jews in the Canadian forces today. The religion of service personnel is confidential, known only by the chaplain-general.

Fitch keeps kosher at home and on the job as much as possible. Kosher rations have been available in the field since the late 1990s, but not in garrison, he said. "I've eaten a lot of peanut butter sandwiches."

Fitch's father Burton served in World War II, and his uncle, his father's brother Max, was a military medical officer for 30 years.

One of Fitch's great-grandfathers also served in the Austrian army before the family came to Canada.

TEACHERS HONOURED: A standing-room-only-crowd of parents, students, colleagues, alumni and parents of alumni gathered Jan. 22 at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation to pay tribute to three faculty members of Yeshivat Or Chaim-Ulpanat Orot Girls School who are retiring. Brenda Freedman, seated, along with Cordelia Oliver, standing left, and Marsha Razin have taught for a combined total of more than 100 years at the schools.
[Rebecca Ansel photo]



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HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER RADICAL-ISLAMIC REGIMES — **Monday, February 6th**

"My Story – The Nightmare of the Sudanese at the hands of the Jihadists"
Simon Deng, Former Sudanese Slave, Human Rights Activist
12:00pm-1:00pm – room SS 2117

"My Story – Growing up in a Jihadist Culture"
Nonie Darwish, Mid-East Women's rights activist
7:00pm-9:00pm – McLennan Physical Labs, 60 St. George Street. room MP 137

CIVIL RIGHTS IN RADICAL-ISLAMIC SOCIETIES — **Tuesday, February 7th**

"Civil Rights of Christians in Palestinian Society"
Donna Holbrook, Executive Director, *International Christian Embassy Jerusalem*, Canada
12:00pm-1:00pm – room SS 2127

"Oppressed Pride – Being Gay in the Middle-East"
Jeremy Dias, Gay Rights Activist, Founder and Executive Director of *Jer's Vision*
7:00pm-9:00pm – room SS 2127

MEDIA IN THE SERVICE OF RADICAL-ISLAM — **Wednesday, February 8th**

"opPRESSion: Doublespeak in 2006"
Khaled Abu Toameh, Palestinian Affairs Correspondent for the *Jerusalem Post*, former P.L.O. journalist
12:00pm-1:00pm – room SS 2135

"Canadian Media and Radical-Islam"
Dov Smith, Director of *Honest Reporting Canada*
4:00pm-5:00pm – room SS 2117

"Sesame Street for Suicide Bombers"
Barbara Crook, Co-Founder and Associate Director of *Palestinian Media Watch*
7:00pm-8:00pm – room SS 2117

THE GLOBAL THREAT – *JIHAD*: RADICAL-ISLAMIC TERRORISM — **Thursday, February 9th**

"Terrorism at Our Doorstep"
David B. Harris, Director, Terrorist Intelligence Program INSIGNIS Strategic Research Inc. and
Former Chief of Strategic Planning for CSIS
12:00pm-1:00pm – room SS 2135

"Domestic and International Terrorism"
Salim Mansur, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Western Ontario
7:00pm-9:00pm – McLennan Physical Labs, 60 St. George Street room MP 102

PEACE – THE ASPIRATION OF THE MODERATES — **Friday, February 10th**

"Knowledge to Resist Oppression"
Inter-Faith Student-Panel
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Dignitaries recall Holocaust at CJC event

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA — To mark the commemoration of the first annual United Nations International Day of Holocaust Remembrance, Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) hosted a luncheon reception for members of the diplomatic corps and representatives of local Jewish organizations.

Eric Vernon, CJC's director of government relations, welcomed Israeli Ambassador Alan Baker and Polish Ambassador Piotr Ogrodzinsky, as well as Sabine Sparwasser, charge d'affaires of the German embassy.

"We pay tribute to the United Nations for adopting the motion of the State of Israel to declare Jan. 27 as the International Day of Holocaust Remembrance to ponder both the uniqueness of the Holocaust in its nature and dimensions and the universality of its lessons and messages," Vernon said, noting that Jan. 27 was chosen because it was the day that Auschwitz was liberated in 1945.

Vernon welcomed representatives of three of the four countries that co-sponsored Israel's UN motion to establish the memorial day: Wendy Drukier, deputy head of the UN desk at Foreign Affairs Canada; Sergey Petrov of the Russian Embassy; and Lisa Wishman, vice-consul at the American Embassy. Vernon noted that the fourth co-sponsor, Australia, was celebrating its National Day, and its representatives could not attend.

Rabbi Reuven Bulka said with irony that he would be leaving the gathering to address a Kiwanis group on the topic, "Is anti-Semitism making a comeback?"

Emphasizing the timeliness of the UN resolution, Rabbi Bulka said, "It comes also at a time when we are acutely aware of some of the horrible, vitriolic statements coming out of Iran and its president," referring to recent statements by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad that Israel should be "wiped off the map."

Rabbi Bulka expressed hope that the United Nations will carry out its mandate and urge member nations to include Holocaust teaching in their educational institutions.

Baker said he was "been involved indirectly in drafting the resolution that was adopted and the many drafts that were proposed and had to be changed, and in negotiations with other countries that do not recognize the State of Israel." He added that this type of resolution should have been passed 60 years ago, but he nonetheless expressed satisfaction that it was passed.

"This being said, within a month or two months of this being adopted by the [UN General Assembly], we find ourselves in the situation that the newly elected president of Iran… claiming that the Holocaust was a myth and convening an international conference on Holocaust denial," Baker said.

"The question is whether or not the international community is prepared to go a step further and to do something practical, whether in the UN or the G-8 or in other international contexts, to act responsibly, in a serious and firm way, against this type of incitement to genocide."

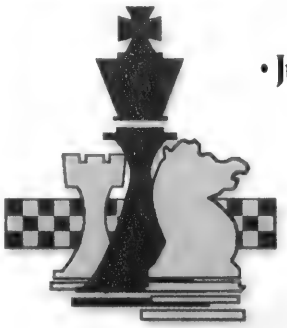
David Shentow and Ellie Bollegraf, as well as Rubin Friedman, the child of Holocaust survivors, represented survivors.

Also in attendance were David Pratt of Canadian Red Cross Society, Gen. Edward Fitch of the Canadian Forces, Sigurd Pacher of the Austrian Embassy and Gaorge Zaharea of the Romanian Embassy.

PAPER MAKERS: Noa Cowley, a Grade 1 student at the Toronto Heschel School, and her teacher Marylin Berman made paper recently as part of a social and environmental studies unit on matter and material. The kids created handmade recycled paper out of old paper using ancient techniques and modern equipment.

The Canadian Jewish news

6th ANNUAL REGIONAL CHESS CHALLENGE!



- Open to school-age children, kindergarten to grade 12
- Just for fun, test your skills, or try for a place at the provincial tournament
- Awards & prizes
- Pairings according to school grade

Competition held under the direction of The Chess 'N Math Association
Light refreshments provided for participants (nominal charge for spectators)

Date: Sunday, February 19, 2006

Location: Kamin Educational Ctr., 300 Atkinson Ave. Thornhill, Ontario

Registration: 12:00-12:45 PM

Entry Fee: $10 Pre-registered $15 At the Door

REGISTRATION FORM FOR CJN CHESS CHALLENGE

First Name_____ Last Name_____ Registration Fee_____

Address_____ Apt._____ City_____ Postal Code_____

Telephone (____) _____ Date of Birth (D/M/Y)_____

E-Mail Address _____ School_____

Ranking _____ *CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE SCHOOL GRADE:*

K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Return To: CJN, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4 – 416-391-1836

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Only paid Mazel tov announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words maximum. Send your photos to:

The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., #205 North York, ON. M3B 3K4
or email them to:
cblackman@cjnews.com

Mazel tov Betty & Hy Arlin on your special occasion.

It's A Girl!

RANGEL - (née Dicker) Rachel and Rene are thrilled to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter, Charley Eden, born on December 29, 2005, weighing 6 lbs. 8 ozs. Elated grandparents are Beverley-Ann and William Dicker, Sofia Hernandez and Rene Rangel. Excited are uncle Adam and auntie Wendy Dicker, aunties Kuqui, Nena and Lala Rangel. Excited about their new playmate is big brother Riley and big sisters Danielle and Rachel Rangel and cousins Jordan, Corey, Julie and Amanda Dicker. Also excited is great-grandmother Hilda Clemens and aunt Paula Kerschenbaum. Many thanks to Doctor Shuen and the wonderful staff at North York General Hospital.

Happy 90th birthday to Ella Razmov. With love from Barry & Sabina, Helen & Hy, and grandchildren Loren, Melissa, Richard, Adrienne, Steven and Mark.

Mazel tov to our wonderful parents and grandparents, Herta & Philip Getzler on their 60th wedding anniversary. All our love and best wishes.

Mazel tov to Amy Shulman & Stephen Getzler on their engagement. The Shulman, Furman and Getzler families are thrilled to share their joy.

Diane Berger proudly announces the engagement of her son Neil, son of the late Julius Berger, to Jennifer Leigh, daughter of Jean & Eugene Doerrsam.

Mazel tov to Tzvia & Sharir Richman, married in Jerusalem. Daughter of Barbie & Alon Zimmerman. Granddaughter of Clive & Reva Lawry. Peace from mishpochah in Canada.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, Feb. 6, is the deadline for the Feb. 16 issue and Monday, Feb. 13, is the deadline for the Feb. 23 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Feb. 2

JEWISH MEDITATION

Lech Lecha Jewish Meditation, Jews for Judaism and Beth Habonim Congregation offer a four- week series on Jewish meditation facilitated by **Chashi Skobac,** beginning tonight, 7:30-9 p.m. at 5 Glen Park Ave. $40, $12 per individual session. To register, call 416-787-9529.

50 YEARS OF STRUGGLE

Beth David Congregation continues the series "Tkuma" with *The People's Army*, a historical documentary about Israel's struggles and achievements, with commentary by **Dr. David Goldberg**, of the Canada-Israel Committee. 7:30 p.m. 416-633-3988.

Friday, Feb. 3

SHABBAT OPEN HOUSE

Join Solel Congregation in Mississauga for its annual "Invite Your Neighbour" Shabbat service. 8 p.m. Call 905-820-5915 for directions.

Saturday, Feb.4,

EMUNAH MOVIE NIGHT

Join Emunah Women at Beth Jacob Synagogue and watch the classic Israeli film *Salah Shabbati*, starring **Chaim Topel**. 7:45 p.m. at 147 Overbrook Pl. Refreshments served. Adults $5, children 14 and under $3.

Sunday, Feb. 5

BBYO IN NIAGARA

Spend the day in Niagara Falls with other teenagers. Call the BBYO office at 416-398-2004 to register.

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc. at a WinterCity Festival of outdoor programs at Nathan Phillips Square. Meet inside the front doors of the Sheraton Hotel, 123 Queen St. W. at 11:30 a.m. For registration, e-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

'WORLD WIDE WRAP'

Beth Emeth Brotherhood and Youth Department present their annual "World Wide Wrap." Beginning at 8 a.m. with putting on tfillin, Shacharit services at 8:30 a.m. Breakfast at 9:15 a.m. Video and program to follow. $5. Reserve at 416-633-3838.

A HEALING SERVICE

The Toronto Healing Project offers a healing service with **Rabbi Ronald Weiss** and **Judy Shier Weisberg**. 3-4 p.m. at Lipa Green, 4600 Bathurst St. Wheelchair access. 416-944-3359.

WEDDING WORKSHOP

Kolel presents "My Big Fat Jewish Wedding Workshop," an evening covering everything you need to know about having a Jewish wedding ceremony with **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** and **Cantor David Edwards**. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at 151 Eglinton Avenue W. $10. 416-485-7007, ext. 0. www.kolel.org

Monday, Feb. 6

POLITICS AND INTRIGUE

Get a new spin on an old story. Join **Rabbi Pinchas Brumer** for "Political Intrigue and Spiritual Reality in Shushan," a four-week course beginning tonight, and continuing Feb. 13, 27 and March 6, at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 8-9:30 p.m. For registration and information, call Mekorot, 416-877-2050.

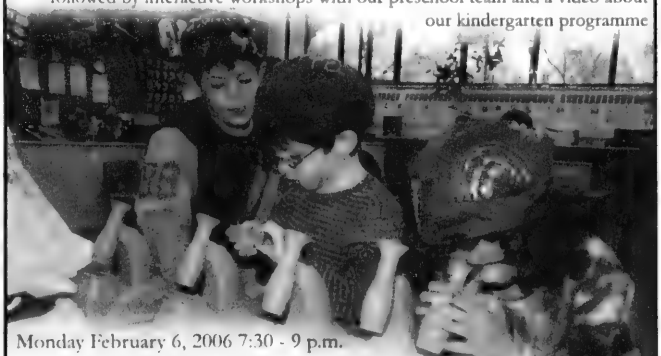
SONG OF SONGS

Rabbi Michal Shekel speaks on the topic "Song of Songs: Divine Love or Human Passion" tonight, Feb. 13 and 20. 8:15 p.m. at Temple Har Zion. $5 for non-members. 905-889-2252.

CHAMBER MUSIC CONCERT

The Associates of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra presents the first of "Five Small Concerts Chamber Music" with members of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra. 7:30 p.m. at

Continued on page 29

Jewish Preschool – Why now?
What happens in preschool that matters?
What is different about a Jewish preschool?
The Toronto Heschel School invites you to an exciting and informative evening with keynote speaker
Dr. Rachael Turkienicz on "Ethics in Preschool"
followed by interactive workshops with our preschool team and a video about our kindergarten programme

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Continued from page 28

Trinity-St. Paul's Community Centre, 427 Bloor St. W. For tickets, call 416-221-8342.

Tuesday, Feb. 7

LONDON LUNCH AND LEARN

The topic of Temple Israel of London's Lunch and Learn is "Tu b'Shvat: Then and Now," with **Rabbi Joel Wittstein**. Bring a lunch, coffee and dessert served. 519-858-4400.

FILDERMAN LODGE MTG

Paul Tauberg speaks on "Albert Einstein: Centenary and the Theory of Relativity," at the Dr. W. Filderman Lodge meeting. 6 p.m. at 15 Hove St. For information, call **Felicia Lowy**, 416-631-0634, or **Nety Badulescu**, 416-733-1214.

NIA CLASSES

Congregation Habonim offers Nia classes Tuesdays, 7:30-8:30 p.m. with **Robyn Tousson**. To register, contact tearsofjoy@rogers.com, 647-295-0084.

WHAT'S KILLING JUDAISM?

Join **Rabbi Michael Skobac** for "Is Religion Killing Judaism?" an examination of the negative stereotypes that distance many people from Jewish involvement. 8 p.m. at the Minsker Shul, 10 St. Andrews St. Free. For information, contact Jews for Judaism, 905-761-0040.

THE DATING DRASHAH

Bnai Torah Congregation and Sasson V'Simcha host The Dating Drashah, a lecture series for singles by **Rabbi Yechiel Goldreich**. Tonight, "Worst Date Ever Horror Stories: The Date Returns." 8:30 p.m. $5. 465 Patricia Ave. 416-256-4497.

Wednesday, Feb. 8

BARRIE LECTURE

Congregation Am Shalom, Barrie will have a Tu b'Shvat lecture presentation with biblical archeologist **Eli Shenhav**. 7 p.m. For information, call 705-792-3949.

Other news

JEWISH MUSIC SERIES

Beth Tzedec Congregation Concert and lecture series on Jewish music and its impact with five lectures by **Edwin Seroussi**, beginning Sunday, Feb. 5, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec with a cantorial concert with cantors **Simon Spiro, Tibor Kovari, Aaron Bensoussan** and **Marshall Loomer**, and a narrative by Seroussi. Voluntary admission $10. On Monday, Feb. 6, at noon at the Wolfond Centre, "Is There an Israeli Rock 'n' Roll?" a lecture with music. On Tuesday, Feb. 7, at 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec, "Shtetl Instrumental Music and Its Modern Offspring." On Thursday, Feb. 9, noon at University of Toronto, faculty of music, "What Makes Jewish Music Jewish?" And on Thursday, Feb. 9, 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec, "Back to the Future: Will Traditional Jewish Music Survive Globalization?" 416-781-3511.

TEACHERS SEMINAR DAY

UJA Federation Holocaust Centre presents its annual teachers' seminar on Teaching the Holocaust with **Prof. Daniel S. Brenner**, of the Auburn Theological Seminary, New York, on "Pop Culture and the Holocaust." Thursday, Feb. 9, 4:30-8:30 p.m. Teachers $25, student teachers $20. Includes dinner, kits and workshops. For information and registration, call **Hanna** at 416-635-2883, ext. 153, or hschwartz@ujafed.org.

SENSORY INPUT & LEARNING

Expressive Communication Help Organization (ECHO) presents **Rhona Feldt-Stein**, pediatric occupational therapist, speaking on "Sensory Input and Its Effect on Learning," for parents of children with late-developing speech, gross and/or fine-motor delay, and/or sensory issues. Thursday, Feb. 9, 7-9 p.m. at the Richmond Hill Public Library. For information, e-mail apraxiaontario@yahoo.com.

EATING DISORDERS

An evening of knowledge and enlightenment in honour of National Eating Disorder Awareness Week, Thursday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m. at the Bathurst Clark Resource Library, 900 Clark Ave. W.

SHLOCK ROCK CONCERT

Canadian Friends of the Koby Mandell Foundation launches a community-wide bar/ bat mitzvah program in memory of **Koby Mandell** with a concert by the group Shlock Rock hosted by **Adrienne Gold**. Thursday, Feb. 9, 7:30 p.m. at the Vaughan City Playhouse Theatre. Youth $5 Adults $10. Tickets available at 905-882-7469. For information, call 905-760-0073 or e-mail joanne@kobymandell.org.

PHOTO SEMINAR

Temple Har Zion host a "Tradigital" photo seminar for 35mm and digital camera users Thursday, Feb. 9 at 7:30 p.m. To register, call 416-490-8236 or e-mail camerabug@rogers.com. $25.

LONDON CONCERT

Celebrate Jewish music with the Gerald Fagan Singers, Saturday evening, Feb. 11 at 7:30 p.m. at Or Shalom Synagogue, 534 Huron St., London. The evening includes music ranging from **Salomone Rossi** to **Leonard Bernstein** and all points in between. Proceeds support Magen David Adom of London. For information and tickets, call 519-438-3081.

SINGLES NIGHT OUT

Adath Israel Young Business and Professionals Network host "Saturday Night at the Bistro Grande" for 20- and 30-somethings. Saturday, Feb. 11 at 9 p.m. 1000 Eglinton Ave. W. Meet, eat and mingle. To reserve, call 416-782-3302.

TU B'SHVAT SEDER

Beth Tzedec Congregation invites Generation Hutzpah to a Tu b'Shvat seder and wine tasting Sunday, Feb. 12, at 6:15 p.m. Free. 416-781-3514, ext. 47.

PERFORMERS WANTED

The Bubies and Zaidies, a small friendly performing group of seniors, needs singers and/or dancers. No fees. Call **Fred Field**, 416-633-2877, or **Tom Weiss**, 416-663-7085.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jiastoronto.org. To register, volunteer or for information on these programs, call **Joanna** at 416-630-6481, ext. 30.

Conversation Cafés: Newcomers to Canada are invited to practise speaking English in a casual and friendly environment with JIAS volunteers. Offered in two locations: BJCC and Bathurst & Steeles.

JIAS Toronto offers programming for newcomer children and teens. For information, call **Allison** at ext.28.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Effective Parenting: A four-session group for parents of children ages 3 to 11 years old. Mondays, beginning Feb. 6, 7- 9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Today's Woman: A six-session group for women who want to discuss time management, building self-esteem and improving communication skills. Begins Tuesday, Feb. 7, 7-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

One Family, Two Homes, a three- session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Children participate in separate age-appropriate groups. Begins Tuesday, Feb. 14, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St., Lipa Green Bldg.

Living With Teens, Parenting your adolescent without losing your cool. A six-session group. Begins Wednesday, Feb. 15, 7:30-9 p.m. the Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Tzedec Congregation Senior Haverim Program presents **Renee Barda**, mezzo-soprano, with piano accompaniment. Monday, Feb. 6, 1:30 p.m. $2. 416-781-3511.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday Dance, Feb. 5. Casino Rama, Wednesday, Feb. 15. Bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. Call 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. Feb. 2, bingo, Feb. 9, dinner. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Inter-generational Environment Day, Wednesday, Feb 8, 1-2:30 p.m. Free. All welcome.

Israeli Club Etrog, Tuesday, Feb 7, 3 p.m. "Stories from the Heart"; Feb. 14, 6:30 p.m.Tu b'Shvat party.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

The BJCC computer lab specializes in computer and Internet classes for those 55+. Each course is four weeks long, two classes per week for a total of 16 hours. Call ext. 235 to register.

Join the BJCC for **Valerie Harper** in *Golda's Balcony*, Thursday, May 25, 2006, 8 p.m., at the Elgin Theatre. $180 with a tax receipt. Call ext. 271 for tickets.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Jewish Meditation Orientation, a 10-week course, Feb. 5-April 9, 4:30-5:30 p.m. $90, non-members $140, drop in $15.

Intermediate Hebrew I, six weeks, Tuesdays, Feb. 7-March 14, 7-9 p.m. $154, non-members $186, $10 material fee.

Hebrew Conversation I, six weeks, Thursdays, Feb. 9-March 16, 7- 9 p.m. $154, non-members $186, $10 material fee.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 31

To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling

OBITUARIES and Related Notices

To place any other family related notice, please call at least 10 DAYS prior to the issue date

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Satanowsky, Boruch	Jan. 16/06	3 Goldfinch Crt
Lederman, Gitla Jean	Jan. 17/06	115 Antibes Dr
Gutstein, Rose	Jan. 18/06	718 Sheppard Ave. W
Fisher, Max	Jan. 18/06	Private
Savlov, Thelma	Jan. 19/06	21 Peverill Hill Rd S
Rechtsman, Philip	Jan. 16/06	44 Carnegie Cres
Bayer, Rose	Jan. 18/06	115 Antibes Dr
Davarashvili, Simha	Jan. 19/06	80 Forecastle Rd
Krugel, Honey Gail	Jan. 19/06	48 Brushwood Cres
Morris, Sadie	Jan. 20/06	Private
Fialkov, Gershon	Jan. 21/06	63 Alexandra Wood
Birman, Philip	Jan. 23/06	3560 Bathurst St.

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Harold Soupcoff	Jan 15/06	3600 Yonge Street
Fanny Saunders	Jan 14/06	18 Lower Village Gate
Harry Schwartz	Jan 15/06	131 Torresdale Avenue
Frieda Sohn	Jan 14/06	645 Castlefield Avenue
Murray Rotstein	Jan 15/06	4 Wyegate Court
Lillian Weinstein	Jan 16/06	25 Brunswick Avenue
Stephen Solymar	Jan 17/06	65 Spring Garden Avenue
Esther Ingber	Jan 19/06	452 Melrose Avenue
Abe Granatstein	Jan 19/06	3560 Bathurst Street
Bernice Marcus	Jan 20/06	7300 Yonge St
David Galler	Jan 19/06	80 Antibes Drive
Ettie Tennen	Jan 21/06	74 Ridge Hill Dr
Terry Browman	Jan 21/06	39 Carnegie Crescent
Harry Goodman	Jan 21/06	77 Searle Avenue
Dr. Rochelle Gross	Jan 21/06	17 Alvin Avenue

HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Barnet Krikst	Jan 17/06	5935 Bathurst Street

In dear memory of our son & brother

Niv Erez z'l

Wednesday February 8, 2006 8:30am

Memorial at Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Community Section

Lisa Judith Spitzer ז"ל

May 28, 1965 - February 5, 1981

In loving memory of our Lisa on her 25th yahrzeit. remembered with the deepest love by her family: her mom, Elizabeth, Andrew, Jodi, Joshua and Jaime. Never forgotten by extended family and close friends. Her sweetness lives in our hearts together with our love, which is eternal.

The family of the late

JULIAN FURMAN ז"ל

wish to express our sincere gratitude to our family and friends for your many acts of kindness and expressions of sympathy. Your comforting love and support during this difficult time will always be remembered.

Mark, Steve, Liza and Adrian Furman

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Obituary

Andrea Bronfman mourned in Montreal

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

Andrea Bronfman is being remembered in Montreal, where she lived for 30 years, as a woman who approached whatever cause she espoused with passion and determination.

The news of Bronfman's accidental death on Jan. 23 in New York at age 60 shocked the Montreal Jewish community, where many still remember her best as a founder of the Group of 35, a pioneering organization of younger women who tirelessly campaigned for the emigration of Soviet Jewry, in the 1970s and early '80s.

Andrea Bronfman

"She was brave and extremely creative, yet self-effacing," said Manny Batshaw, who was her husband Charles Bronfman's adviser on Jewish affairs for 17 years.

"She put herself totally into whatever she took on. Nothing, but nothing, stood in her way. And she was absolutely insistent upon excellence, and was most unhappy with anything less. She wouldn't say so verbally, she never raised her voice, but you could see it in her facial expression," he said.

Group of 35 member Carolyn Steinman recalled:"She had great fortitude. When she believed in something, she got down to the nitty-gritty. Nothing was too difficult for her; I remember her getting down on the floor and painting signs [for the group's demonstrations]. I really admired her.

"Some said she was a tough cookie, but she was also charming and pleasant."

Bronfman was buried on Friday on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

She died in hospital hours after being struck by a vehicle while walking her beloved dog Yoffi early in the morning near her Fifth Avenue apartment in Manhattan.

A petite, dark-haired woman, Bronfman, then known as Andy Cohen, was at the forefront of countless pre-glasnost vigils outside the Soviet consulate, then a mysterious and forbidding place on du Musée Avenue, often in the worst of weather and sometimes overnight.

Batshaw said the image most etched in his memory is of Bronfman standing on top of a panel truck shouting through a bullhorn "Let my people go."

"It was such a contrast to her otherwise self-effacing way. She liked to work in the background. Hers was a quiet leadership," Batshaw said.

"She was very hands-on," remembered Lily Frank, who met Bronfman through the Group of 35."She knew what she wanted and went for it. And she never tolerated fools easily."

Bronfman's biggest project in Canada was A Coat of Many Colours: Two Centuries of Jewish Life in Canada, which produced a film, book and an exhibition that premiered in 1990 at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, then travelled across Canada, and to New York and Israel.

Her 1982 marriage to Charles Bronfman, then the Montreal head of the Seagram's liquor corporation – a second marriage for both – was unusually compatible, observers say.

She came from a strongly Zionist background. Her late parents, Hyam and New York-born Doris Morrison, were leaders of the British Jewish community who lived part of the year in Jerusalem. Andrea expanded Charles's interest in Israel and the arts, moving him toward an activist style of philanthropy.

"They worked together as a team. They had the same mindset, the desire to do good for people. Charles is going to be lost without her," said longtime friend Martin Levine, who attended Bronfman's funeral at Manhattan's historic B'nai Jeshurun Synagogue on Jan. 25.

Levine described the funeral, attended by close to 1,500, including former U.S. president Bill Clinton, as a scene of "total sadness and sense of loss."

Born in London in 1945, Bronfman emigrated to Montreal soon after her first marriage to David Cohen in 1969, joining her older sister Marcia (Kappy) Flanders here.

She and Charles moved to New York in 1998, after dividing their time between that city and Montreal for some years. They also had homes in Jerusalem and Palm Beach, Fla. In 2003, she and Charles were named honorary citizens of Jerusalem, where they lived three months of the year, the first North American Jews to receive this honour.

She was co-chair of the Andrea and Charles Bronfman Philanthropies (ACBP), founded in 1998, which awards millions in grants annually to endeavours aimed at strengthening Jewish identity, especially among youth, as well as the arts and education in general. She and her husband were co-founders six years ago of birthright israel, a popular program that offers Jewish young people free organized trips to Israel. Almost 100,000 youths have participated to date.

"There was an undeniable force that seemed to emanate from Andy and make good things happen for many, many people," said Jeffrey Solomon, president of ACBP.

Among the recipient of ACBP funding in Canada are the Historica Foundation, which encourages young people to learn Canadian history and creates the televised Heritage Minutes; the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada; the National Gallery of Canada for the purchase of Canadian art; the University of Toronto, to establish a chair in Israeli studies; and scholarships for the Canadian Gene Cure Foundation to encourage more students to enter the field of genetics.

Bronfman was also founder and deputy chair of the Gift of New York, which donated tickets to cultural and sports events in New York to bereaved relatives of the 9/11 terrorist attacks as a gesture of solace. By its conclusion in the spring of 2003, 12,000 families had benefited.

In 2003, she founded the Association for Israel's Decorative Arts, with the mission of exposing Israeli artists to North American galleries and collectors. On her 60th birthday, Charles established the Andrea M. Bronfman Prize for the Arts, affectionately referred to as The Andy, to honour his wife's lifelong love of the arts and to showcase Israeli decorative artists.

In a 2002 interview with the *New York Times*, Bronfman explained that her grief over the recent death of a close friend of 35 years in a traffic accident in India gave her a sense of what the families of the 9/11 victims were suffering.

"I can feel it in my fingertips," she said. "Just what happens to people's worlds when you have a sudden tragedy; how many people need looking after who are left behind, in so many ways. Each person needs something different. It takes a lot of energy to come back into an everyday life."

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On Campus

Cotler speaks to law students

OTTAWA — If we don't get involved in the larger issues of human rights then we will diminish ourselves as Jews, MP Irwin Cotler recently told Jewish law students prior to the federal election.

Speaking at the 19th annual conference of the Canadian Jewish Law Students Association, Cotler urged students to take the struggle against injustice into their own hands.

Citing the landmark case of James Keegstra, in which the Supreme Court condemned hate speech, Cotler said that one of the deciding factors in the judgment came as the result of a factum that he filed with the assistance of a McGill law student.

He also urged students to use the Canadian government's recent designation of a Raoul Wallenberg Day and a Holocaust Remembrance Day as organizing points for days of reflection, learning, and inspiration.

When he spoke of what he called "a silent tsunami" in Africa, and "genocide" in Darfur, Cotler's passion resonated most strongly. "We are witnessing a silent tsunami in Africa every week. Between now and next Shabbat, 130,000 people will die in Africa. Do you hear anything about it [in the media]?"

Using statistics on the pervasiveness of poverty and mass atrocity in Africa, Cotler said, "We need students to sound the alarm. Unlike politicians, students can speak with a moral voice that will be respected. You should raise your voices because society is so cynical these days that if a politician speaks about Darfur they'll say 'He's manipulating the issue for political advantage'."

Cotler said he would provide conference organizers with a 12-point action plan for law students looking to make a difference on Darfur, which will be put on the organization's website.

But he warned that being involved in a cause mustn't be an exercise in "cocktail advocacy, where you go to a demonstration once a year and say 'I've done my thing for the cause.'"

Among speakers at the conference were Ontario Court of Appeal Justice Marc Rosenberg, Israel Ambassador Alan Baker, Lawrence Bergman, Jonathan Herman, Jack Silverstone, Elliot Lifson, Sara Saber Freedman and former Liberal MP Herb Gray.

U.S. students visit Hadera

A group of 20 American university students have returned from a visit they made last month to Hadera, Israel, where they visited the site of a suicide bombing that killed six Israelis and injured many more.

Aside from visiting the Barzilai Falafel stand in the Hadera market, where a suicide detonated himself this past October, the students also visited the Hillel Yaffe Hospital, where many Israelis are still recovering from that and other bombings.

The student leadership mission to Israel was organized by the Zionist Organization of America, (ZOA) in partnership with Chabad's Terror Victims Project, a group of 230 Chabad centres that offers emotional and financial support to victims of terror.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש־ווינקל

רעדאגירט פון: אלעק סילווער

פינף־און־אכציק ביז הונדערט

און צוואנציק

פון אלעק סילווער

עס איז באמת א גרויס פארגענגין ווען מען קען עמעצן ווינטשן א „פריילעכן געבורטסטאג" („הפעי בירטהדיי"), ספעציעל ווען דאס צייכנט אפ א וויכטיק מיילשטיין אין לעבן פון דאזיקן מענטש. די פרייד איז באמת גרויס, ווען די ווינטשן גייען צו א מענטש מיט ווען מען איז נאענט באפריינדט שוין עטלעכע צענדליק יארן. אין איצטיקן פאל איז דער פארגענגין נאך גרעסער, ווייל דער דאזיקער מענטש פארדינט די אלע ווינטשן און דערצו נאך א גרויס פעקל מיט כבוד, וואס ער באקומט אין דער ליטעראריישער געזעלשאפט. איר ווילט דאך זיכער וויסן ווען מען קען שוין שרייב דא, וועל איך איך זאגן. איך שרייב דא וועגן דעם טאראנטער דיכטער און שרייבער שמחה סימכאוויטש, ווען מען איז אין עטלעכע וואכן צוריק געווארן 85 יאר יונג. דערביבער איז דאס קעפל אויבן — פינף־און־אכציק ביז הונדערט און צוואנציק.

דער נאמען שמחה סימכאוויטש איז גוט באקאנט ביי אונדז אין שטאט, אין דער לענג און בריים פון אונדזער לאנד קאנאדע און אויסער די גרענעצן פון אונדזער מדינה. איך האב געהאט די פערזענלעכע פריווילעגיע מיטצוארבעטן מיט אים אויף פארשיידענע פראיעקטן, סיי אויפן טעכנישן געביט, סיי אויפן ליטעראריישן גע־ביט. און איך וויל פעסטשטעלן, אז די מיטארבעט איז שטענדיק געווען א צופרידנשטעלנדיקע. קיין מאל איז צווישן אונדז נישט פארגעקומען קיין סיכסוך. פאר דעם בין איך אים דאנקבאר.

איך בין אויך דאנקבאר פארן פאקט, אז ער גיט מיר דעם כבוד צו רופן מיך „פריינד" און ער דערלויבט מיר צו רופן אים „פריינד". גלויבט מיר, א גוטן פריינד איז היינטיקע צייטן שווער צו קריגן.

זיין לעבנסגאנג פון 85 יאר קען מען באשרייבן אין עטלעכע שורות. געבוירן אין אטוואצק, פוילן, איבער־געלעבט די שואה אין סאוועטן־פארבאנד. נאכן צוריק־קומען קיין פוילן עמיגרירט ער קיין פארים. פון דארט איז ער אין 1949 געקומען קיין מאנטרעאל. געלעבט א שטיקל צייט אין אטאווא און צום סוף זיך באזעצט אין טאראנטא, ווו ער לעבט ביים היינטיק טאג.

אבער צו שרייבן וועגן זיינע ליטעראריש אוים־טוען, צו מאכן אפהאנדלונגען וועגן זיינע 16 ביכער, צו אנאליזירן זיינע עסייען און אפשאצן זיינע ליטעראריש־קריטישע ארטיקלען, פאר דעם דארף מען שוין האבן א סך צייט און א סך מער פאזיר. מען דארף איך דערצו האבן א סך מער ליטעראריש פעיקייטן ווי מיינע. און איך ווייס, אז עס איז פאראן א גרויסע צאל ליטע־ראטור־קריטיקער מער באהאנדטע ווי איך, ווען האבן געשריבן וועגן דעם דיכטער און וועגן זיינע שאפונגען.

צווישן זיי קענט איר בעפינען אדעלכע ווי אלי וויזעל, וועלכער האט געשריבן: „וייט געבענטשט איר פאר־מאכט טאלאנט און ווייזע". אן אנדערער איז מרדכי צאנין, וועלכער האט געשריבן: „דורכצומאכן דעם וועג וועלכן איר האט דורכגעמאכט און האבן דעם כוח צו שאפן אזעלכע גוטע לידער ווי איר שאפט, דארף מען האבן גנדרה". וייטער זיינען די ארומגעמעדיקע ווערטער פון דוד וואלפע. סימכאוויטשעס לידער פלוס די פראזע־פרקים זיינען איין ארטיעלטיק קול, דער סימכאוויטש־זינען, וואס איז אויך זינען־ידיש".

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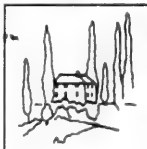
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On Campus

NOW attracts Jewish students from across Canada

'Our No. 1 goal is to light a flame under these students and to re-energize them'

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

The 500 Jewish students who did not attend the recent Canadian Federation of Jewish Students (CFJS) NOW weekend in Montreal were more significant in a way than the 350 who did participate, conference organizers say.

CFJS had to turn down that number of wannabe participants – an indication, they say, of the new level of resolve among increasing numbers of Canadian Jewish university students to work together as a dynamic whole and be involved in Jewish campus life in their local communities.

"That's key," said CFJS president Gary Diamond. "We will be a success nationally only if we are a success locally."

Success is something the fledgling organization seems to be achieving in small steps only two years since it was founded January 2004 to "empower the Canadian Jewish student community."

Its terms of reference include being the voice of Jewish students, convening and uniting students, leadership development, Canadian Jewish identity development and national communication – sharing resources across the country.

CFJS is also the Canadian representative of the World Union of Jewish Students (WUJS).

Last year, CFJS's first conference – also in Montreal – was called ONE, to signify Jewish student solidarity as Jews and as students. This year's name, NOW, was chosen to suggest that there is no better time for Jewish students to affirm themselves than "right here, right now."

Is some respects, Diamond said, CFJS is a successor – hopefully, a more durable one – to Network, a national Jewish student umbrella body that fizzled out of existence some years ago.

Diamond, 23, is a student at the University of Western Ontario, one of 30 campuses across Canada represented at the Jan. 19 to 22 conference. Participants came from Halifax, Kingston, Ottawa, London, Toronto, Hamilton, Kitchener-Waterloo, Windsor-Trent, Winnipeg, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon and other centres.

"It's been an incredible weekend," said Sara Berger, 21, vice-president of programming for CFJS, who co-chaired the NOW conference with 20-year-old McGill University political science student Jonathan Katz.

A fourth-year political science student at Queen's University, Berger estimated that only about 10 per cent of the 32,000 Jewish students at university campuses across the country are involved in a Jewish way, which she said could mean through Hillel, a Jewish fraternity or another affiliation.

It's a number CFJS is intent on increasing.

"Our No. 1 goal is to light a flame under these students and to re-energize them, to see that their passion stays strong," Berger said.

CFJS leaders said that goal was achieved in Montreal.

Diamond said students, in addition to socializing, having fun and participating in scores of workshops, "questioned themselves on why Judaism was important to them and what they wanted to see their communities doing" to encourage Jewish students to "do Jewish" in any way, from practising tikkun olam to asserting Jewish identity.

The frames of reference for NOW did not include passing resolutions or establishing policy. Nor did it focus on a specific, topical issue, as it did last year with Darfur.

What the weekend did include were meetings of the executive board, sessions and workshops on CFJS and scores of topical and relevant issues on Israel, Judaism, globalization and anti-Semitism in France, as well as presentations on "Jewish Women and Body Image" and "Kosher Sex: the Jewish Kama Sutra."

Among the highlights, Berger said, was an inspirational session led by David Bornstein, author of *How to Change the World*, and Tzvi Sperber, director of United Israel Appeals Federation Canada's Canada-Israel Experience.

Other participants included Hershell Ezrin, founding CEO of the Canadian Council of Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA); Canadian Jewish Congress CEO Bernie Farber; former Canadian ambassador to Israel David Berger; *National Post* writer Stewart Bell, who specializes in terrorism and security issues; and FEDERATION CJA president Richard Vineberg.

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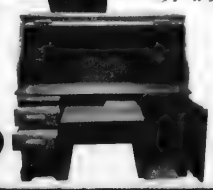

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On Campus

Ethiopian-Israeli comedian performs at IsraelFEST

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Hillel of Greater Toronto kicked off IsraelFEST last week, an annual week-long festival showcasing Israeli innovation, tourism and culture, with a performance by Yossi Vassa, an Ethiopian-Israeli actor and comedian.

The one-man show called *It Sounds Better in Amharic*, co-written and directed by Israeli-born Shai Ben Attar, chronicles Vassa's 700-kilometre journey on foot from a small Ethiopian village to a Sudanese refugee camp and finally to Israel.

This comedic and insightful performance offers an outside perspective of Israeli culture through the eyes of an immigrant coming from a very different world, while shedding light on the culture he left behind.

While Vassa, who has been called the Eddie Murphy of Israel, managed to find humour in the situation of a 10-year-old boy trying desperately to fit into a culture so different from his, he also informed the audience at the Miles Nadal JCC of the difficulty of the year-long journey to Israel, which he barely survived.

He described having to walk for hours at night, hiding from robbers and soldiers and running low on food and water on his three-month trek before arriving at the Sudanese refugee camp.

He recalled having to dig graves with his bare hands to bury his two younger brothers and his grandmother who succumbed to disease and malnourishment in the camp before his family and thousands of others were airlifted to Israel as part of Operation Moses in 1985.

But before the crowd could dwell on the tragedy that befell Vassa and his family, he had the 100-person audience laughing about his first thoughts when he arrived in Netanya.

"Netanya is a scary place," he said.

"Have you ever seen *The Sopranos*? Well, Netanya is like New Jersey."

Coming from a small village, without television, Vassa, who is now a graduate of Haifa University, was also shocked to discover people with a different skin colour.

"When I first got to Israel, I saw so many white people, it freaked me out.

"I remember thinking, 'I have to be sensitive to these whities. They're a rare breed. They could get sunburned!'"

The 50-minute show, which he also performs in Hebrew and Amharic, combined storytelling, standup comedy, music, and even a little singing.

It gave the audience an opportunity to learn about the difficulties of integrating into Israeli culture – and to laugh about it.

Vassa and Ben Attar have been touring the show in Israel, North America and Europe since December 2002.

Food, Scrumptious Food

Food to munch while you watch the Super Bowl

By EILEEN GOLTZ
Special to The CJN

The best rule to follow when feeding anyone watching a sporting event is to keep it simple. Over the years, I have developed a repertoire of dips, wraps, spreads and snacks that everyone loves to eat before, during and after dinner. I try and mix it up a little and have a few hot and cold munchies to serve next to the chips, salsa, veggies and soft drinks.

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Super Bowl Sunday is as much about food as it is about who is victorious. But everybody wins when you serve these tried and true recipes.

HOT SPINACH CHEESE DIP

1 pkg. frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry
1 pkg. cream cheese, softened
1 cup freshly grated cheddar cheese
1 cup freshly grated Monterey Jack cheese
8 oz. sour cream
1 tbsp. grated, peeled onions
1 tsp. spicy brown mustard
2 cloves garlic, crushed
¼ tsp. sea salt
¼ tsp. fresh ground black pepper
3 dashes hot sauce, optional

Combine all ingredients in a large, microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on high for 2 minutes. Stir; microwave another 2 minutes. Stir again and microwave for 1 minute. Serve piping hot. Makes 4 cups.

BAKED PIZZA DIP

1 tub whipped cream cheese spread
1 tsp. Italian seasoning
1 pkg. (8 oz.) shredded Mozzarella cheese, divided
1 cup pizza sauce

Preheat oven to 350. In the bowl of an electric mixer combine the cream cheese and Italian seasoning to blend. Spread the seasoned cream cheese on the bottom of 9-in. pie plate. Top with 1 cup of the Mozzarella cheese then spread the pizza sauce on top of the cheese and top with the remaining Mozzarella cheese. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until dip is heated through and cheese is melted. Great with crackers or pieces of French bread. Makes approximately 20 servings.

BAKED RUBEN DIP

1 cup grated Swiss cheese
1 cup drained sauerkraut
⅓ cup sour cream
2 tsp. spicy brown mustard
1 tbsp. ketchup
2 tsp. minced onion
1 pkg. cream cheese, cubed
½ cup imitation bacon bits
½ to 1 tsp. caraway seeds

Preheat oven to 350. Combine all ingredients in ovenproof glass bowl. Mix to combine. Cover and bake 30 minutes then uncover the dip and bake for an additional 5 to 10 minutes until the top is golden. Serves 6 to 8. This recipe can be doubled or tripled.

BAKED ONION RINGS

¼ cup flour
¼ tsp. garlic powder
¼ tsp. dry mustard
¼ tsp. table salt
2 large Spanish onions, sliced into ¼-in.-thick rounds
½ cup buttermilk or non-dairy substitute
1 cup seasoned bread crumbs
olive oil-flavoured cooking spray

Preheat oven to 400. (The oven must be hot for best results.) Coat a large baking sheet with olive oil cooking spray and set it aside. In a large bowl, combine the flour, garlic powder, mustard powder and salt. Add onions and toss to coat.

Pour buttermilk into a large bowl, add onions and toss to coat. Place the bread crumbs in a separate large bowl, add onions and toss to coat. Transfer onions to prepared baking sheet and spray the top of the coated onions lightly with the olive oil cooking spray. Bake until golden brown, 35 minutes. Serve hot. Serves 6 to 8 appetizer servings. This recipe can be doubled or tripled.

CORRECTION

In the article "Recipe Ideas from Out of the Cold" (*CJN*, Jan. 26), the recipe for Ridiculously Easy Banana Muffins (or Loaf or Cake) should have called for 1¼ cups of flour. *The CJN* regrets the error.

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Hamas acting 'responsibly' thus far: Mofaz

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz said in Sunday's cabinet meeting that Hamas was, at this point, acting "responsibly," and added that he believed that the organization would soon attempt to rein in terror. He added that the Palestinians were in shock following Hamas victory in last week's Palestinian Authority legislative elections.

Acting prime minister Ehud Olmert took a firm line in the meeting, saying that Israel would not have any contact with Hamas until and unless the organization renounces terrorism and recognizes Israel's right to exist, as well as all agreements hitherto signed with Israel.

Olmert reported on his and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni's weekend efforts to convince world leaders to take a firm stance against Hamas' terror activity. Olmert declared that the international community stood behind Israel.

"We clarified that without a clear abandonment of the path of terror, a recognition of Israel's right to exist in security and peace … Israel won't have any contact with the Palestinians," Olmert said. "These principles are accepted by the international community. On this issue, I don't intend to make any compromises."

National Infrastructure Minister Ze'ev Boim (Kadima) said that a distinction must be made between transferring money to the PA as long as Hamas has not taken its place in the government and transferring funds after Hamas takes over, in which case, Boim said, there would be "new rules."

Under the 1995 Israel-PA interim agreements, agreements Hamas does not recognize, Israel is to transfer to the PA each month tax and customs revenues it collects on the PA's behalf. A payment of some $60 million (US) is scheduled to take place tomorrow.

Yuval Diskin, head of Shin Bet (Israel Security Services) said on Sunday in a government meeting that Hamas are unsure of their next move following their election victory, saying that it may be prepared to accept a unity government with Fatah if it would ensure that funding to the Palestinian people continues.

He warned, however, that Iran was considering giving financial aid to the Palestinians if Europe and the United States cease funding the PA in light of Hamas' victory.

He added that Fatah would be making a grave mistake if it lets PA President Mahmoud Abbas resign from his post.

One government official said that Israel was in no rush to publicize any decision on how it will deal with Hamas, beyond the carefully crafted statement that followed last Thursday night's meeting of the security cabinet. That statement made clear that Israel would have no dealings with a government in which Hamas was a participant.

Government officials said that Israel wanted to see what happened over the course of the next few days before making operative decisions.

"What happens if we say we won't transfer the money, and the next day Hamas disarms and repeals its charter," one official in the Prime Minister's Office asked.

The official said that although the payment is due Friday, Israel could always "hold it up" for a few days, as has been done in the past.

Over the weekend, Olmert spoke with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Jordan's King Abdullah, French President Jacques Chirac and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

One official said that Mubarak and Abdullah, who both have strong radical Islamic elements in their own countries, were also worried about the Hamas landslide, and the possibility that it may spill over into their regimes.

Mubarak said that he would be speaking to the Palestinian leadership this week about the election results, and Abdullah called on the Palestinians to demonstrate "responsibility." Livni was scheduled to travel to Egypt Wednesday to talk with Mubarak about the new situation.

Olmert told both Arab leaders that Israel was deeply concerned about the election results, and would not co-operate with Hamas or with a PA government in which Hamas was a member.

He also said that Israel's position was clear, and needed to be made clear to the Palestinians: Hamas must be dismantled and it must repeal its charter calling for Israel's destruction.

RENOWNED KABBALIST DIES: More than 200,000 people turned out Sunday for the funeral of the venerated kabbalist Rabbi Yitzhak Kadouri, inset, who died the previous night in Jerusalem of complications from pneumonia. The rabbi's age was reported to be between 104 and 112. Rabbi Kadouri, who was buried in Jerusalem's Har Hamenuhot cemetery, led a quiet life, immersed in Torah and good deeds. Traffic was brought to a halt for several hours as one of the largest funeral processions ever seen in the capital made its way from the Bukharan area of the city, where Rabbi Kadouri lived in a modest home, to the rabbi's final resting place in Givat Shaul. [Israpet photo]

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Security forces brace for violent evacuation in Hebron

By YAAKOV KATZ and YIGAL GRAYEFF
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Obtaining a green light from the High Court of Justice, the Israel Defence Forces and Israel Police on Sunday began training and gearing up for violent confrontations expected this week during the evacuations of the illegal outpost of Amona and the Hebron marketplace.

Security officials said that already close to 100 far-right activists had infiltrated Hebron to assist settlers there in preventing the evacuation of the Mizpe Shalhevet outpost in the Hebron marketplace. Some 6,000 soldiers and police officers were scheduled to participate in the evacuation and the army planned to declare the area a closed military zone to prevent additional activists from reaching the city. The demolition and evacuation of nine permanent homes in Amona was scheduled to begin the day following the evacuation from Hebron.

On Sunday, Hebron Brigade commander Colonel Motti Baruch met with the Hebron settlers to convince them to evacuate willingly and without force. Security officials said they did not believe the talks would bear fruit and predicted settlers would violently resist the evacuation and might even open fire on evacuating forces. Channel 10 reported Sunday night that the settlers had reached an agreement with the army and that on Monday they planned to leave their homes willingly, but Hebron spokesperson David Wilder rejected the report.

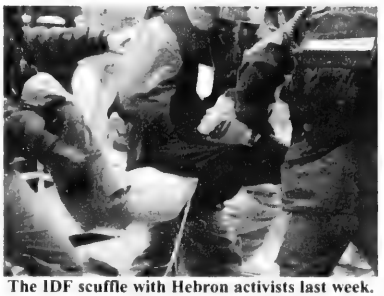
"We expect extreme violence during the evacuation," a senior officer told the *Jerusalem Post*. "We cannot rule out any scenario, including the possibility that there will be gunfire."

The officer said security forces planned to arrest anyone who raised a hand against a soldier or a police officer. "We will not tolerate any violence," he said. "If they throw rocks or paint bottles at us, we will not let them get away."

In an effort to quell settler resistance, Maj.-Gen. Yair Naveh issued 21 restriction orders against far-right activists from across the West Bank on Sunday, banning them from entering Amona or Hebron for the next month. Police succeeded in delivering only nine of the orders after they encountered fierce resistance during the distribution in the settlement of Yitzhar – a known right-wing stronghold. Four people were arrested after settlers there threw stones at police vehicles and spread spikes on the road.

Security officials said the 21 people issued the orders were known far-right activists who the Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) had gathered intelligence on, indicating they could violently resist the evacuations or launch reprisal attacks against Palestinians.

Meanwhile Sunday, close to 2,000 police officers began training for the evacuation, which will be spearheaded by the Border Police and commanders who participated in the evacuation from the Gaza Strip this past summer.



The IDF scuffle with Hebron activists last week. [Israel photo]

Evacuating forces will be split into three rings – with 1,600 in the inner circle charged with the physical evacuation, a second circle made up of close to 1,000 Border Police officers to deal with public disturbances, and a third circle made up of four infantry regiments – totalling close to 3,000 soldiers who will secure the entire city and prevent clashes with local Palestinians. The evacuation will be commanded by Asst.-Cmdr. Meir Bokovza – deputy head of the Judea and Samaria District.

Security forces, officials said, would employ similar methods to those used during the disengagement from the Gaza Strip this past summer. Evacuating forces will enter Hebron and Amona unarmed but will wear helmets and additional protective body gear. Those carrying out the operation will also be different than the police officers and soldiers who participated in the withdrawal from Gaza, police said.

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ANDREA BRONFMAN ז"ל

Her exceptional vision and her commitment to art and culture in Israel were inspirational.

We extend heartfelt condolences to her husband Charles, their children and the entire family.

Wendy and Elliott Eisen
Chairs, Canadian Friends of the Israel Museum

'We shall miss Andy terribly'

Continued from page 1

Bronfman's daughter, Pippa Cohen, speaking on behalf of her siblings and their children, spoke of the park as a metaphor for her mother.

"Gan Shoshanim embodied Andy and her love of the outdoors. The park is a welcoming place for the community, just like Andy's heart was always kind, warm and welcoming."

The London-born Bronfman was also active in many charities outside of Israel. One of the most recent was the Gift of New York, which benefited families of the victims of 9/11.

In slow and sombre tones addressed directly to Bronfman's grieving husband Charles, former Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres said that "none of us can accept the cruel, unjustified intervention cutting short the life of so special an individual.

"In the homes of Jerusalem and in the prayers of our hearts, we shall miss Andy terribly and painfully."

In a reference to the many philanthropic projects and programs that Bronfman was involved in, and choking back tears, Janet Aviad, director of the Karev Foundation, pointed out that "Andy's zeal for young people was unmatched."

Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert was the last to eulogize Bronfman. He spoke about her uncompromising commitment to Jerusalem and the sad irony of this, her last and final trip to Israel's capital.

"Andy returns to where she really belongs. She lived in many places, but there is only one place where she belonged Jerusalem.

"When times were very difficult for the city and the people of Jerusalem, Andy and Charles were here.

"She was a person of truth, and at the end of the day, that is why so many people cared for and will miss her."

The family intoned the words of the *Kaddish* as the rain that had been falling hard on the canvas cover of the tent began to abate.

After the *Kaddish*, Bronfman's body was interred on the Mount of Olives, where, according to Jewish tradition, many of our people's righteous are buried.

Bronfman is survived by her husband, Charles, son Jeremy Cohen and wife Marci Ann, daugher Pipppa Cohen, son Tony Cohen and wife Moira, stepson Stephen Bronfman and wife Claudine, stepdaughter Ellen Hauptman and husband Andrew, sister Marcia (Kappy) Flanders, and six grandchildren.

Omri Sharon apologizes

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's son apologized for illicitly funding his father's 1999 run to head the Likud Party. "I made mistakes, serious mistakes, and I'm sorry for it," Omri Sharon told a Tel Aviv court last week in closing arguments before he is sentenced as part of a plea bargain. He pleaded guilty last year to fraud and bribery in connection with the Likud primary in 1999, saying he illegally solicited foreign funding without his father's knowledge. He told the court that 1999 was the year his mother, the late Lily Sharon, was diagnosed with cancer, and said this affected his judgment. The prime minister has been cleared in the case, and his hospitalization after a stroke has led to speculation his son could be spared jail time. Sentencing is expected later this month.

Lapid quits Shinui

Yosef "Tommy" Lapid resigned last week from his Shinui Party. Lapid, a Holocaust survivor whose party rode a wave of anti-religious sentiment to become the Knesset's third-largest faction in the 2003 election, blamed low voter support on Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's new centrist Kadima Party, which is attracting many Shinui backers. Polls suggest Shinui may not win enough votes in the March 28 election to take a single Knesset seat.

Film on bombers shunned

An award-winning film about Palestinian suicide bombers will not be shown at major Israeli cinemas. *Paradise Now*, named best foreign language film at last month's Golden Globes, has been shunned by Israel's eight cinema chains. Distribution experts blame the film's sympathetic depiction of two men who volunteer for a suicide bombing mission, which has drawn criticism from terror victims. The film is in limited release in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

Anti-Semitism down: JAFI

The Jewish Agency for Israel reported a dip in anti-Semitic incidents worldwide last year, crediting political pressure and police crackdowns. Agency chairman Zeev Bielski and Israel's Diaspora minister, Avraham Hirschson presented the 2005 data at a news conference held by the Global Forum Against Anti-Semitism. There were fewer anti-Semitic incidents in Britain, France, Belgium and the Czech Republic – considered hot spots of anti-Jewish hostility – compared to 2004, thanks to police action against culprits. However, Russia and Ukraine saw a considerable increase in anti-Semitic incidents.

Israel marks Holocaust Day

Interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert voiced hope that International Holocaust Day would help fight anti-Semitism worldwide. He chaired a special cabinet session at Yad Vashem last week ahead of the UN-declared global memorial day. "I hope that this step will lead to the awareness of the Holocaust being instilled in many publics around the world, which for years tried to evade the need to deal with the Holocaust in all its aspects. I also hope that this step will lead to a reduction in anti-Semitism and Holocaust-denial," Olmert told fellow ministers. The annual event, approved last year, was marked for the first time last Friday.

Bush backs Israel vs. Iran

U.S. George W. President Bush pledged to protect Israel in case of Iranian attack. "I'm concerned" when the president of Iran "announces his desire to see that Israel gets destroyed," Bush said in a speech on terrorism at Kansas State University last week. "We're committed to the safety of Israel, and it's a commitment we will keep." It was the latest reassurance from U.S. officials after a recent war of words between Israel and Iran over the prospects of an Iranian nuclear bomb.

Assassin's brother convicted

The brother of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassin was convicted of threatening Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's life. Hagai Amir, who is serving a 16-year jail sentence for helping his brother, Yigal, shoot Rabin in 1995, was convicted last week of threatening Sharon's life. Prosecutors say Amir told prison guards he could arrange for Sharon to be killed "with one phone call." His lawyers said the comments were a "joke."

Rescue team sent to Kenya

Israel sent a search-and-rescue team last week to the site of a Kenyan building collapse. Eighty disaster and medical relief personnel were sent to Nairobi, where scores of people were believed to be trapped in the rubble of a collapsed multi-storey building. Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni ordered the mission after receiving appeals from Kenya to help in the Jan. 23 disaster.

More kids are poor: report

More than one in three Israeli children are poor, new statistics show. Some 1.58 million Israelis lived below the poverty line as of June 2005, according to statistics compiled by the National Insurance Institute. The number of children living in poverty, 738,000, has jumped from 482,000 in 2000.

With files from JTA

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extend sincere condolences
to our friend and supporter
Charles Bronfman
and his family
on the passing of his beloved wife
Andrea Bronfman ז"ל
May they be comforted
among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem

AIPAC case sentence chills free-speech community

By RON KAMPEAS
JTA

WASHINGTON — It was surprising enough that the judge quadrupled the prosecution's recommended sentence for Lawrence Franklin, from three years to more than 12.

But the true bombshell at the Jan. 13 sentencing of the former Pentagon analyst, who is at the centre of the case involving pro-Israel lobbyists and classified information, came as lawyers were shutting their briefcases.

That's when U.S. District Judge T.S. Ellis III told the court in Alexandria, Va., that he believed civilians are just as liable as government employees under laws governing the dissemination of classified information.

"Persons who have unauthorized possession, who come into unauthorized possession of classified information, must abide by the law," Ellis said. "That applies to academics, lawyers, journalists, professors, whatever."

It was difficult to say whether Ellis was thinking out loud or pronouncing his judicial philosophy. But if those are Ellis' jury instructions in April, when two former staffers of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) go on trial, the implications could have major consequences – not just for Steve Rosen and Keith Weissman, but for how Americans consider national security questions.

Defence lawyers for Rosen and Weissman have joined a free speech watchdog in casting the case as a major First Amendment battle.

"The implications of this prosecution to news gatherers and others who work in First Amendment cases cannot be overstated," lawyers for the former AIPAC staffers wrote in last month in support of an application from the Reporters Committee for the Freedom of the Press to file an amicus brief.

The case is believed to be the first ever to apply a World War I-era statute that criminalizes the dissemination of classified information by U.S. civilians.

Franklin pleaded guilty to a similar statute barring government employees from leaking classified information. That statute has rarely been prosecuted – the last successful prosecution experts can recall was in the 1980s.

JTA has learned that the defence team for Rosen and Weissman last month filed a brief by Viet Dinh, the former assistant attorney general who was the principal drafter of the USA Patriot Act, arguing that federal prosecutors in the case were interpreting classified information protections too broadly.

Franklin, a mid-level Iran analyst at the Pentagon, admitted to leaking information to Rosen and Weissman in 2003 because he wanted his concerns about the Iranian threat to reach the White House.

His Pentagon colleagues were focused on Iraq, and Franklin believed AIPAC could get his theories a hearing at the White House's National Security Council. He also leaked information to Naor Gilon, the former chief political officer at the Israeli Embassy.

By the summer of 2004, government agents co-opted Franklin into setting up Rosen and Weissman. He allegedly leaked classified information to Weissman about purported Iranian plans to kill Israeli and American agents in northern Iraq.

Weissman and Rosen allegedly relayed that information to AIPAC colleagues, the media and Gilon. AIPAC fired the two men in March 2005.

In sentencing Franklin, Ellis described the former Pentagon analyst's motives as "laudable," but said his motives were beside the point.

"It doesn't matter that you think you were really helping," Ellis said. "That arrogates to yourself the decision whether to adhere to a statute passed by Congress, and we can't have that in this country."

Those views could be bad news for Rosen and Weissman, who hoped to rest part of their defence on an altruistic desire to save lives.

It also suggests Ellis believes government statutes are sacrosanct, however little they've been used. That's what concerns free-speech advocates.

"These provisions of the Espionage Act are widely recognized in the legal literature as incoherent," said Steven Aftergood, head of the government secrecy project for the Federation of American Scientists, a nuclear watchdog that relies on leaks for its information.

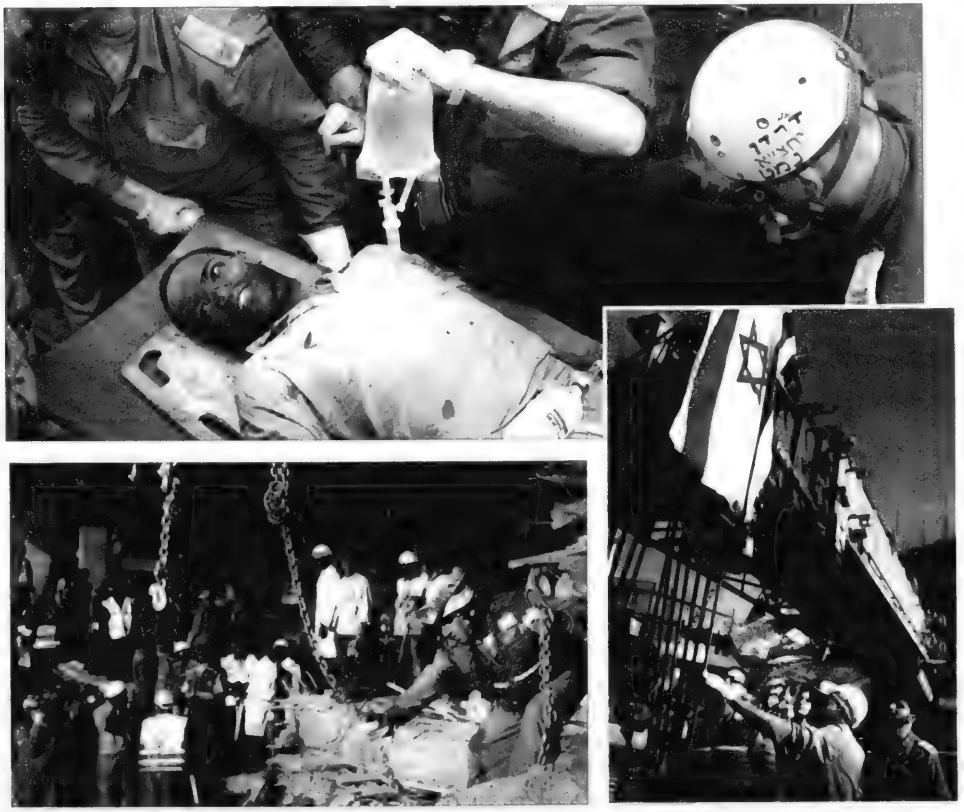
"We do not arrest and charge every reporter who comes into possession of classified information. We do not arrest people who receive leaks of classified information. We never have," he said. "For the judge to suggest otherwise is quite shocking."

Lucy Dalglish, the Reporters Committee executive director, described the case as "terribly important."

"If we had a situation where journalists can be punished for receiving information, hello police state," she said.

Franklin's sentence seemed exceptionally tough, given the prosecution's tentative agreement to recommend a three-year sentence if Franklin co-operated against Rosen and Weissman.

But Ellis' sentence – abiding by strict government sentencing guidelines – was mainly a technicality, since Franklin is not going to go to jail until his co-operation with the prosecution is complete.



ISRAEL HELPS KENYA: Israeli IDF Home Command personnel flew to Kenya last week to assist in the rescue operation following the collapse of a building in Nairobi on Jan. 23. The team was able to locate and save two people caught in the rubble; it also located three bodies. The Israeli team, which included specially trained dogs, returned home when all possible survivors and bodies of the victims had been removed. The government of Kenya officially requested Israel to help it train Kenyans to conduct such rescue operations in the future. [Isranet photos]

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Rabbis prioritize fitness, despite hectic schedules

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rabbi Erwin Schild

Rabbi ReuvenTradburks

Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich

Rabbi Moshe Stern

A strong proponent and fine example of the benefits of physical fitness, Rabbi Erwin Schild was somewhat of a pioneer when he took up running three times a week in the late 1950s.

And for a congregational rabbi, it's never been easy to carve out time for extracurricular activities.

"Today, often, I'm amazed I made the time to do it," the rabbi emeritus of Adath Israel Congregation told *The CJN* recently. Speaking from St. Petersburg, Fla., he had just returned from his daily (Shabbat excepted) hour-long power walk.

"I'm doing more speedwalking now than running," he said, explaining that he modified his routine following his 85th birthday last March.

As a youngster in Germany, the future rabbi was "anything but athletic," he recalled.

In Toronto, when he was in his late 20s, Rabbi Schild began taking fitness classes at the Jewish Y on Brunswick Avenue, an activity he continued at the YM&YWHA (now the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre) following his synagogue's move to North York. He was initially motivated by a household move, during which he became winded carrying boxes up a flight of stairs.

One of the rabbi's fitness instructors was a firm believer in running. Rabbi Schild himself found it "very good for my fitness, and it kept my weight down."

But he quickly realized that the benefits were not only physical. Running provided "a heightened awareness," an opportunity to practice self-discipline, and to spend time thinking.

Unlike Rabbi Schild, Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich of Beth Sholom Congregation has made exercise part of his life from a young age.

Now 39, he has put his thrice-weekly hockey games on ice due to a knee injury, but he continues cardio and weight training at a gym three to four times a week.

The sole rabbi of an 1,100-family congregation, Rabbi Flanzraich said it would not be good for anybody – family, community or congregation – if the demands of a rabbi's job were to take a toll on his health.

"You have to make sure you're able to give," he said, noting in addition the halachic directive to take care of one's health.

He admits, however, that sometimes he has to force himself to go to the gym.

Rabbi Reuven Tradburks, the 48-year-old spiritual leader of Kehillat Shaarei Torah, also works out regularly, but he didn't find the motivation until his doctor recommended that he start.

Like many people, he knew he "should be doing something, but was waiting for the catalyst."

Now the rabbi, who has a family history of heart disease, views exercise as "something I have to do in order to stay healthy."

In the winter, he works out on an elliptical machine while listening to Yeshiva University lectures or online classes. Recently, he added weight training to his routine, and in the summer, he swims.

Like Rabbi Schild, he tries to fit in a workout every day, with the exception of Shabbat. Even a half hour investment of time pays off in energy gained throughout the day, he finds. It also clears his mind, and he finds his head is filled with ideas during the session.

"If I don't work out, I find I have trouble focusing, and I need more breaks."

Rabbi Moshe Stern of Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, like rabbis Schild and Tradburks, also works out on a daily basis, Jewish holidays excepted.

A onetime avid runner, he switched to the stationary bicycle after his knee started acting up.

"I've always been somewhat athletic, and I've always enjoyed sports," said the 62-year-old rabbi, who belongs to the BJCC.

As he got older, his dedication to fitness was reinforced as he noticed how other people often deteriorated physically by not taking care of themselves.

When he travels, he takes along his workout clothes. "I've visited dozens of Jewish community centres," he said.

Like other congregational rabbis, Rabbi Stern juggles responsibilities that include preparation of classes, hospital and shivah visits, communal functions and meetings, officiating at life cycle events, and preparing a weekly sermon.

"It's a seven-day-a-week job, often morning to night."

While he would encourage everyone to exercise and maintain a healthy lifestyle, he would particularly like to see more of his colleagues involved in fitness. "Some do [work out], but many don't."

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Passion for Israel leads to joint art exhibit

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Susan Steinberg, left, holding a photograph she took in Israel, and Rina Gottesman, whose painting behind her was inspired by Israel, share a similar creative approach to their work. [Frances Kraft photo]

When Rina Gottesman and Susan Steinberg met on a UJA Federation of Greater Toronto mission to Israel two years ago, the artist and photographer joked that one day they'd have a show together.

The two women don't have to joke about it any more: their work is currently on display at Mashu Mashu, a Middle Eastern restaurant on Spadina Road. Mashu Mashu means "Something Something" in Hebrew.

One of Gottesman's five pieces in the exhibit, which will probably run until early spring, was directly inspired by Israel, and four of Steinberg's 12 photographs were taken there.

"I find the ingenuity and the creativity of the Israeli people very inspiring," said Steinberg recently. "There's such a spark of life there."

They both share a passion for Israel. Steinberg spent seven weeks in Israel as a university student in the early 1960s. Gottesman was born there 50 years ago and her father Sam Rotenberg fought in the War of Independence.

Their close friendship is based in part on their similar approach to creativity and their mutual support for each other's work, which they both undertook seriously and began to study formally only in recent years.

There was "an instant connection" when they met, recalled Gottesman.

Steinberg laughs when she remembers the pre-mission meeting at which she asked Gottesman's husband, Irv, a physician who co-chairs the federation's medical missions, if there were plans for the spouses.

"You'll go with my wife," he said. "You'll love my wife."

The women's show at Mashu Mashu came about after someone mentioned Steinberg's work to the restaurant's owner, who expressed interest in displaying it. "If you like what I do," she told him, "I have a friend who's an artist."

"It was so unplanned," said Gottesman, who works in acrylics and mixed media. Her art resumé only dates back to 1999, but it includes half a dozen awards and participation in almost four dozen shows.

Her work is also currently on display at World of Picture Frames on Cartwright Ave.

"I always loved art," said Gottesman, a child of Holocaust survivors who has lived in Toronto since she was two years old. Her mother, Shoshana Rotenberg, a former Hebrew teacher, used to paint in oils, and her grandfather also had an artistic bent. As a gift for her grandmother before they were married, he drew a picture of two hands held together. Gottesman's sister Charlene Mandelbaum also paints.

A former insurance underwriter, Gottesman left the business world to be at home full-time with her two children, who are now in their 20s.

Steinberg, a mother of three grown sons who cut back significantly on her work as a career consultant and workshop trainer to concentrate on photography, says she "always had a creative side.

"My whole role was to help people find what they are passionate about," she said. "I found a new passion… I wanted to find a way to explore the world through the camera."

Her interests range from human faces to patterns and textures found in nature. She rarely knows what she will shoot with her Canon Elan 7 single lens reflex camera until she sees it.

Recently, she began to sell her work privately and has also exhibited it at a cottage show. The photographs in the exhibit sell for $395, and Gottesman's pieces range from $600 to $950.

One of Steinberg's shots at Mashu Mashu – a Monet-like, glimmering lake surface taken in northern Ontario – prompted someone to ask her if it was a painting, she said.

The Israeli pictures include a luminous-eyed Ethiopian girl at a school for new olim, and a serendipitous zoom-lens shot of a young chassidic boy and his Winnie-the-Pooh bear.

Gottesman has only one painting at the restaurant that is directly Israel-inspired – a mixed-media abstract called *Ancient Walls*. The copper, indigo and ochre colours and block-like shapes, along with a delicately stamped text, are reminiscent of Jerusalem. The picture evokes "a feeling of antiquity," she said.

"I loved that I was walking on stones that held thousands of years of history and stories."

Steinberg is particularly drawn to a painting of Gottesman's called *Becoming*. "My background is in [the field of] transition," she explains. The semi-abstract piece, which can be seen on Gottesman's website (www.rinagottesman.com/show.html) consists of five female figures partly inspired by the Ethiopian Jews she encountered in Israel.

Like Steinberg, Gottesman has no plan when she sets out to create an image. She loves faces, and black lines that evoke a mood or an image. Often, her work features themes of women and friendship.

"We paint and photograph what speaks to us, and what comes from our hearts," said Gottesman.

Seymour Mayne renews himself with latest poetry anthology

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

One needs a "strong sense of perseverance" to be a poet, says Seymour Mayne, the Ottawa professor and wordsmith whose recent slim volume *September Rain* (Mosaic Press) is the 29th book of poetry he's published since 1964 – "keneinehora, almost 41 years ago."

Educated at the Talmud Torah in his native Montreal, Mayne visited the Jewish Public Library often in the 1950s and absorbed much modern Jewish writing. In the 1960s, he studied Canadian literature at McGill University, learning from and crossing paths with the likes of Louis Dudek, Irving Layton, Leonard Cohen and many other luminaries.

Today, his own star has risen considerably in the sphere of Canadian literature. Much anthologized and translated, he has developed followings in Spain and Israel, as well as in Canada. Several of his humorous short stories have been published in Spanish translation in Spain, where he's been described as "a Canadian Woody Allen," and four of his poetry volumes have appeared in Israel in Hebrew translation.

"I've been writing and publishing since I was a teenager," he said recently over a cup of coffee at the Nadal Jewish Community Centre in Toronto. "If you ask me why I do it, I say I have a need to shape words into utterances that on the one hand give people a degree of pleasure, and on the other hand communicate something to them about the significance of everyday life.

"Sounds old-fashioned and it is," he continued. "You want to give people pleasure at the same time as some kind of insightful illumination into experience. And if you can do both, then it's a wonderful miracle that suddenly appears on the page."

Mayne has produced that particular miracle on the page enough times that Arnold Ages, the distinguished southern Ontario professor and literary critic, proposed in an essay last fall that Mayne should be considered for the Nobel Prize in literature, potentially joining the ranks of Jewish winners such as S.Y. Agnon, Elias Canetti, Imre Kertesz and Nelly Sachs.

> 'Poet is as prolific as ever'

Among other qualities, Ages cited Mayne's "attachment to, and love of, pure poetry, Jewish tradition, the Hebrew Bible and Canadian Jewry," adding that "Mayne has transformed that which is dear to his heart into a universal poetic language."

Last year, an Italian university student wrote a thesis dissertation on him, "so I've been pre-embalmed while living," joked Mayne, a University of Ottawa English professor.

The poems in *September Rain* are divided into four sections, each with its own theme. The first poem, *Ottawa Dozes Amidst Its Leafy Trees*, signals a "seasons" theme as well as Mayne's deep Canadian sensibility. The other sections deal respectively with Spain, Israel and his deceased parents.

The writing is light and airy, rarely seeming to fill the page, but often soaring through a poetic loftiness. Jewish and biblical stories and images pop up recurrently throughout, as does the universal imagery of death.

"I close the book with a poem that draws on the passing of the seasons, with the underlying theme of renewal," he said. "And by that I mean personal renewal, seasonal renewal [and] cultural renewal. Regarding the overall theme of the collection, the key word is 'renewal.'"

Indeed, the collection is bursting with images of death and new life, as in the poem *Hail*, which opens with the memorable line: "Hail peppered the air like seed/ as you were lowered/ below the frost line."

Having branched into short fiction in recent years, Mayne contributed a story to the latest issue of *Parchment*, but he disclaims any aspiration to write a novel.

"One must have a gene to be a novelist," he said. "I think my DNA included the gene for poetry, the gene for short fiction and the gene for the essay, in that descending order. I don't have the gene for the novel."

Still, he seems as prolific as ever, with several new volumes of various sorts in the works, both at home and abroad. "As a writer, it's the promise of renewal that keeps me writing," he said. "It also keeps me optimistic about the Jewish future. Everything cycles, and hopefully for the better."

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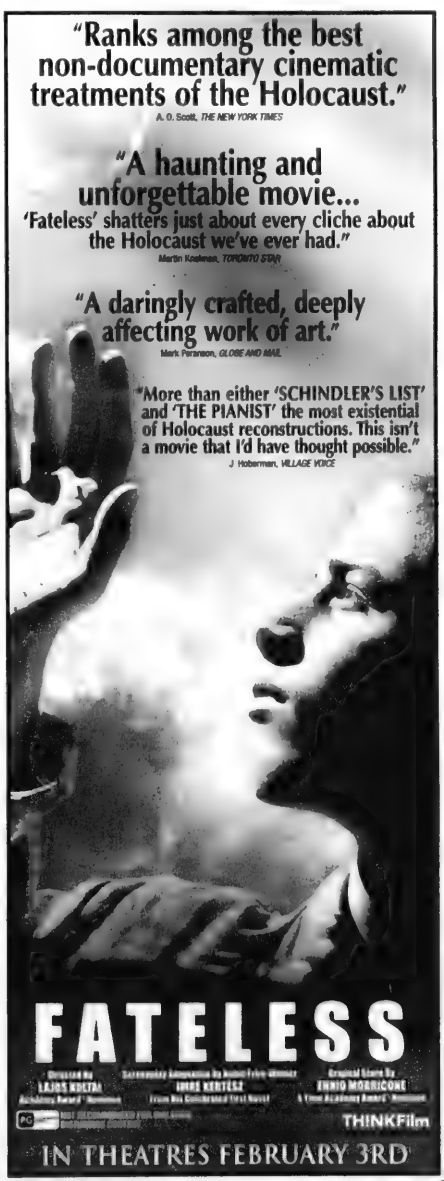

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John Lennon and the Flaming Red Rabbi

By NANCY WIGSTON
Special to The CJN

"All we are say-y-ying… is give peace a chance." Many of us have sung along with the famous John Lennon tune, a peace anthem recorded on June 1, 1969, in a suite in Montreal's Queen Elizabeth Hotel.

Lennon's death at the hands of a crazed fan recently passed its 25th anniversary, an occasion marked by a fresh crop of books about the singer. But only recently has it become widely known that a Toronto rabbi inspired John to write *Give Peace a Chance*, the song's title and arguably its only memorable line.

When a hastily assembled group joined Lennon and Yoko Ono, during their "Bed-In for Peace," to record the song, Abraham Feinberg, then the former senior rabbi of Toronto's Holy Blossom Temple, was there. Lennon and Rabbi Feinberg had met and bonded a few days before.

A recent estate offering of Lennon memorabilia in London confirms this: the word "rabbi," Rabbi Feinberg's phone number and a rough draft of the song appear in John's handwriting on both sides of a hotel letterhead envelope. The *Sunday Times* reported that John at first planned to record the song only with Feinberg, a former singer, under the name "John Lennon and the Flaming Red Rabbi."

Although Suite 1742 has long since been refurbished, people frequently ask to see or stay in the "John Lennon suite," which is decorated with photos and memorabilia, and is frequently used for fundraising purposes, says Joanne Papineau, director of public relations at the Fairmont Queen Elizabeth. She concedes that some of Lennon's lines in *Give Peace a Chance* were rather nonsensical, like the rhyming neologisms "bagism, shagism, dragism," or seemingly random names like "Bobby Dylan" and "Norman Mailer" (neither man was there in person, but Lennon admired them).

A single red rose in mysterious tribute rests on the hall table outside of Suite 1742. (Every year on Dec. 8, the day Lennon was murdered, two dozen roses, half red and half white, are left anonymous at the door of the suite.) Inside the suite, after we gazed around at the photos and gold records on the walls, we agree that *Give Peace a Chance* endures because of its unforgettable chorus, which has now been credited to Rabbi Feinberg.

John Lennon with Yoko Ono at their Bed-In for Peace in Montreal.

"John," the rabbi reputedly said during a conversation, "we really have to give peace a chance." Lennon's political stance against the war in Vietnam was a view shared by Rabbi Feinberg, who had visited North Vietnam leader Ho Chi Minh as part of an interfaith delegation in 1967; his book, *Rabbi Feinberg's Hanoi Diary*, was published in 1968.

Lennon and Rabbi Feinberg connected just as the anti-war movement was getting a boost of energy from rock's most-famous couple. Fresh from their Gibraltar wedding and an Amsterdam Bed-In, Lennon and Ono received 150 journalists a day from May 26 to June 2 in Montreal, while they were stretched out in bed wearing their pajamas.

They ordered room-service meals as well as special items that included "an extra-large comb" and a "cage for a white mouse." At the height of the circus-like scene in Suite 1742 – a frequent source of complaint from other hotel guests – Lennon and 50-odd friends recorded what would become an anthem for a generation. From unknowns to celebrities like LSD guru Timothy Leary, comedian Tommy Smothers, singer Petula Clark, and Apple Corps press agent Derek Taylor, everybody sang the words John had taped on the walls. Papineau reports there was much enthusiastic kicking of the door's brass plates to provide extra rhythm.

Lennon, naturally, sang the lead. In a 1970 *Rolling Stone* interview, he said: "In my secret heart, I wanted to write something that would take over from *We Shall Overcome*. I don't know why that's the only one they sang. I thought: why isn't somebody writing one for the people now? That's what my job is."

Rabbi Feinberg, now revealed as Lennon's not-so-unlikely muse, was born in Ohio in 1899 and became a rabbi in the 1920s. But he left to pursue his own singing career in the mid-1930s. Under the moniker "Arthur Frome," Rabbi Feinberg's successful career lasted three years on New York radio, where he was heralded as the "Poet Prince of the Airwaves." As Sharon Drache writes in *The Canadian Encyclopedia*: "Alarmed by the rise of Hitler and Nazi Germany, Feinberg became a rabbi again." He was a rabbi at Toronto's Holy Blossom Temple from 1943 to '61.

A generation of Canadians knew of and respected Rabbi Feinberg. He earned a reputation as a peace activist and anti-racist, and a man who believed in dialogue. He forged a natural bond with Canada's youth. In addition to writing books, he voiced his liberal views in frequent contributions to *Maclean's*, the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star*. Admirers affectionately dubbed him the "radical rabbi"; the less enthusiastic called him the "flaming red rabbi," the tag Lennon liked.

One afternoon, in 1971, my boyfriend and I were delegated to fetch Rabbi Feinberg and drive him to our friend Marty's wedding, where he performed the service. During the ride, he told us he had recently recorded the Dylan song "*I Shall Be Released*." We were very impressed; this was one hip rabbi.

Feinberg returned to the United States soon afterward, where he became rabbi-in-residence at San Francisco's Glide Memorial Church, which provides programs for poor and marginalized people. He died at age 87, in Reno, Nev. He had told the *Toronto Star* that he regarded Holy Blossom Temple as his "spiritual home" and Toronto as "home," since he'd lived here longer than anywhere else.

For years, Queen Elizabeth Hotel staff have known about the Feinberg-Lennon conversations, confirms Papineau. In November 2005, Taylor's estate offered the Lennon envelope for sale at Bonham's Auction House in London, and the press connected the dots between the singer and the rabbi. However, the envelope never made it to public auction. It was sold to a private buyer for a good price, says a Bonham's spokesperson. Speculation is that it fetched about $400,000 and that the buyer was none other than Ono.

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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By BILL GLADSTONE

YIDDISH MOVIE FROM MONSEY OFFERS GLIMPSE INTO PRIVATE ORTHODOX REALM

Brothers **Yakov** and **Mendy Kirsh**, a bookkeeper and real estate agent respectively, wanted to make a feature film set within their Yiddish-speaking Orthodox community in Monsey, N.Y., without the "dangerous influence of Hollywood" or any other "treif" elements.

The result is *A Gesheft (The Deal)*, a 90-minute action-packed drama about "a religious-school flunky run amok." The movie was shot on location in religious schools and business establishments, and acted mostly by chassidic community members with no prior dramatic experience. The language of the film is the deeply accented, religious Yiddish sometimes called Hyemish. The filmmakers claim it is the first Yiddish film made in 60 years.

The story focuses on Peretz Grossberg, a flamboyant and colourful wheeler-dealer who straddles the Orthodox Jewish world and the wider secular world. His counterpoint is the sage Rabbi Wolf, who is steadfast in his belief despite excessive tribulations. The pair find their lives intertwined in what Rabbi Wolf describes as "bashert" (God's master plan). They are left to teach each other about their place on earth.

This was the first movie-making experience for the actors and the chief filmmakers, who invested much of their savings in it. The one film pro on the project was editor Ruven Millman, who took it on because of his personal interest in the Yiddish language. "I've dreamed of making a modern theatrical film in Yiddish for years," he said.

While television is normally taboo in most chassidic households, the filmmakers report that the Orthodox community has shown great interest in the film. Released by Kosher Entertainment Productions, it is available on DVD at www.mostlymusic.com. View the trailers at www.agesheft.com

* * *

Arabs of Suburbia: Diaspora Film Festival Group and the National Film Board of Canada present *L'esquive*, an award-winning film by **Abdellatif Kechiche** (France, 2004) about the "Arabs of suburbia" and the clash of cultures in France. In his second film, Kechiche uses non-professional actors to tell a story of teenage love in a run-down Paris suburb; the film examines the complexity of multiculturism in modern France. $7-$10; free for NFB members; tickets available half-hour before showtime. NFB Mediatheque, 150 John St. (at Richmond) Thursday, Feb. 9, 7 p.m. 416-973-3012.

* * *

Names in the News: George Faludy, the 95-year-old Hungarian-Jewish poet who lived in Toronto from the late 1960s through the late '80s, was the focus of a recent celebration in Budapest at the home of the Canadian ambassador to Hungary. The reception paid homage to Faludy as the city of Toronto prepares to honour him by naming a downtown parkette after him and erecting a bronze medallion bearing his likeness.

Grace Westcott, of the organizing committee, presented Faludy with a framed original watercolour sketch of the planned landscape design for the park, as an actor read several excerpts from Faludy's writings. Press coverage of the event in Hungary was extensive, Westcott said. "Faludy replied to the speech to say how grateful he was to Canada," she reported. "He said that he had never felt so free in his life as he did in Canada."

Situated at Charles and Bay, George Faludy Place is due to open in the spring to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian uprising of 1956.

* * *

Amadeo – Mozart in Italy: Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra and male soprano **Michael Maniaci** perform works by **Mozart**, focusing on the composer's early years and music. In 1769, **Leopold Mozart** and his 14-year-old son, Wolfgang, left Salzburg for Italy, the first of three such trips they would take in as many years; the resulting family correspondence is brought to life by actors **Ryan Haas** and **Don Allison**. $20 - $64. Trinity-St. Paul's Centre (416-964-6337), five performances between Feb. 3 & 9. Also at George Weston Recital Hall, Toronto Centre for the Arts (416-872-1111), Tuesday, Feb. 7, 8 p.m.

* * *

Names in the News II: Jack Wayne, who founded and runs Canadian Scholars Press, has launched Kellom, a new imprint that features the work of male authors. Two newly published works suggest both originality and verve. Poet **George Elliott Clarke** teams with photographer **Ricardo Scipio** in *Illuminated Verses*, celebrating the physical beauty of women of colour. And **Larry O'Connor**'s novel-memoir *Tip of the Iceberg* explores the unspoken and unseen in family life at the edge of the far north. www.cspi.org

* * *

Arts in Brief

• The Koffler Centre's School of Music presents **The Koffler Chamber Orchestra**, with renowned harpist **Erica Goodman**, conducted by **Jacques Israelievitch**, concertmaster of the **Toronto Symphony Orchestra**. The program includes selections from **Handel**, **Debussy**, **Telemann** and **Bartok**. Leah Posluns Theatre, 4588 Bathurst St. $20-$15. Tuesday, Feb. 14, 8 p.m. 416-636-1880, ext. 228.

• **North Toronto Players** is updating the classic **Gilbert and Sullivan** operetta *The Mikado*, setting it in the American Wild West for its 40th anniversary season. The community theatre group has been performing G&S musicals since 1965. Leah Posluns Theatre. Six performances from Feb. 24 to March 5. 905-727-2209 or www.northtorontoplayers.com

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A credible account of Jamaican Jewish history

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

To Canadians seeking a respite from the arctic blasts of winter, the lush Caribbean island of Jamaica offers immediate relief in the form of sand, surf, sun and exquisite vistas.

But Jamaica is also an extremely interesting, though little known, outpost in the Diaspora, a fact that becomes clear in *The Island of One People* (Ian Randle Publishers) by Marilyn Delevante and Anthony Alberga.

As Delevante and Alberga inform us in this engaging book, Jews have lived in Jamaica since the dawn of European colonization in the 16th century. And although Jews have never accounted for more than about five per cent of the island's population, their contributions, particularly in the realm of business, have been keenly felt.

In this amply illustrated volume, the authors cover a great deal of ground, touching on the migration of Jews to the island, the battle for civil liberties, Jewish life over the centuries and the community's high profile families. But their claim that "this fascinating story has remained untold" is contradicted by the books on Jamaican Jews they cite in their bibliography.

As *The Island of One People* states, Jews began reaching Jamaica in the late 1500s as Conversos – newly converted Christians – fled the wrath of the Inquisition. With the British conquest in 1655, Jews could live openly as Jews, yet they were subjected to discrimination. Once these obstacles were removed in the 1830s, still more Jews settled in Jamaica. They, in turn, were followed by Sephardi Jews from the Middle East and Ashkenazi Jews fleeing Nazi Germany.

Delevante and Alberga, both born and raised in Jamaica, speculate that the Spanish explorer Christopher Columbus, who may have been a Converso himself, employed several Conversos as crewmen when he paid a brief visit to Jamaica in 1494.

During the Spanish occupation (1509-1655), Jews arriving in Jamaica passed themselves off as Catholics. But when Spain, in 1577, repealed an edict prohibiting Conversos to emigrate to the colonies, the way was open for them to live and trade freely in Jamaica.

With the end of the Spanish occupation, Jews could practise their faith openly and build synagogues. The new British colonial administrators encouraged Jewish immigration, recognizing that Jews could bring expertise in trading, banking and shipping. Many of the Jewish families settling in Jamaica in the 17th and 18th centuries arrived through Amsterdam.

Yet Jews were definitely second-class citizens during this period.

In 1681, the Jamaican House of Assembly enacted a law excluding Roman Catholics, Jews and Jamaicans of African ancestry from exercising their civil rights. In 1695, the legislature passed an act forcing Jews, representing five per cent of the white population, to pay more than their fair share of taxes.

Fiercely anti-Semitic and jealous of the success Jews enjoyed in commerce, British settlers filed a petition to the House of Assembly in 1698 requesting that they be forced to leave Jamaica. The request was denied on the grounds that they were too economically useful to be expelled.

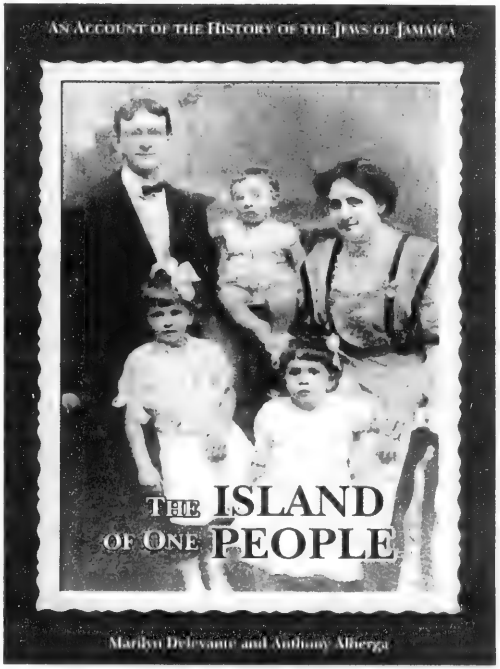
The Plantation Act of 1740, granting Jews various "privileges and advantages," marked an improvement in their status. But it was not until 1826 that a bill was passed giving Jews full equality. Even so, Jews had to wait another five years before the bill was finally promulgated.

Interestingly enough, Delevante and Alberga observe that Jews in Canada were not granted the same political rights as Christians until 1832.

The emancipation of Jamaica Jewry had an impact. By 1849, eight of the 47 members of the House of Assembly were Jewish. It was in that year, too, that the legislature adjourned for Yom Kippur for the first time.

The acceptance of Jews in Anglo-Jamaican society was such that some of the earliest Jewish settlers intermarried and were lost to the community. Families such as the deCordovas, the Harts, the Levys, the Mottas and the deLissers fall into that category.

The deCordovas founded *The Gleaner*, Jamaica's leading daily newspaper, in 1834. Lewis Ashenheim, the scion of a prominent Jewish family, was chairman of its board from 1909 to 1941. His son, Neville, was Jamaica's first ambassador to the United States.



Apart from the Ashenheims, the most notable Jewish Jamaican families have been the Lindos, who made their fortune as banana planters and then branched into the wine and rum business; the deLissers, who own luxury hotels in Montego Bay; the Myers, who bottle Captain Morgan Rum; the Henriques, who head a construction conglomerate; and the Matalons, who trade in cocoa products, foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals and knitted goods. During the 16th and 17th centuries, a small proportion of Jamaican Jews were in the slave trade.

Jews have also been active in the professions and the arts. Marvin Goodman is a past president of the Jamaican Institute of Architects. Basil Anthony Lindo was appointed general manager and chief executive officer of the Bank of Nova Scotia's Jamaican branches. Maurice Stoppi was chairman of the National Dance Theatre.

Four Jews – Philip Stern, Altamont de Costa, George Seymour-Seymour and Eli Matalon – have served as mayor of Kingston, the island's capital. Matalon was later minister of education and minister of justice in Michael Manley's government.

As of 2002, Jamaica had 250 Jewish inhabitants, comprising 0.0094 per cent of its population. At its peak in the 1880s, the Jewish community had 2,535 members. In 1720, however, 18 per cent of Kingston's white population was Jewish.

The authors ascribe the decline to two factors: assimilation and emigration. Mixed marriages from the 16th century onward had a discernible effect, as did the migration of some families – the Torres', the Gomez's and the Pintos – to Britain, Canada and Panama. One co-author of the book, Alberga, is a resident of Toronto.

As a counterpoint to assimilation, many Jews have preserved their traditions. But during the 20th century, Orthodox Judaism faded away and was replaced by a more progressive and Conservative form of observance.

The Island of One People charts the rise and development of a historic Jewish community, and although Delevante and Alberga are not not professional historians, they have written a credible account of Jamaican Jewry.

Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. Stories should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 10. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office. E-mail: **info@cjnews.com.** Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Please note: submissions will *not* be returned. Only writers whose work is chosen for publication will be contacted.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual **Purim Art Contest**.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of *CJN* employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN*'s 2006 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for $25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, 2006. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 3, 2006.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 16, 2006. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

CJN Profile

Lord of the Rings: live on stage

By DAVID SILVERBERG
Special to The CJN

"Tolkien is talmudic," professes David Mirvish, head of Mirvish Productions. "He understood the sense of fairness and rightness, of the importance in community."

What inspires Mirvish to such gushing is nothing less than the most expensive stage show in history, at $27 million. His stage adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings (LOTR)* is primed and ready for a world première in Toronto on March 23, with previews running for five weeks on Feb. 2 at the Princess of Wales Theatre.

In an interview at his office, Mirvish almost appears giddy when he speaks about Tolkien's famous trilogy coming to downtown Toronto. "Nothing has been done on this type of scale before," he says. "I'm calling this epic. It's not a conventional musical."

Mirvish and company have been avoiding the dreaded "m"-word for obvious reasons: ardent *LOTR* fans cringe at the prospect of prancing Hobbits and Orcs high-stepping to show tunes. To quell those fears, the creative team in Toronto approached *The Lord of the Rings* with a deep respect for the original text when they adapted the books for the stage.

"And this sure isn't a conventional musical when you have the artistic director inspired by Tom Waits," Mirvish says, before cautioning that musical tastes will span a worldly spectrum.

In fact, it was the music that first convinced Mirvish the Tolkien text was worth adapting. Two years ago, Mirvish heard a sample of the music to be included in the adaptation. Composed by two distinct collaborators – Indian composer A.R. Rahman and Finnish group Värttinä – the music "had an otherworldly quality to it that made me think 'This is magical,'" Mirvish recalls.

The legendary producer, famous for bringing to Toronto *The Lion King*, *Mamma Mia!* and *The Producers*, understood the risk of staging a show as expansive as *The Lord of the Rings*. But smart gambles have always been part of Mirvish's work schedule. "My credibility is on the line here," he says, half-laughing. "But I'm stepping up to a challenge I've never engaged in before."

The challenge also relates to what Mirvish is risking financially. He invested $1 million of his own money into the production, while also convincing Tourism Toronto and the Ontario government to invest $3 million each. "The government didn't see it as a question of supporting the arts but as a job creation and tourism program," Mirvish points out, adding how the politicians will see a return on their investment by the fourth week of the show – if sales progress as expected.

And Mirvish is convinced the show's grand spectacle won't disappoint. With a cast of 55 and 14 musical numbers, *The Lord of the Rings* stretches to three hours of battles, music and dance. The set resembles a tree trunk, with movable parts allowing the Fellowship to traverse grassy, rocky or uphill terrain. Special effects colour the fight scenes and creative lighting adds lustre to terrific monsters such as the winged Balrog.

The only standout star in the cast is Tony Award-winning Brent Carver, a Canadian theatre veteran who excels in every role he plays. Another noted actor is Michael Therriault, seen recently in Mirvish's *The Producers* and playing the slimy Gollum in *The Lord of the Rings*.

With any spectacle, the music must act as the sweeping soundtrack to the dramatic action. Mini-symphonies carry the battle sequences, and a percussion-heavy number plays during the Helm's Deep sequence.

Quarterbacking the creative component of the show is Kevin Wallace, co-producer and chief architect. When he read an early draft of the stage adaptation by Shaun McKenna in November 2001, he was so impressed by the writing quality he secured the underlying theatre rights. He corralled director Kevin Marchus, designer Rob Howell, musical supervisor Christopher Nightingale and choreographer Peter Darling (of *Billy Elliot* fame).

"Everyone is working with a clear agenda," Wallace tells *The CJN* in his office a floor above Mirvish's. "The ultimate strength of the stage adaptation is its clarity."

He aims to sway Tolkien fans who hold preconceived notions. "This will lurch the audience out of their own perception of *The Lord of the Rings*," he says.

Kevin Wallace, left, and David Mirvish.

Unlike the film, the show will not ignore key sections of the trilogy in favour of more action-oriented scenes. For instance, Wallace points out, the show "gives a nod to Tom Bombadil," a minor character in the book who helped the Hobbits during their journey across Middle Earth. And when Frodo meets Faramir for the first time, the scene is uneventful but "there's a calm and settled beauty to the writing" the script didn't want to omit, Wallace says.

Wallace is tight-lipped about the more intriguing aspects of the show, including Gollum's final look – "it'll be unlike anything ever conceived," he says – and the special effects concepts. He slyly smiles and admits he wants "to create an air of surprise when the show opens on March 23."

But *The CJN* has learned a few tidbits worth sharing: as expected, the emotional centre of the story will focus on the Hobbits, especially Frodo the Ring-bearer and his companion, Sam; the massive battle scenes will take up the entire stage; song lyrics will be composed in English and Elvish, Tolkien's created language for his pointy-eared creatures; and Act One will finish with the emergence of the winged creature Balrog, which Wallace claims "will be the talking point at intermission."

But what the world will be talking about in several weeks is Toronto's ability to pull off a monumental show such as *The Lord of the Rings*. Also important to Mirvish, though, is what the story can do to rally a community. "It's about people caring for each other, all kinds of races coming together to fight evil," he says. "The responsibility is not on the shoulders of the biggest person but on someone who represents the Everyman."

Good versus evil. Frodo versus Sauron. Another Biblical allegory comes to mind but Mirvish isn't saying it. He doesn't need to – David and Goliath, in the form of Hobbits, Orcs and Trolls, is coming to town.

Previews for The Lord of the Rings *run Feb. 2 to March 22 at the Princess of Wales Theatre, 300 King St. W. Opening night is March 23. For tickets, call 416-872-1212.*

Sonny Goldstein, CFP

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by Ellene Newman and Hallel Newman

ANIMAL QUIZ

There are many references to animals in the *Tanach* (Bible). Can you match the right animal to each quote?

Young _____, Judah, you have risen from prey... *Genesis 49:9*

Issachar is a strong-boned _____ he will bend his back to the load... *Genesis 49:14*

Let Dan be a _____ on the road... biting the horse's heel so the rider falls backward. *Genesis 49:17*

Naphtali is a _____ running free. *Genesis 49:21*

Benjamin is a vicious _____. He eats a portion in the morning, and divides his prey in the evening. *Genesis 49:27*

Can a _____ change its spots? *Jeremiah 13:23*

A golden ring in the snout of a _____. *Proverbs 11:22*

The Amorites... chased you like _____ *Deuteronomy 1:44*

A little _____ may tell it. *Ecclesiastes 10:20*

We felt as small as _____ *Numbers 13:33*

Go to the _____, lazy one, see how it prepares, and become wise. *Proverbs 6:6*

ant
bees
bird
deer
donkey
grasshoppers
leopard
lion
pig
snake
wolf

THE LION'S TALE

The following story is adapted from an ancient parable quoted by the post-talmudic commentator, Rav Hai Gaon. Rav Hai Gaon lived about 1,000 years ago in Babylonia, which is now known as Iraq.

Leo the lion was hungry. Very hungry, in fact. Restlessly, he paced back and forth, wondering where to find food. The thought crossed his mind that maybe he should venture into the nearby village and eat someone, but he immediately rejected the idea. Leo still remembered his great-grandfather's warning, "Leo, eat any animals you please, but whatever you do, don't eat humans. Great punishment awaits the lion who eats a human."

Leo was getting desperate. So desperate that he tried eating the tall, thick grass covering the forest floor. "Yuck!" He spat it out, repulsed. *What am I thinking? Lions can't eat grass!*

I'm going to have to eat a person, he thought, frantically. *But I can't!* His thoughts tortured him until he found himself walking through the woods toward the village where the people lived. Soon the terrain levelled, and in the distance he could see the huts of the village. Leo surveyed his surroundings. Men were coming home from their day's work. Plumes of smoke rose from the many fire pits scattered throughout the village. The sun would set soon, and all the people would return to their homes. Leo had to act quickly. But his great-grandfather's warning haunted him. *How can I do this?* he asked himself. And he squatted down on the grass despondently.

"What's the matter, Leo?"

Leo looked up. Sly the Fox was calling him.

"Oh, hello, Sly. The problem is, I'm real hungry."

"Uh oh. I'd better stay away from you. You might eat me."

"Nah, I wouldn't eat a good friend like you." Actually, Leo was so hungry that he would, but he knew that Sly was much too fast for him to catch.

"So what's the problem, Leo? Look around you. All these delicious people just waiting to become your dinner. See, there's a man standing right on the other side of that ditch over there. Can't you imagine how tasty…"

"Oh Sly, don't do that to me. It's bad luck to eat people. Real bad luck."

"What are you talking about?"

"My great-grandfather warned me that great punishment is in store for any lion who eats a person."

"Oh, c'mon, Leo. That's not true anymore. These days it's all buy now, pay later."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean that nothing's going to happen to you if you eat him. Your grandchildren will take the punishment, not you."

"Really? How do you know?"

"Leo, foxes know everything."

"Well," said Leo, "That does make sense. I guess I was just being overly fearful."

"So what are you waiting for? It's suppertime!"

Trembling with excitement, Leo silently crept though the tall grass until he reached the ditch separating the man and himself. Then, with a mighty roar, Leo pounced. He shot over the ditch, bearing down on his helpless repast…

Leo never did figure out what went wrong. Maybe his angle was off. Maybe the wind shifted. He smashed into the steep, ragged wall of the ditch and plunged to the bottom. He landed on his leg, and the sudden crack and sharp pain told him he had broken it.

Sly peered over the rim of the ditch.

"Sly! You tricked me! I told you something would happen! You lied to me! You said I wouldn't get any punishment for this!"

"What are you talking about?" replied Sly. I told you that grandchildren get punished for what their grandparents do. "I know what must have happened. Your grandfather must have eaten a person, and you're taking the punishment."

"That's not fair!"

"Oh, all of a sudden, it's not fair."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean, when I told you that your grandchildren would take the punishment instead of you, it made sense to you, but now that you're taking your grandfather's punishment, it's suddenly not fair."

Sly flicked his tail to say goodbye, and vanished.

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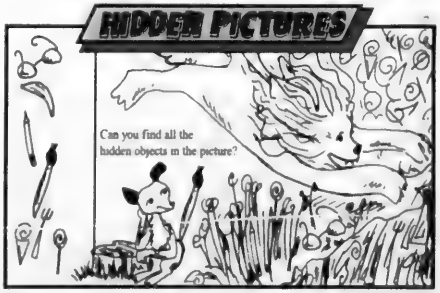

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Brother, sister are Canada's top junior pairs

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Last summer, in the middle of training for the figure skating season ahead, Kyra Moscovitch took a bit of a tumble.

During one of the soaring lifts that are part of pairs skaters' routines, she turned awkwardly and came down off balance. When she hit the ice, her skate dug in and wedged next to her brother Dylan's boot. Her body continued to turn, and the resulting torque forces broke her left leg quite badly.

It took two pins in the bone and months of rehab for Kyra, 12, to be ready to resume training. But resume training she did, and a few weeks ago, with only two months of training together, she and big brother Dylan did what they seem to always do: finish first in whatever competition they enter.

Adding to their national pre-novice and novice titles earned in the two previous years, the Moscovitch duo captured the Canadian junior title in pairs skating at the BMO Canadian figure skating championships in Ottawa.

The North York pair scored 143.45 points, ahead of silver medalists Rachel Kirkland and Eric Radford (132.91) and bronze medalists Taylor Steele and Robert Paxton (131.97).

Top of the medal podium is where the Moscovitch team seems most comfortable, so even with only two months to prepare, it would have been premature to write them off.

Dylan, 21, handles most of the questions directed at the pair and he acknowledges the two have an intense desire to compete and win. In fact, he said, by the time he was five,"I wanted to be an Olympic champion."

At the Civic Centre in Ottawa, the two found themselves in third place after their short program, only .61 points behind the leaders.

With a gold medal in sight, the Moscovitches' strengths came to the fore. "I think we won it on our artistry, our energy and our enthusiasm," said Dylan.

As he told the media at the time, "that program just rolled from one element to the next, and it was quite a fun ride."

The duo's signature traits are their dynamism, their speed and the way "we attack into the elements." Add consistency to the mix and the result is,"We're undefeated domestically for the last three years," Dylan said.

Although they've been skating together competitively for only three years, they've been on the ice from a very young age.

Dylan likes to tell the story of his first experience on ice – when he was barely able to walk at 13 months of age. His parents wanted to carry him onto a frozen lake, but local rules required that everyone wear skates.

His parents rented bob (double runner) skates for him, and, voila, he was a skater.

At three, Dylan was enrolled in skating lessons, "and ever since then, I kept going."

At seven, he entered his first competition. He remembers being dressed as a cowboy and performing bunny hops (jumping off the ice for a split second) and waltz jumps (half turn jumps).

As a youngster, he also played hockey for the Parkdale Flames. Because he could skate backward so well, his coach put him on defence. He also played baseball, soccer and other sports.

At 13, with a full load of extracurricular activities to take up all his time, he had to make a decision. He jettisoned most of the other activities and concentrated on figure skating.

As a singles skater, he has finished second nationally in junior men's competition (2004) and he's skated at international Grand Prix events in Japan and Germany. His best international finish was third as a junior at the 2004 Triglav Trophy in Slovenia.

His younger sister, Natasha, 19, skated competitively until she was 13, and brother Mischa, 14, is a competitive tennis player.

Kyra, who stands 5-2 and weights 95 pounds, can't remember a time when skating wasn't part of her life.

"I started skating because I was at the rink even before I was born," she said.

She recalls watching Dylan skate at the West Toronto Skating Club when they lived in the Parkdale neighbourhood of Toronto.

At about 10, Dylan enrolled at other clubs. Until recently, the two skated under the direction of coach Paul Wirtz at the Toronto Cricket, Skating and Curling Club. A variety of choreographers have helped them with their routines: Steven Belanger, Rosella Sousanna and Jackie Peter.

After five years with Wirtz, the Moscovitches switched clubs and coaches, opting for a trial run with coach Lee Barkell at a skating school in Barrie. They're up at 5:45 to make it on time for their 7:15 ice time. They train on the ice for approximately three hours at a time, and sometimes for five hours in the lead-up to competitions.

Kyra makes it back to Toronto by 12:30 to attend Grade 7 classes at St. Andrews Junior High in its high performance athlete program.

Dylan continues to work toward a high school diploma through correspondence school. Because of his training and travel schedule, he's opted for an educational "slow track."

When he's not on the ice, the 5-11, 165-pound skater trains in martial arts with former world figure skating champion Elvis Stojko.

Kyra, meanwhile, still takes gymnastics four times a week, which helps her skating by giving her good "body awareness" during jumps, throws and twists.

With their domination of youth categories all but complete, Dylan and Kyra are looking forward to next season, when they will graduate to seniors, where Canada's very best skaters compete.

"It's exciting," said Dylan. "We're looking forward to it. We're aiming for the top five, but of course we'd love to come as high as possible.

"Our long term goal is Vancouver 2010 [Winter Olympics]."

Israeli skaters finish fifth at Euro championships

Jerusalem Post and CJN News Services

JERUSALEM — The Olympics-bound Israeli ice dance duo of Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovsky finished fifth in the recently concluded 2006 European Championships in Lyon, France.

The two Israelis amassed 188.91 points based on a fifth place finish in the free dance, fifth in compulsory dance and fourth in original dance (short program).

The opening compulsory dance – the Tango Romantica – saw the Israelis earn a 34.79 combined score, worth 20 per cent of the total marks, in spite of a strong performance that elicited praise from the *Eurosport* commentator, who added that, in his opinion, they should have taken the top spot. They skated to Maurice Ravel's Bolero in the free dance, with the judges again ranking them fifth.

Elena Grushina and Ruslan Goncharov of Ukraine, last year's silver medalists, were first after the compulsories with a 38.82 score, closely followed by the comeback team of Margarita Drobiazko and Povilas Vanagas of Lithuania with 38.34, whose last competition was the 2002 World Championships.

Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovsky

World and European champions Tatiana Navka and Ruslan Goncharov of Russia stood third after the preliminary event, with 38.21 points.

The world champions bounced back with a first in original dance and another first in free dance to capture top spot in the championship, with 202.32 points. Second were Grushina and Goncharov with 196.73 points and the bronze medalists were Drobiazko and Vanagas with 196.18.

Isabelle Delobel and Olivier Schoenfelder of France finished fourth with 194.49 points.

Israel's Alexandra and Roman Zaretsky, a brother-and-sister team, managed a decent placing, finishing 15th overall in their first European performance.

The Zaretskys were born in Minsk, Belarus, but have lived in Israel since the late 1980s. Their best international finish was in the 2004 Harghita Cup in Romania, where they placed second in junior ice dance.

The Zaretskys, as well as Chait and Sakhnovsky, are coached by Evgeni Platov and they train in Montclair, N.J. Platov is a two-time Olympic champion (1994, 1998) in ice dance with partner Oksana Grishuk. Alexander Zhulin also coaches Chait and Sakhnovsky. Zulin is the 1993 world champion and 1994 Olympic silver medalist in ice dance. He skated with Maya Usova.

Chait and Sakhnovsky are the first Israeli skaters to medal at the world championships, winning a bronze in 2002. They finished sixth at the Salt Lake City Olympics that same year. Sakhnovsky was the 1993 world junior champion with partner Ekaterina Svirina, when the Moscow native competed for Russia.

Sakhnovsky and Chait will represent Israel at the Turin Olympics, which will run from Feb. 10 to 26. They will be joined by alpine skier Michael Renzhin, a native of Latvia who grew up in the Ukrainian Carpathian Mountains and who has lived in Israel for about 4½ years.

Inside Back

A living will is no panacea

By DR. MICHAEL GORDON

Harold, a 52-year-old physician, is the spokesperson in his family, and he was struggling with decisions about Moshe, his 88-year-old father who had a malignant blood disorder. Moshe's physician believed that palliative care, with comfort measures only, was appropriate. Harold felt that further blood transfusions, beyond the six Moshe had already received in the past two months, were needed. Harold's three siblings appeared to be going along with him, though perhaps reluctantly. Moshe's wife Rivka said she only wanted "the best" for her husband, but, as might be expected, she deferred to her physician son.

The Senior Side of Life

As the case of Terry Schiavo unfolded last year in the United States, many believed that if she had written a living will (often called an advance directive), the conflict between her husband and her family over her treatment could have been avoided.

Moshe had a living will, one that contained a lot of detail, but the interpretation of what he intended when he wrote about "comfort measures" and "no heroic measures," as well being "allowed to die peacefully," was causing conflict.

Moshe's physician believed that the living will focused on the management of pain and other symptoms. Harold believed that blood transfusions, although not curative, provide comfort, and he wanted them continued for as long as necessary, while recognizing they would not alter the course of his father's terminal condition. He had said, "My father's well-being is what matters most to me, and a blood transfusion is not 'heroic' and provides comfort to him when he gets short of breath because of his anemia."

In this situation, a caring and loving family and a dedicated physician were in conflict over the meaning of a living will. Rather than helping the family agree to a course of action, the living will caused as much trouble as if nothing at all had been written.

Without the document, the same questions about Moshe's care might also have arisen, but no one would have tried to interpret his written words in order to determine treatment. It would have helped had he explained his intentions to his family at the time he wrote his living will, as he had become very sick and suffered from accompanying dementia and could no longer indicate his treatment preferences.

The last thing any caring family wants in an end-of-life situation is conflict, especially if bad feelings after death are the result. For the treating physician, the true wishes of the patient are usually paramount. When the patient cannot indicate them, physicians must rely on surrogate decision-makers who are usually family members. When a living will exists, it's hoped that it will ease the treatment decisions for families and physicians – but as this case indicates, it doesn't always turn out that way.

The resolution is not always easy. A family meeting with the doctor, a social worker and maybe an ethicist might help everyone understand the goals of treatment – which, of course, was to make Moshe's last days or weeks as comfortable as possible.

Respect for his wishes was an important value for the family, so even if he had not explained in detail to anyone why he wrote what he wrote, it appeared that he did not want to suffer. As he indicated in the document, he had a good life and wanted a peaceful end. With that in mind, it was possible for the family and physician to agree to the limits of future blood transfusions and focus instead on other comfort measures.

With that approach, Moshe's last days were comfortable, and the family could agree to support each other, with the help of the physician, during the very important final days of what had been a remarkable life.

Dr. Michael Gordon, vice-president of medical services at Baycrest, is co-author with of Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents.

Parsnip and Apple Soup

3 tblsp butter
3 lg leeks; white part, finely chopped
5 lg parsnips (about 1 1/2 lbs), peeled, cut into 1/2" pieces
2 med. Gala or Fuji apples peeled, cored, cut into 1/2" pieces
4 c (or more) water
1 1/2 c whole milk
Large pinch of sugar

Melt butter in large pot over medium heat. Add leeks, parsnips, and apples. Cook, stirring often, about 20 min. Add 4 c. water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium. Simmer uncovered about 20 min. Cool slightly.

Puree vegetable mixture with milk in blender until smooth or in pot with immersion blender, thinning soup with more water if desired. Return to pot. Season with sugar, salt, and pepper. Bring soup to simmer.

Yield: 6 servings.

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Epi on Education

Election contained negative lessons

While I found it difficult to make an accurate prediction as to who would win last month's federal election, I can predict, sadly, that there will be one serious consequence of the campaign itself.

Seymour Epstein

Politicians are on the front pages of our newspapers and monopolize our television screens, and they have recently taken over cyberspace as well. That's been the case under normal circumstances, but the recent campaign only exaggerated a situation in which these "honourable" men and women have become models of public behaviour for our youth – the very young people who will be running for office and running our country in a few decades.

Many, if not most, of the candidates for office chose to denigrate the other parties and personalities as an alternative to stating their own positive positions. While this practice is usually part of any election, the decision of the four major parties to make it the main motif of their campaigns set a new low in the ethics of rhetoric.

As is always the case, once a norm is lowered, there is always someone who will drag it into the gutter. And it's also a truth of our culture that once something becomes permitted, it soon becomes obligatory, and, of course, super-sized. And so, our young people who should be learning responsible government and prophetic leadership from our politicians instead are seeing daily ads – a powerful influence on untrained minds – that aggressively denigrate others while saying little that is credible about the positive goals of any one party.

There have been some exceptions, but in this campaign, they have proven the rule that negative rhetoric is acceptable – a lesson we hope our children will reject. And they will, if schools, youth groups and family dinner discussions over-teach (a new term I've just invented!) the ancient Jewish rejection of lashon hara, the slanderous tongue. Our biblical and rabbinic texts are filled with law and legend that make it abundantly clear that the wonder of human speech is equally capable of the highest mitzvot or the gravest of sins.

Our children need to see in us models of the very best we have to offer, not the very worst of someone else.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

And the winners are…

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

What this town needs is a little pizzazz. I am, therefore, launching the Yasher Koach (Yiddish for "way to go") Awards (YKAs) to give us some hometown naches (pride), fun and entertainment.

The YKAs are my own invention and are metaphorically presented to fellow Jews, companies or organizations who have brought spirit and growth to the Toronto Jewish community in 2005/5675/6.

URBAN WRITER

The following are some of my nominees/winners.

For Rabbi of the Year, I nominate Rabbi Phil Scheim of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, a decent man who has lead his flock for many years with grace and fortitude.

Rabbi Lawrence Englander and his wife Cheryl of Solel Congregation in Mississauga deserve a nomination for Pre-eminent Rabbinical Couple in an Outlying Area, for building this 300-family shul into a bastion of hearty Jewish activism with an abundance of community warmth.

Rabbi Yossi Sapurman of Beth Torah Congregation and Eli Rubenstein of Congregation Habonim are nominated for their innovative spiritual leadership and for illuminating their shuls with their shining *neshamas* (souls).

Rabbi Debra Landsberg of Temple Emanu-El gets the Rabbinical Fruitfulness YKA for being the only spiritual leader whose water broke in 2005. She subsequently delivered triplets.

How about a YKA for Best Kosher Eatery? *CJN* policy discourages the mention of company names in columns, so I'll simply say that there is a fellow in town who owns five kosher restaurants, ranging from one that serves only dairy cuisine to one that specializes in late-night fine dining. He walks away hands down with the YKA for Jewish Gastronomic Inventiveness.

There's also a new place on Eglinton Avenue with an ambiance that my zaide would have said is "nice enough for the goyim." I nominate it for the Evolving from the Shtetl award.

My first nomination for the Community Leaders of the Year YKA is Darryl Borden, director of Ve'ahavta's homeless initiatives. Darryl operates in the streets with a raw enthusiasm and determination that's solidly grounded in the principle of tikkun olam (repairing the world). Simon Kalkstein, a social worker and supervisor of the downtown branch of Jewish Family & Child Service, is "the read deal" and shares the nomination for helping more Jews in need than there are seeds in a pomegranate.

Other YKA nominees are Ted Sokolsky, president of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, who diligently worked his way through the ranks of various community organizations, paid his dues, and has taken us to a higher level of fundraising and community development.

I also nominate Avi Benlolo, the director of the Canadian office of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, who has developed the right tools to enhance the profile of his organization and has [illegible] its mission statement with dogged tenacity.

The YKA for Courage to Take a Stand would have to go to Prof. Martin Lockshin of York University, who regularly expresses dovish sentiments about the Middle East peace process in a generally hawkish community. Yossi Adler, a Toronto lawyer, shares this YKA for a recent gutsy column in *The CJN* that challenged prominent haredi rabbis who ostracized a haredi scholar, Rabbi Nosson Slifkin, for trying to reconcile science and Torah using traditional sources.

Other YKA nominations could include Best Anti-Semite Buster (say, B'nai Brith's Frank Dimant versus Canadian Jewish Congress' Bernie Farber); Best Shabbat Service; Greatest Synagogue Shammas (sexton); Most Inspiring Jewish Family; Funkiest Jewish Artist; and Most Rockin' Jewish Activist.

Please e-mail me your nominations for other YKA awards (and the reason for your nominations). I'll try to publish some of the results. Yasher koach to all those nominated, and all those who should have been. On their behalf, I'd like to thank the (Jewish) academy, their parents and, most importantly, God.

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This Week

National

Jewish groups work to counter 'Israel Apartheid Week' at U of T. *Page 3*

UTT firebomber will be paroled in May. *Page 30*

To Your Health

Yoga, dental health, holistic nutrition and lots more. *Section B*

Arts & Travel

Letters from Lehrer is a personal journey for Richard Greenblatt. *Page 40*

Author discusses her GG-Award-nominated novel. *Page 41*

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Canada Post Publication Agreement #40008684
Publication Mail Registration #07894

Israel applauds IAEA decision

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Israel has officially welcomed a resolution passed last Saturday by the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to refer Iran to the United Nations Security Council.

The response came Saturday even though a clause in the resolution states that "a solution to the Iranian issue would contribute to global non-proliferation efforts and to realizing the objective of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction, including their means of delivery."

Diplomatic officials in Israel were not concerned about the clause, which is believed to be an indirect reference to Israel, saying that it has no real operative meaning and that the most important thing is to get the Iranian nuclear issue referred to the Security Council, something Israel had been advocating for months.

Atomic watchdog refers Iran to Security Council

The IAEA reported Iran to the Security Council because it fears the Iranian regime wants to produce nuclear arms. The move, which raised the stakes in the diplomatic confrontation already underway over the Iranian program, prompted Tehran to threaten immediate retaliation.

The resolution links the decision to ask for Tehran's referral to the Security Council to the country's breaches of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and lack of confidence in Iran's claim that it is not trying to make weapons.

The text expresses "serious concerns about Iran's nuclear program." It recalls "Iran's many failures and breaches of its obligations" with regard to the non-proliferation treaty. It expresses "the absence of confidence that Iran's nuclear program is exclusively for peaceful purposes."

It asks IAEA director general Mohamed ElBaradei to report to the Security Council with steps Iran needs to take to dispel suspicions about its nuclear ambitions.

These include that it return to freezing uranium enrichment, consider stopping construction of a heavy-water reactor that could be

Continued on page 35

Canada reviews aid after Hamas win

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

Canada is re-examining its development aid to the Palestinian Authority after the shocking landslide win by Hamas in last month's Palestinian parliamentary elections.

Observers say Canada, like other western democracies, is realizing that it cannot morally or legally fund an organization that it considers to be an outlawed terrorist group.

Last week's announcement by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) – the federal agency that plans and implements most of Canada's aid funding– that it was reviewing its aid to the PA came as Paul Wolfowitz, president of the World Bank, said the bank should continue delivering aid to the West Bank and Gaza despite Hamas' victory.

At the same time, European Union bureaucrats and foreign ministers reportedly held a flurry of meetings and consultations aimed at recrafting their aid package to the Palestinian Authority.

Wolfowitz told the *Financial Times* that the World Bank was operating in Palestinian areas at the request of the so-called Mideast Quartet of the United Nations, United States, Russia and the European Union.

Continued on page 29

OTHERWORLDLY VISITORS: NASA astronaut Andy Thomas talks to a patient at the Schneider Children's Hospital in Petach Tikva. At the initiative of Rona Ramon, right, the widow of Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon, Thomas and fellow space shuttle crew members Commander Eileen Collins and Steve Robinson were in Israel to commemorate the third anniversary of the loss of the Columbia shuttle, of which Ilan Ramon was a crew member. **Please see related story on page 37.** *[Israel photo]*

Beshallach-Shabbat Shirah
Candlelighting: 5:23
Havdallah: 6:28

Greater Toronto Area

Washington day school gets $15-million gift — please see page 36

The News in Brief

CANADA

Nazi Label Decried

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — A magazine article that likened opponents of a controversial 100-metre-high condominium project to Nazis and its supporters to Jews is drawing criticism in Port Dalhousie, a historic lakeside hamlet that's now part of St. Catharines, Ont. Titled "A NIMBY Primer," the unsigned article appeared in the January issue of the *Port Dalhousie Peer*, whose editor, tower supporter David Serafino, would not answer queries from the *St. Catharines Standard*. "Developers are to NIMBYs what Jews were to Nazis," the piece's unnamed author wrote, adding that tower opponents are using Nazi-like tactics to vilify project backers. Anglican Minister Alan Minarcik said the article "borders on anti-Semitism." Len Rudner of Canadian Jewish Congress, called it "tasteless and stupid."

Manor Gets Reprieve

JERUSALEM — Boaz Manor, the Israeli co-founder of failed hedge fund Portus Alternative Management will remain free while Israel's Supreme Court hears his appeal of an order that he turn in $9 million (US) in diamonds, allegedly bought with investors' funds, or face jail, the *Globe and Mail* reported. Manor, who faces securities charges in Ontario and fled to Israel last March after Portus went bankrupt, had missed a deadline issued by a Tel Aviv judge to turn in the diamonds. Receiver KPMG wants him to account for $800 million (Cdn) of the firm's assets.

WORLD

Senate OKs Fed Chief

NEW YORK — The U.S. Senate last week approved Ben Shalom Bernanke, 52, as the next chairman of the Federal Reserve. Bernanke, brought up in an observant Jewish household in Dillon, S.C., succeeds Alan Greenspan, who served more than 18 years. Bernanke was approved in a voice vote with strong bipartisan support.

Shoah Cash Allocated

NEW YORK — Money from the "Hungarian Gold Train" settlement has been distributed to social service agencies to benefit Holocaust survivors. The Claims Conference has doled out $4.2 million (US) to 27 social service agencies – including Circle of Care in Toronto, the Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors in Montreal, and UIA Federations Canada – and will give the same amount for the next five years. Details are available at www.claimscon.org. The settlement comes from the U.S. government in the case of a trainload of Hungarian Jewish-owned goods, looted by the Nazis and confiscated by U.S. troops in World War II.

Chavez Meets Jews

CARACAS — Venezuela's president met with local Jewish officials after being accused of making remarks some consider anti-Semitic. Freddy Pressner, president of the Venezuelan Confederation of Israelite Associations, said he believes Hugo Chavez's remarks were not anti-Semitic, Reuters reported. In a speech in late December, Chavez said that while the world offers riches to all, "minorities such as the descendants of those who crucified Christ" have become "the owners of the riches of the world." The Simon Wiesenthal Center said the remarks were a veiled attack on Jews. Chavez insists he was referring to wealthy elites and not to Jews.

Hate Incidents Drop

LONDON — Anti-Semitic incidents decreased by 14 per cent in Britain in 2005, according to a new report. The decrease is mainly due to a decrease in the number of threats from 2004, according to the report, released by the Community Security Trust, a Jewish group. Among violent assaults, there were 82 reported incidents in 2005, down one from the historically high number in 2004.

Tory's Loss Blamed on Jewish Media Owners

VANCOUVER — Tory officials and defeated candidate Darrel Reid were distancing themselves last month from Reid's former campaign manager, who said the Jewish-owned CanWest media empire has a liberal bias against socially conservative Christians like Reid.

Robbie Robertson made the remarks on election night to the CanWest-owned *Richmond News*. "The CanWest Global media empire is controlled by a Jewish family, and they have been the most aggressive family to attack Christians, especially Conservative Christians," Robertson said in explaining some of the challenges faced by Reid's campaign.

Reid, who lost in the suburban Vancouver riding of Richmond to Liberal incumbent Raymond Chan, dismissed the comments and said Robertson was on medical leave from the campaign when he made them.

CanWest also owns the Global TV network, as well as the *Vancouver Sun*, *Vancouver Province* and the *National Post*. All three papers endorsed the Tories in the election.

Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith both strongly condemned Robertson's comments.

The Canadian Jewish news

Vol. XXXVI, No. 7 (1,734)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation 38,949 copies
Total paid circulation 38,099 copies

CCNA verified circulation Sept. 7, 2005

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada: $35.95, 1 yr. Incl. GST
$63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST
U.S.A.: $100 U.S funds, 1 yr
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Postmaster Please return 2985 and changes of address to Toronto office

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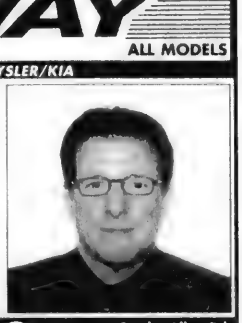

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Hillel seeks name change for 'Israel Apartheid Week'

Program to be held at U of T

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

As the Arab Students' Collective was busy making arrangements to hold its second Israel Apartheid Week at the University of Toronto, Hillel was in close talks with the school to have the name of the event changed.

"It's the name that we take issue with. That's what we find offensive," said Tilly Shames, Israel affairs director for Hillel of Greater Toronto.

Last year, part of the controversy surrounding Israel Apartheid Week, a week-long series of anti-Israel lectures and events, was that it was scheduled to coincide with Hillel's annual IsraelFEST. The move was seen as a deliberate attempt to divert attention from the Hillel event, which aimed to promote Israeli arts and culture.

Other Jewish groups, such as B'nai Brith Canada, were urging U of T to cancel Israel Apartheid Week on the grounds it would create a dangerous environment for Jewish students, but Hillel decided against that approach and acknowledged the right of other groups to hold campus events.

This year, Hillel is once again not trying to have the Feb. 13-17 event cancelled, but it has asked U of T's office of student affairs to change its name to omit the word "apartheid."

"Hillel of Greater Toronto has worked very closely with the university to have the name changed, and we are in constant communication," Shames said.

"We have let our feelings be known that the name of the event won't create a positive atmosphere on campus," said Hagai Kuperman, president of Hillel at U of T.

But he added that only the university has the power to decide if the name should be changed.

A decision had not been made at *The CJN*'s deadline. Calls and e-mails to U of T's office of student affairs were not returned.

"Extremist programming is not where the students are today," Shames said. "It's unfortunate, because it taints the university experience when students are exposed to extremism."

While Hillel has focused its energy on having the name changed, Shames said she is also concerned by material the Arab Students' Collective may present.

Last year, there were many complaints from Jewish students when a mock refugee camp was constructed on campus and posters were put up promoting the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, the military wing of the Fatah movement that is responsible for suicide bombings in Israel, she said.

Avi Benlolo, Canadian director of Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, also believes that associating the word apartheid with Israel is a major concern to Jewish staff and students on campus.

"While the name of the event is one of the greater issues, we are also concerned about the advertising throughout the campus. Seeing the name will register in the minds of students that Israel is an apartheid state, and that is an issue," Benlolo said.

He said the university needs to re-evaluate what it finds permissible.

"I do not think the event is productive. I don't think it fosters peace. It isn't accurate and misinformation being applied is a complete fabrication of what Israel really is – a first-world democracy."

In response to Israel Apartheid Week, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, in partnership with Betar Tagar, a Zionist campus group, organized a series of lectures called Know Radical-Islam Week, which began Feb. 6 and runs until Feb. 10.

Topics included civil rights in radical Islamic societies and the threat of radical Islamic terrorism.

"It is obvious that this is a direct response to Israel Apartheid Week. We are running it a week before. We can't take this lying down. The Arab Students' Collective is growing and they are transplanting Israel Apartheid Week to other universities. Not responding to this event is not working," Benlolo said.

Continued on page 25

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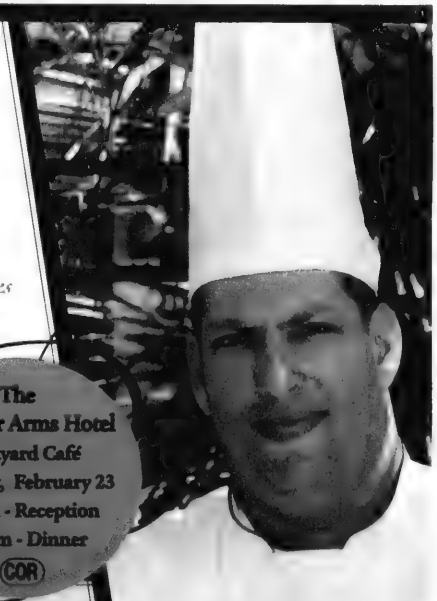

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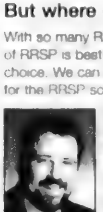

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Herzliya Conference (3)

The Sixth Herzliya Conference on the Balance of Israel's National Security that concluded on Jan. 24 was an ambitious, intense 84-hour immersion into a constantly reverberating echo chamber of seminars, lectures, debates, discussions and speeches on some 30 different subjects bearing upon Israel's overall security.

One of the panel discussions that attracted a great deal of media attention, not surprisingly, was titled "The Nuclearization of Iran."

The international community – and it is important to add, not only the West – is highly suspicious of Iran's true intentions regarding its nuclear program. The peaceful purposes, which the Iranian regime repeatedly proclaims to be the sole reason for developing nuclear energy, are inconsistent with the country's secretive, prevaricating behaviour and its known foreign policy objectives.

That suspicion was expressed last weekend, in the vote by the 35-nation board of the United Nations atomic energy agency in Vienna to report Iran to the Security Council, a procedure that may eventually lead to punitive measures against the theocratic regime in Tehran by the international community.

The resolution passed by a vote of 27 to 3, with five abstentions. Cuba, Syria and Venezuela voted against the European-drafted resolution. Three Muslim countries, it is significant to note, Algeria, Indonesia and Libya, joined Belarus and South Africa in abstaining. They too realize that the acquisition by Iran of nuclear weapons is a threat to the stability of the entire Middle East and beyond.

Most military and political officials in Israel regard Iran as an existential threat to the Jewish state's existence. On the opening night of the conference, Israel's Minister of Defence Shaul Mofaz urged Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to heed the lessons of history before he considered attempting to harm the Jewish state.

History, however, is not likely much of a priority in the curriculum of Iranian schools, given that Ahmadinejad will soon be hosting a conference to examine the nature of the proof for the Holocaust.

On the subject of the nuclearization of Iran, the conference heard from a number of veteran individuals experienced in defence matters generally and involved in the worrisome Iranian conundrum specifically.

The three-person panel comprised Philippe Errera, the deputy director of the Centre d'Analyse et de Prévision at the French ministry of foreign affairs; Sir Michael Quinlan, a guest lecturer at the department of war studies, Kings College, London; and Maj.-Gen. (res.) Isaac Ben-Israel, head of the security studies program at Tel Aviv University.

Errera was part of the European Union (EU) team that has been dealing with Iran. He pointed out that the Iran dossier was the first time the EU had taken on a security challenge with worldwide implications, acknowledging at the same time that the credibility of the EU is at stake.

"A multilateral consensus was indispensible," he said. "And if the matter proceeds to the Security Council, action must result. But we are just at the beginning of what will be a long confrontation."

Sir Michael generally echoed Errera's overall point of view but warned against any military option to the situation. Broad and economic sanctions were the ultimate instruments to be deployed against Iran, Quinlan suggested. But before sanctions are deployed, "the Iranian regime must know precisely what the nature of the sanctions would be."

Quinlan also suggested that for the sake of regional safety, Israel would eventually have to negotiate an appropriate status for its nuclear capacity as well.

Ben-Israel seemed to have little patience with Quinlan's cool, studied advice. "Jewish history prevents Israel from disregarding Iran's statements," he said.

The ensuing discussion between the audience and the members of the panel was quite lively. No consensus emerged.

Labor Party member of Knesset (MK) Ephraim Sneh expressed the hope that a diplomatic embargo might encourage Iranians to change the regime in Tehran. "But if we are talking about another option [namely military], we must prepare it with all reasonable urgency."

Likud MK Arieh Eldad was unequivocal. "The West must know that if they do not act [against Iran], then we will. The world must know that we will not be parties to a second Shoah."

Some people in the audience were less sanguine than Eldad about Israel's capability to pre-emptively eliminate the Iranian nuclear threat. The multi-facility configuration of Iran's nuclear establishment was more complex than that of the single-facility Iraqi station in 1981.

"Israeli policy must be anchored in reality, not in indignation," someone from the audience pleaded.

The last word on the subject of a possible Israeli strike against Iran's nuclear reactors came from the army's chief of staff, Lt.-Gen. Dan Halutz. "When the situation reaches the stage that will require a response from us, we will know what to do."

Iran announced on the weekend that it was suspending all co-operation with the IAEA. Some people quickly pointed out there has been no honest co-operation to date anyway from Iran.

The situation grows tenser and more complicated. — *MBD*

See JN

VIOLENCE AT AMONA

Some 50 police officers and 200 protesters, including three Knesset members, were hurt last week as police moved in to dismantle an illegal cluster of houses at Amona near Ofra in the West Bank. Hundreds of youths who had barricaded themselves at the hilltop outpost threw rocks and other debris at the police units. Some people accused the police of acting with too heavy a hand. Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert refused the call for a special inquiry into the violence of the evacuation. On Sunday, tens of thousands of people at Zion Square in Jerusalem demonstrated their opposition to Olmert and to his decisions about Amona. [Israpet photo]

Fighter pilot discusses aftermath of Gaza pullout

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Omer Theori, a fighter pilot in the Israeli Air Force who remains a captain in the reserves, spoke at Congregation B'nai Torah last week about the social and security problems facing Israel in the wake of last summer's Gaza pullout.

"As you all know, something like 8,000 Jews were told, 'You don't live here anymore and that maybe you'll have other houses somewhere else, but here you won't,'" said Theori, who served for two years as an F-16 fighter pilot in the IDF's most elite flight squadron.

"The security problems of the disengagement were clear to everybody. I don't think that someone thought that once we disengage that all the terrorism will stop."

He added that not only did the terror not stop, but Palestinians began to shoot missiles from the same places Jews had been removed from.

"I think Hamas won the election because of the disengagement, in my opinion. The disengagement made [Palestinians] believe that terrorism helped them reach their goal," he said.

Theori, who was critical of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's plan to leave Gaza, said he still followed his orders despite his skepticism that the plan would benefit Israel.

He said social issues – the fact the Gaza settlers received very little help, understanding or compassion after the disengagement – are a much bigger problem than security and defence.

He recalled having a conversation with one of his friends just days before the settlements were to be dismantled.

"He asked me, 'What is the problem in moving houses? I've moved three times. Why is everyone making so much noise about moving out?'

"When he asked me this question, I started to realize that the problem here is that people that surround me didn't know what is Gush Katif and didn't understand what was happening."

Theori said that he was asked to prepare soldiers who would be responsible for physically removing people from their homes for what they were about to do.

"They understand technically what they are going to do, they understand their orders… but they were never in Gush Katif and they don't understand what they are going to do."

During a question-and-answer period, a man in the audience said the majority of people in Israel simply don't care about Gazans who were forced to leave their homes and are now crying in hotel rooms and facing unemployment.

The questioner asked how Israel can address this division between the people who are suffering and those who ignore them.

Theori said the key to improving the social problems that arose because of the pullout is to create awareness about how settlers have been affected by the move.

"There is no magic answer to this question, but part of the answer is that we have to learn the lesson of this," he said.

Theori talked mostly about the disengagement, but he also took some time to discuss his involvement with the Mechina yeshiva program in the northern Negev.

Theori – who is shomer Shabbat, a rarity among fighter pilots, who are often on call on Saturdays – is a lay leader of the three-year-old preparatory program, which gives directionless youth the resources to succeed in Israeli society.

The program is based in a poor town called Kiryat Malachi, where most of the residents are recent immigrants from the former Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

BEDTIME HAVDALAH SERVICE: Kids wore pyjamas and adults wore jeans for a recent Bedtime Musical Havdalah service put on by Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am's young families division. Among the more than 100 children and parents were: top row, Breanne Bornstein; middle row from left, Benjamin Nemirov, Samantha Marks, Alexis Silverstein and Randy Bornstein; and bottom row from left, Meron Nemirov, Justin Marks and Marshall Silverstein. A lively musical Havdalah service was followed by an ice cream sundae buffet. [Michael Ferman photo]

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Canadian travel to Israel continues to recover

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The number of Canadians heading to Israel rose by 17 per cent in 2005, part of a continuing rebound in tourism for the Jewish state.

Overall, the number of travellers to Israel jumped by 27 per cent in 2005, building on gains in 2004 and marking a major reversal from the height of the Palestinian intifadah, when Israeli tourism suffered from a dramatic falloff of visitors.

More than 1.9 million visitors travelled to Israel last year, the Israel Government Tourism Office (IGTO) reported. The United States was the single largest source of tourists to Israel, with 457,500 arriving in 2005, a 21 per cent increase over 2004.

Some 50,800 Canadians, not including an additional 10,000 to 15,000 who also hold other passports, visited the Jewish state in 2005.

An improved security situation and the rediscovery of Israel as a world class tourist destination contributed to the Canadian increase, said Jerry Adler, marketing and public relations manager of IGTO Canada. The Jewish community provided the bulk of Israel-bound travellers, Adler noted, but Christian pilgrims also increased, many buoyed by the late Pope John Paul II's pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Israel's Ministry of Tourism predicts tourism to Israel in 2006 will come back in line with the booming pre-intifadah years. Travel to Israel nosedived in late 2001 as suicide bombings and attacks on restaurants and cafes dissuaded many from visiting.

"I expect the positive trend to continue through 2006," said Israeli Tourism Minister Avraham Hirchson in a news release. "We hope to welcome three million tourists this year."

Stanley Morais, general manager of El Al's Canadian office, said that "2005 was an exceptional year for us at El Al. El Al turned a profit even with high fuel costs."

Peter Fitzpatrick, a spokesperson for Air Canada, said that "2005 was better for us than 2004, and the trend looks good for 2006. We're encouraged and pleased with it."

Air Canada flies to Israel daily from mid-April to early November and five times a week during the rest of the year.

El Al's chronically money-losing Toronto to Tel Aviv route, which cost-cutters at El Al's head office have been eyeing for years, did particularly well, registering approximately a 20 per cent increase over 2004. The route's overall load factor reached 90 per cent in 2005, including passengers who originated in Los Angeles, Morais said.

El Al offers five flights a week from Los Angeles to Toronto to Tel Aviv during the winter season, six flights a week in the spring and fall seasons, and the airline adds three Toronto to Tel Aviv flights in the summer high season, for a total of nine weekly flights.

During the summer high season, El Al flights to and from Israel were 95 per cent full, Morais said. The airline's market research showed that more than 80 per cent of its Canadian passengers who flew to Israel originated in Toronto.

"The Jewish community in Toronto has very strong ties to Israel," he said. "During the height of the intifadah, the Jewish organizations, especially led by [UJA Federation of Greater Toronto], was relentless in sending trips to Israel on a monthly basis, and it remained a key issue for the people of Toronto to be in Israel at a difficult time.

"Now that the situation has been quieted down, the Jewish community recognized the importance of travelling to Israel and that it's a great place to visit."

Morais said the birthright israel program, which brings young adults to Israel for 10-day visits, has created a multiplier effect, as hundreds of families are picking up on their children's enthusiasm and planning visits. In addition, fares dropped an average of seven per cent in 2005.

Despite the boost in travel to Israel from Canada during 2005, the Toronto route only broke even, Morais continued. On Jan. 1, Toronto's Pearson airport became the most expensive airport in the world for airlines, with carriers paying $14,000 to land a 747 jumbo jet. El Al's 767s are charged about $7,000, and they land twice a day, he noted.

Based on early bookings, El Al is forecasting a decrease in passenger traffic in 2006. As a result, it will be dropping one of its nine weekly summer flights, Morais said.

Morais said Israel's Ministry of Tourism dropped the ball in 2005 by failing to adequately promote travel to Israel. Morais, who worked for four years as the IGTO's deputy director, said the IGTO operated under budgetary constraints in early 2005 – when families plan their 2006 trips – and so missed an opportunity to sell Israel during the current year.

Adler said Morais' comment is "wrong. We are in the throes of a major advertising campaign across Canada, in the hundreds of thousands of dollars… to encourage travel to Israel."

Adler distinguished between the IGTO as an arm of the government of Israel and El Al, a private corporation.

"They have their own problems. That's all I am going to say."

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CJPAC claims success after federal election

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When CJPAC, the Canadian Jewish Political Affairs Committee, was created weeks before the election was called, its advocates said it could be judged by whether it could mobilize members of the Jewish community to become actively involved in the coming campaign.

Josh Cooper

With the national vote now in the books, CJPAC executive director Josh Cooper said the new organization met its objectives.

CJPAC's success, he said, can be measured by the extent to which politically motivated Jews joined campaigns, hosted coffee parties for candidates, displayed lawn signs, and canvassed by phone and door to door, as well as voted.

Furthermore, Cooper added, CJPAC proved itself an effective resource for many candidates, who called and requested information about issues of interest to the Jewish community, such as a definition of the term "occupied territories," or whether Israel's security barrier was properly termed a fence or a wall.

At the heart of CJPAC's agenda for the recent campaign was to get Jews involved in politics for the parties of their choice. The organization did not favour one party over another, nor did it instruct its members to work for any particular candidate or against another, Cooper said.

Organization helped Jews become politically active to have influence on issues

CJPAC is an independent organization with a 12-person board whose activities are funded by non-tax-deductible donations. An earlier entity, CIJA-PAC, the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) Public Affairs Committee, was a UIA-supported group that was also headed by Cooper and is now defunct.

He acknowledged that CJPAC and CIJA-PAC, which was partly funded by charitable dollars, share "an overlap in membership, but it is not entirely similar."

He added that their mandates were also similar, "as they were both developed to encourage participation in the political process. However, because CIJA-PAC was partially funded by charitable dollars, it could only encourage participation in the political process. At CJPAC, we placed people directly in the political process, especially during the recent election."

CJPAC currently has more than 3,000 members, with major Jewish population centres represented.

"CJPAC does not donate money to candidates, political parties or leadership campaigns," Cooper said. "CJPAC does not rate or endorse candidates for political office."

At the heart of CJPAC's strategy is the belief that by helping Jews to become politically active, they can have influence on issues of concern to the Jewish community.

The first step was to get CJPAC members working on campaigns. In the long term, it means planting seeds among Canada's political class that will one day bear fruit through a more sympathetic attitude to Israel and an appreciation of other issues, such as community security, terrorism and anti-Semitism.

CJPAC is merely asking Canadian Jews to be "good citizens and be part of the political process," Cooper added.

Nelson Wiseman, a professor of political science at the University of Toronto, said he has not heard of CJPAC but believes its approach "is perfectly kosher."

"It's part of a healthy civil society," he said.

Wiseman said Sikhs have rallied to get various members of that community elected to public office, but they do not favour one particular party. "That's effective," he said.

Jews, he continued, "are more politically involved than the Canadian average," in part due to the higher education level of Jews as well as due to an ancient prophetic tradition that has led to social consciousness.

By supporting different parties, "it tells people you are part of the Canadian political community and were not dictating what strand of the ideological spectrum you're trying to embrace," he added.

Cooper said the recent election saw the involvement of many university and high school students and "first timers."

They shared a general consensus on a number of issues. Critics of the Jewish state were not likely to embrace CJPAC, he suggested.

With the election over, CJPAC's mission is to keep people interested in politics in their local ridings. "The long term goal is to develop relationships with elected officials and to engage the community in the political system between and during elections," Cooper stated.

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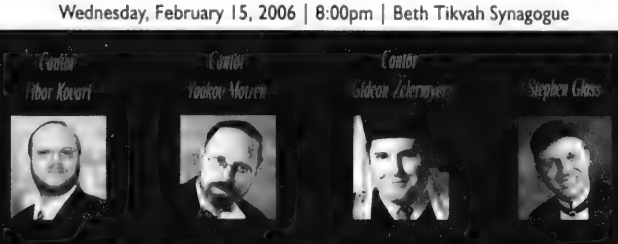

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Publisher and Proprietor:
The Canadian Jewish News, a corporation without share capital.
Head Office
1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4

We are all Danes!

Aggrieved masses of Muslims razed the Danish embassies in Damascus and Beirut over the weekend. They were expressing their deep sense of affront at the publication of a number of cartoon caricatures of the prophet Muhammad in the Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten* in September and reprinted in various European media last week.

Any visual depiction of Muhammad is prohibited under Islamic law and offensive to Muslim sensibility. Satire and caricature, therefore, are egregiously more offensive. As a result, in cities around the world last weekend, Muslims expressed their profound anger that anyone would deign to draw, let alone ridicule, the prophet.

Most of the demonstrations were non-violent, if noisy. Some were quite ugly, as in London, where protesters called alternatively for the "beheading," "slaying," "butchering," or "extermination" of "those who insult Islam." In Beirut and Damascus, as mentioned, the demonstrations were brutishly violent.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has ordered his government to study cancelling all trade contracts with European countries whose newspapers published the caricatures. He said the drawings showed the "impudence and rudeness" of Western newspapers against the prophet, as well as the "maximum resentment of the Zionists [Jews] ruling these countries against Islam and Muslims."

Mahmoud Zahar, leader of Hamas, the Palestinian terror group that last week won the general elections in the Palestinian territories, told the Italian daily *Il Giornale* that the cartoonists should be punished by death. "We should have killed all those who offend the Prophet, and instead, here we are, protesting peacefully," he said.

Between the actions of the satirists, however, and the reactions of the aggrieved is a distance– indeed, a void – so profoundly wide that we in and of the West cannot cross it.

Let us ignore, for the sake of argument, the hypocrisy of the angry Muslims who rage at the Danish cartoons, yet happily abide grotesque anti-Jewish depictions almost on a daily basis in their own media. Let us also ignore the otherwise relevant fact that non-Muslims need not feel bound by the strictures of Islamic law, however compelling and prudent the courtesy of being respectful. But we cannot – dare not – ignore the life-affirming values of Western society that lead us to ask: how is the burning of embassies, or the call to "behead" and to "slay," not a greater offence to God than an ill-advised, thoughtless, insensitive attempt to depict His prophet?

Muslim extremists have singled out Denmark and the Danes for vituperation. In their struggle against extremism, hatred, intolerance and violence, we should show Danes that they are not alone. We join them in donning the "yellow star" of their vilification, as the king of Denmark did for Jews in World War II.

We are all Danes in this epochal struggle.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• Moshe Dayan, who resigned as Israel's foreign minister in 1980, said he might run in the upcoming Israeli election as head of a new centrist party, which polls predicted could win 17 seats. He said a key part of his platform would be giving autonomy to Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Dayan's Telem party later won two seats, but he died of cancer a short time later.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
YOU WANT TO PUBLISH CARTOONS ABOUT MOHAMMED IN OUR PAPER?
RIGHT!
YOU DON'T THINK WE'LL GET INTO TROUBLE?
NAH!
WE'RE A DANISH NEWS-PAPER! WHO READS DANISH?!
NO ONE OUTSIDE OF DENMARK WILL EVER EVEN HEAR ABOUT IT?!

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'Israel Apartheid Week'

The Arab Students' Collective at the University of Toronto will be hosting its second annual "Israel Apartheid Week" on campus starting Feb. 13. To be sure, Israel is not a perfect state, but like all other democracies, it strives to improve itself and reduce racial and ethnic stratification. But to label Israel an apartheid state is immoral and unethical. It's a complete fabrication and gross mischaracterization of a first-world democracy.

A recent report by the Economist Intelligence Unity (EIU) ranked 20 countries on 15 indicators of political and civil liberty. The Index of Political Freedom lists Israel first, followed by Lebanon, Morocco, Iraq and the Palestinian Territories as the most democratic countries in the Middle East.

According to the index, Israel had the best marks for the following "freedom indicators": election of head of government, election of parliament, fairness of electoral laws, right to organize political parties, power of elected representatives, presence of an opposition, transparency, minority participation, level of corruption, freedom of assembly, independence of the judiciary, freedom of the press, religious freedom, rule of law and property rights.

The U of T Arab group believes that "a just and peaceful solution can only come about through an end to the Israeli military occupation of Palestine, the reversal of Israeli policies of apartheid, and allowing the return of the Palestinian refugees... These demands can only come about through international understanding of and mobilization against the Israeli apartheid regime in the form of boycotts, divestment and sanctions."

The university is celebrated as a bastion of freedom of expression and for its true reflection of the values esteemed by western democracies. These values should be preserved. But we deplore the hijacking of campuses to radicalize students and faculty and attempt to influence the public at large with patently false misinformation.

As a counterbalance to Israel Apartheid Week and as a way of providing U of T students with a fuller, truer picture, the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center and the student advocacy group Betar Tagar will be hosting Know Radical Islam Week, starting Feb. 6.

With the transplanting of Israel Apartheid Week to other universities across Canada and Europe, it's time for people of good conscience who espouse virtues of liberal democracy and civil rights to politely ask the organizers to look in the mirror.

Avi Benlolo
Canadian director of the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies
Toronto

Community demographics

I also applaud the wonderful work done by the Taglit-birthright israel program over the past six years and the support given to it by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and private philanthropists ("UJA Federation supports birthright israel," letters, *CJN*, Feb. 2). What Leo Davids was trying to point out in "World Jewry today" (*CJN*, Jan. 5) is that despite the valiant ongoing efforts of organizations such as birthright, the Jewish birthrate in the Diaspora continues to fall. As Davids wrote, "donations are still supporting business as usual, rather than innovative programs to cope with this crisis. Something significant needs to be done about the community's demographics, and soon." "Jewish Singles World," despite endorsements by the Conservative and Reform rabbinate in the Greater Toronto Area, still remains unfunded. Won't someone support us, before it's too late?

Judith Weinroth
Toronto

* * *

Bill 27 and beit dins

There is a notable omission in the article "Jewish groups say new bill targets beit dins" (*CJN*, Jan. 26). Canadian Jewish Congress honorary legal counsel Mark Freiman was joined by the associate national chair of CJC's executive, Rachael Turkienicz, in our submission to the committee that is reviewing Bill 27.

This is of particular note because a portion of CJC's submission quoted in the article, but not attributed, was ably presented by Turkienicz. In part, she stated: "If the concern of this legislation is to ensure that all parties are treated fairly and with one legal standard, the legislation should consider regulating arbitration and family law to protect the rights of the potentially vulnerable and support their choices of expression. Faith tribunals are empowered by their faith communities. They will continue to be sought after by people of faith as a trusted venue for resolution. As a Canadian, it is important to support each person's personal choice of the lens through which they prefer to see Canadian principles expressed. Rather than removing the support of the government, CJC believes that the legislation should stand strongly beside any woman who chooses to express herself through her faith, knowing she need never compromise her Canadian sensibilities."

Turkienicz echoed CJC's overall approach on this legislation. The protection of women's rights and equality are paramount considerations. At the same time it is crucial that we don't focus on issues that effectively have the state controlling matters of conscience, while doing nothing to advance protection against potential abuses that we all agree must be prevented.

Steven H. Shulman
Regional director and general counsel
Canadian Jewish Congress, Ontario region

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The Tu b'Shvat seder

By SHARON KANON
IPS

Almond blossoms are part of nature's wondrous language, telling us that the gloomy, short days of winter are coming to an end and that most of Israel's winter rains have fallen. The blossoms, like a wake-up call, signal the start of a new planting season.

Tu b'Shvat, the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shvat, is the official day for celebrating the New Year of the Trees. As a holiday, first mentioned in the Mishnah, it is a late bloomer, only coming into full flower with the Zionist return to Israel. Focusing on the land and its fruits, our return to our roots and Eretz Yisrael, it is customary on Tu b'Shvat to eat a variety of fresh and dried fruits and nuts. Only in recent years, however, has the Tu b'Shvat seder grown in popularity in both Israel and the Diaspora.

Girl with a Flower **by Shmuel Schlesinger (1901-1986), oil on canvas, painted in the 1950s.**

In the 16th century, Kabbalists (mystics) in Safed enriched the holiday by creating a Tu b'Shvat seder, modelled on the Pesach seder that included four cups of wine, four questions, specific foods and storytelling. They believed that eating different fruits, each preceded by a blessing, was a *tikkun*, or correction in the metaphysical order of the world according to the Kabbalah, that could have a positive influence on the year's produce. Over time, different communities have added their own customs, and the Tu b'Shvat seder – which now also has its own Haggadah and often includes contemporary Hebrew poetry and song – has developed into a unique expression of appreciation for the land.

Although there are different versions of the Tu b'Shvat seder, most follow the same pattern. Like the Passover seder, the Tu b'Shvat seder calls for four glasses of wine, the drinking of which is preceded by the blessing for wine.

The first cup is composed entirely of white wine, symbolizing the barrenness of the winter; the second is mostly white mixed with some red, symbolizing the approach of spring; the third is mostly red mixed with some white, symbolizing the progression of spring, and the fourth is all red, symbolizing the arrival of summer.

Fruit eaten during the seder is in four categories: fruit with a hard outer shell (almonds, pecans, walnuts), fruit with an inner pit (dates, olives, plums, cherries), fruit with an outer shell and inner pit (carob, avocado, pomegranate, orange) and fruit that is entirely edible (figs, grapes, raisins, strawberries). A large plate in the centre of the table is usually used to hold 15 different kinds of fruits, but sometimes individual plates are prepared for each person.

A woodcut from an early 18th-century book of customs in Amsterdam depicts a table laden with the fruits of Tu b'Shvat.

A friend of mine has always associated *bokser*, the fruit of the carob tree, with Tu b'Shvat, as he recalls his father bringing it home at holiday time. This tradition can be traced back to Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, who, in the second century CE, took refuge in a cave with his son when hiding from the Romans, and lived on well water and the fruit of the carob tree for 13 years.

The late Lubavitcher Rebbe instructed his followers to eat carob on Tu b'Shvat during the Gulf War in 1991, because the talmudic sage Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa, who was know for his miraculous intervention on behalf of those in trouble, was known to eat carob. Although no miracles occurred, the war did take a turn for the better after the holiday.

One person usually leads the Tu b'Shvat seder – providing direction as to which fruit to eat or glass of wine to drink – and makes the appropriate blessing while holding in his hand the object being blessed. As with the Pesach seder, however, it is also quite acceptable for everyone to have a turn reading the Haggadah.

Noga Hareuven of Neot Kedumim, the Biblical Landscape Reserve in Israel, composed the following version of the questions used as part of their Tu b'Shvat seder program:

Why is the seder of the night of Tu b'Shvat different from the seder of the night of Passover?

Because at the Passover seder we eat matzah, and on this night, only fruit.

At the Passover seder, we drink wine of any colour; on this night, we drink white and red wine.

At the Passover seder, we tell of the Exodus from Egypt; on this night we speak of the fruits of the field.

Another seder begins by asking four ecologically relevant questions designed to help us understand the significance of this day:

Why does this holiday honour trees?

Why, today, do we eat fruit that is grown in Israel?

Why, today, do we focus on conservation?

Why do we think about planting, even though spring is still some way off?

In fact, environmentally conscious educators have suggested that the seder include the reciting of a list of *makot* (plagues) of the modern world, such as air pollution, water contamination, noise abuse, wanton destruction, causing the extinction of species, disregard for the environment (littering, using toxic materials, etc.) and not thinking of the future.

Tu b'Shvat Haggadot typically reaffirm our bond with the Land of Israel, rejoice in its rebirth and pledge to share in its rebuilding. One Tu b'Shvat Haggadah includes part of the first Israeli president Chaim Weizmann's emotion-packed speech when he opened the first Knesset of the State of Israel on Tu b'Shvat 1949: "Every Jew has a connection to Eretz Yisrael. We pray that the incoming of the exiles will bring in more and more people who will strike roots and work together with all of us to build the State of Israel and make the desolated land flower."

Buying dried fruit and nuts at Jerusalem's Machane Yehuda market for celebrating the Tu b'Shvat seder.

A Tu b'Shvat poster from the 1950s [IPS photos by AVI]

Consensus in Israel

Most analysts of the career of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon suggest he was a very poor strategist but a brilliant tactician. He knew how to respond to crises, but not how to avert them. He even precipitated some.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

What turned him into a great prime minister was his ability to read the mood of the majority of Israel's Jewish population. He may, in fact, have been a better follower than a leader. More than setting the country's agenda, he knew how to carry out the will of the people.

That will was manifest, first and foremost, in the determination that Israel be a Jewish state. Only a substantial Jewish majority could achieve that. If most of the citizens of Israel were Jews, Israel would be Jewish, irrespective of their religious and political views and irrespective of the criteria promulgated by the Orthodox rabbinate.

That is why Sharon decided to disengage from Gaza and thus remove 1.3 million Arabs from Israel's immediate orbit. Though the price of also having to move some 8,000 Jews may have weighed heavily on the man who for a long time was seen as the father of the settlement movement, Sharon believed that the price was worth paying.

Most Israelis are cautious about the left's insistence that accommodation with the Palestinians is within easy reach. The victory of Hamas in recent Palestinian legislative elections vindicates the caution. But even now, after the Hamas victory, Israelis are also unhappy with the seeming intransigence of the right. Sharon interpreted the mood of the majority to mean that unilateral separation was called for.

The Gaza pullout was probably conceived as the first of many similar steps. Whereas a cluster of Jewish settlements in the West Bank would be preserved, the areas where the majority of Palestinians lived would go back to them. The separation wall is being constructed with that in mind. The Hamas victory has made that even more urgent.

Kadima, the party Sharon formed, has gone beyond the conventional divisions of right and left. Opinion polls suggest that it may end up with a plurality in the March elections, even though Sharon is no longer at its helm. That's evidence enough that it's not the will of one man, however determined, but the will of the people, however seemingly divided, that will chart the course of Israel in the next few years.

The outpouring of affection and concern by friends and foes alike in response to Sharon's illness should perhaps be seen less as a tribute to a great leader than the warm appreciation of a man who was prepared to change his stance in order to carry out the wishes of the people.

Israel's national soccer squad: a good-news story

The recent Palestinian elections ended with a shocking result: Hamas won 76 of the 132 seats in the Palestinian assembly to become the official voice of the Palestinian people.

Hamas – regarded as a terrorist organization by the United States, Canada, the United Nations and the European Union – calls for the destruction of Israel. How could such a group win the election? I certainly don't have the answer to this question, but I've started my column with this suprising story in order to make a point.

When Israel makes the headlines, it's almost always because of politics or tragedy, such as the deterioration of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's health or the killing of an Israeli or Palestinian civilian who did not deserve to die.

Yet Israel deserves recognition not just because of the current political situation or because of terrible tragedies, but for its many heroic stories of human triumph, such as the achievements of its national soccer team.

Across the country, one in three Israelis watched on television last March as Abbas Suan, one of two Israeli Arabs on the national team, unleashed a blazing 22-yard shot that got past the Irish goalkeeper in the 90th minute to give Israel a 1-1 tie in a home game against Ireland. The goal kept alive what was undoubtedly the biggest underdog story of the road to soccer's 2006 World Cup in Germany.

Matthew Pattens in Halifax

After scoring his goal, Suan dropped to his knees, kissed the ground and thanked Allah. Then his teammates – all but one of them Jews – gang tackled him.

"The greatest moment of my life," is how Suan described his role in the team's comeback, which he celebrated by wrapping himself in Israel's Star of David flag.

Some 40,000 ecstatic Israelis turned the sold-out national stadium in Ramat Gan into one big blue-and-white party. And in Sakhnin, Suan's hometown, devout Muslims excitedly clogged the streets and shot fireworks into the sky. Among Israel's more liberal Jews and Hebrew-language media, the reaction was equally festive, as well as occasionally ironic – "Goyim equals goalim," read one headline.

For the first time in ages, Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs shared the same sense of joy and accomplishment, all because of the Israeli soccer team's relentless perseverance.

Four nights later, again in Tel Aviv, an Arab again proved to be the team's saviour. This time, the team's other Muslim player, midfielder Walid Badir headed home the tying goal in the final minutes to earn a 1-1 draw against France, a perennial soccer powerhouse.

"We have Jewish players and we have Arab players, but they are all Israeli players," Itche Menachem, the president of the Israeli Soccer Federation, told *Sports Illustrated* last August.

"When there were no Arabs playing on the national team, they didn't pay attention. Now, in all the Arab communities of Israel, they watch the games, and they feel like they are part of it," Suan told the magazine.

Despite his heroics, Suan is subjected to threats, taunts and other forms of racism. Indeed, anti-Arab racism is so common at Israeli professional soccer games that the New Israel Fund – whose slogan is "Promoting equality and social justice for all Israelis" – monitors every professional match and issues a racism index each week to the media.

Israel's make-or-break qualifying game occurred in the St. Jakob Park stadium in Basel, Switzerland, the city where, in 1897, Theodor Herzl convened the first Zionist Congress, the body that proposed the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

The Israelis tied the Swiss team, coming just short of realizing the extraordinary dream of playing in the 2006 World Cup. The tie placed Switzerland ahead of Israel in the standings, pushing Israel into third place in group 4, in which only the top two teams advance.

Israel has not participated in a World Cup since 1970. Yet, the team that achieved the unthinkable – keeping pace with elite European national soccer teams while bringing together Arabs and Jews – offers a prime example of unity and accomplishment.

It's a story that should be told more often.

Moving beyond macaroni, oatmeal and hot dogs

I recently overheard an interesting conversation between two twentysomething students in the University of Manitoba's faculty of architecture.

Working late, as students often do, they were discussing the important things they had to do when they got home.

Gershon Richter in Winnipeg

Student 1: "Ugh. I can't wait to get home. This is the last time I forget to bring a lunch."

Student 2: "What's for dinner at home?"

Student 1: "Either hot dogs or macaroni and cheese."

Student 2: "Both nutritious and satisfying choices."

Student 1: "They also happen to be the only things I know how to make."

This seems a bit absurd to me. I'd say that after more than two decades on earth, a normal person should be able to do more when it comes to cooking than boil water. While it's important to know how to boil things (not to mention fun, as long as you avoid your own body parts), at a certain point in life, you should be capable of going beyond heating up H_2O.

If cooking a meal is too complex a task for you, what are you doing at university? How can we trust someone who can't assemble an omelet with the task of putting together a building? If you can't slice some vegetables for a salad or a stir fry, do we even want to think about you becoming a surgeon? If you're not able to follow a recipe with more than two ingredients or steps, should you be allowed to tackle more complex and dangerous things, such as operating a motor vehicle or changing a light bulb?

Now, I'm not saying that you can't survive by cooking with boiled water alone. Let's imagine for a moment the various meal possibilities: Breakfast could be instant oatmeal from a packet, which is chock full of fibre, so that's a positive. Lunch might be a bowl of instant ramen noodle soup – it's easy to prepare, but loaded with sodium, a definite minus. Supper might be hot dogs or macaroni and cheese. The next day might see cold macaroni and cheese for breakfast, oatmeal for lunch and hot dogs for supper.

But what if company is coming over? What tasty boiled treats could you whip up to delight their taste buds? As an appetizer, consider removing instant ramen soup from the cardboard cup it comes in and try serving it in a real bowl. Follow that up with a steaming macaroni-and-cheese, veggie-dog casserole as the main entrée, then cap the meal off with cinnamon-and-raisin flavoured oatmeal, lightly dusted with cinnamon or nutmeg and served in individual dessert dishes.

Yum, yum.

You could also try one of the simplest and oldest forms of cooking. It's mainly the domain of the male of the species, now modernized so that he sometimes wears an apron and holds some kind of metal flipping implement. About one trillion years ago (approximately), humans discovered fire. Not long after that, someone accidentally dropped a piece of meat into the fire, and it was later removed from the flames and eaten.

So began a sacred Sunday tradition. We have improved on it somewhat, but the basic idea of cooking things with fire is still around today. If cave men could do it – and, more importantly, if I can figure it out – *anyone* can get the hang of it.

One of the greatest discoveries of the 20th century, and the salvation of many a student who can do nothing but boil water, was the microwave oven. In 1947, the first commercial microwave stood almost six feet tall, weighed a hefty 750 pounds and cost approximately $7,000. Today, more microwaves are sold than conventional ovens, and hardly anyone worries about the potential health hazards from leaking radiation. We're also all aware of the potential carcinogenic effects of nuking something in styrofoam or plastic, thanks to numerous forwarded e-mails from concerned friends. Plus, a good microwave can be had for under $100, a very important factor for students, not to mention parents who are sending their offspring out into the real world of meal preparation.

Yes, the microwave has revolutionized food preparation and freed up many minutes in the busy life of a university student. You can boil water in less than one minute in a microwave, so now you can pull an all-nighter studying for exams and still have a hot nutritious breakfast of instant oatmeal, and then nuke hot dogs for company at dinnertime.

Hamas victory raises two major questions

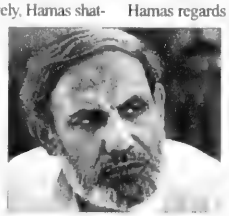
As Israelis and Arabs take stock of Hamas' stunning victory in the Palestinian parliamentary election in the West Bank and Gaza Strip on Jan. 25, two salient questions are worth pondering. The first is whether Hamas is capable of moderating its steadfast rejectionist policies and thus redefining itself. The second turns on whether Hamas will observe the shaky, unwritten truce with Israel, which officially expired at the end of 2005.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

The answers to these questions may well affect the Arab-Israeli peace process, such as it is, and stability in the Middle East.

In an astonishing break with the status quo, Hamas – which boycotted the last general election in the Palestinian Authority in 1996 – won 76 out of 132 seats in the Legislative Council, thus becoming the first Islamic party to win an election in the Arab world. Fatah, the ruling secular nationalist party co-founded by Yasser Arafat in the mid-1950s, picked up only 43 seats. Fringe parties won the remaining mandates.

Pundits assumed that Fatah would defeat Hamas by a narrow margin and form a coalition government with its Islamic rival. Nobody, including Hamas officials, expected Hamas to score such a triumph. By winning so decisively, Hamas shattered Fatah's domination of Palestinian politics, added a new layer of complexity to the Arab-Israeli dispute, practically ensured that Israel will take further unilateral steps to delineate its final borders and proved that the exercise of democracy in the Middle East can unleash negative forces.



Mahmoud Zahar

Hamas, which campaigned under the banner of "Change and Reform," triumphed because Fatah was generally seen as a corrupt and inefficient party unable to stem lawlessness, deliver basic services, build a sound economy and forge peace with Israel. Previously, the majority of these factors enabled Hamas to acquit itself quite well in municipal elections. Hamas won one-third of the seats in the West Bank and nearly two-thirds in Gaza, which Israel evacuated last summer.

Considering that it was founded only 19 years ago, during the opening days of the first Palestinian uprising, Hamas has progressed rapidly. Ironically, it owes part of its success to Israel, which initially backed Hamas as a counterweight to the PLO. An offshoot of Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas is militantly anti-Israel. Its 1988 charter, the work of the late Ahmed Yassin and his closest associates, leaves no doubts about its philosophy and intentions. The charter, which draws inspiration from the anti-Semitic *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, describes Palestine as a Muslim endowment that cannot be ceded to non-Muslims, or infidels. Calling for Israel's elimination and describing Jews as intrinsically evil, the charter is more extreme than the PLO's first national covenant. "We do not recognize the Israeli enemy, nor his right to be our neighbour, nor to stay, or his ownership of any inch of land," Mahmoud Zahar, a top Hamas leader in Gaza, declared recently.

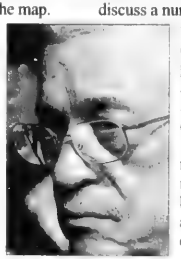
Like Islamic Jihad, which boycotted last month's PA election, Hamas hews to an uncompromising worldview that puts it sharply at odds with the PA's current president, Mahmoud Abbas, who is committed to peace negotiations with Israel, the yet-to-be-implemented 2003 "road map" peace plan and a two-state solution.

Hamas and Abbas also differ on the use of violence. Abbas has denounced the intifadah, saying it is inimical to Palestinian interests. By contrast, Hamas regards it as an absolute necessity. Since the outbreak of the second intifadah in September 2000, Hamas, by its own admission, has carried out 54 per cent of the more than 400 suicide attacks in Israel and the territories. Islamic Jihad, which has carried out all six suicide bombings since the start of the informal ceasefire last February, including the latest one in Tel Aviv on Jan. 19, has been responsible for almost 40 such attacks. The Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, which is loosely affiliated with Fatah, has perpetrated about 22 bombings.

Given its blood-stained record, Hamas has come under intense pressure from the United States, the European Union, Russia, the United Nations' secretary general, Egypt and Canada to recognize Israel, renounce violence, disarm and honour previous PA agreements with Israel.

Hamas risks losing about $1 billion (US) in annual aid if it snubs its nose at these conditions. Without these funds, the virtually bankrupt PA would find itself in still more dire straits. But Hamas does not appear to care about the consequences of its obduracy. Last week, Osama Hamdan, a senior Hamas official, said that Hamas will not give in to "blackmail" and will seek funds elsewhere, presumably in Iran, whose president has called for Israel to be wiped off the map.

Israel's acting prime minister, Ehud Olmert, who is filling in for the hospitalized Ariel Sharon, has also projected toughness. Having pledged not to deal with Hamas unless it transforms itself, Olmert is withholding tax rebates and customs revenues that the PA is entitled to until the situation becomes much clearer.



Mahmoud Abbas

Facing catastrophic economic sanctions and a disastrous loss of political support for the Palestinian cause, Hamas leaders remain defiant, at least for now.

Zahar, one of the founders of Hamas, stated last week that recognition of Israel is a non-starter. But he said that he would be willing to consider a long-term truce under certain conditions. In passing, he denigrated the idea of peace talks with Israel, saying that the Palestinians had gained nothing from the Oslo process, which Hamas rejected vehemently from the outset. Incredibly enough, Zahar also demanded that Israel should remove the two blue bands from its flag, claiming that they symbolize Israel's secret desire to expand its borders from the Euphrates to the Nile.

His colleague, Moussa Abu Marzouk, the deputy head of Hamas, sounded a similar theme: "As long as there is occupation and so long as our people's rights are usurped, our stand will remain the same." Khaled Meshal, the most important Hamas leader in exile and the target of an abortive Israeli assassination attempt in Amman in September 1997, said that Hamas would not "submit to pressure" and defended attacks on Israeli civilians.

On the face of it, these statements strongly suggest that Hamas will not abandon ideological rigour in exchange for international legitimacy. Hamas, right now, is where the PLO was situated a generation ago, placing emphasis on "armed struggle" rather than peaceful coexistence with Israel. It took the PLO approximately 30 years to recognize Israel. Hamas, which is more radical than the PLO ever was, will need a lot more coaxing to reform itself. It seems clear that the clock has been turned back now that Hamas has become the Palestinians' face to the world.

But there is a silver lining in the dark clouds. Judging by its statements and actions on the ground, Hamas is fully capable of adopting pragmatic positions. Last December, Hamas officials in the West Bank town of Qalqilya met with representatives of the Israel Electricity Company to discuss a number of practical issues. In its election campaign manifesto, Hamas dropped its call for Israel to be replaced by an Islamic state from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea – not because Hamas had suddenly recognized Israel but because Israel was not considered a pressing matter at this point in time. For Hamas, the real issue was reform and better government. Most Palestinians, who favour a two-state solution, embraced the message.

But since Hamas is composed of different factions, it also doles out contradictory messages. Two days before the election, Hamas raised the possibility of negotiating with Israel through a third party, probably the PLO, but earlier, Hamas ruled out such talks. All rhetoric aside, Hamas seems ready for an extended truce with Israel, provided Israel withdraws to the pre-1967 lines, releases all Palestinian prisoners, allows Palestinian refugees to return to their former homes and ceases military operations against its fighters. Israel, which is intent on retaining major settlement blocs in the West Bank and keeping out the bulk of the refugees, will resist virtually all these demands. So a stalemate looms.

Hamas leaders exiled in Syria and Lebanon oppose the current ceasefire, or *tahdia*, which in any case has been repeatedly broken by both sides. But the Hamas leadership in the West Bank and Gaza wants to preserve the truce in the "national interest," as Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh has indicated.

In principle, however, Hamas remains wedded to violence to advance its objective of establishing an Islamic state in place of Israel. Hamas, which engaged in heavy clashes with the Israeli army last September, has been trying to transfer Qassam rockets from Gaza to the West Bank. If Hamas succeeds, Israeli cities on the coastal plain and Ben-Gurion Airport will be in its crosshairs.

Hamas may yet evolve into a responsible organization prepared to coexist with Israel. But years may elapse before Hamas comes to its senses and faces reality. In the meantime, Hamas is wholeheartedly dedicated to Israel's destruction.

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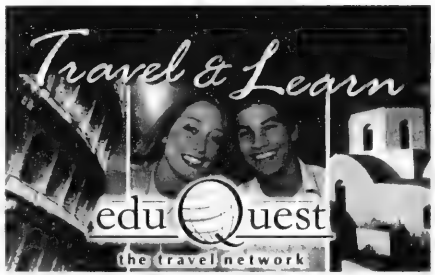

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Jewish Life

The Crypto-Jews of New Mexico

By ZE'EV GLICENSTEIN

It has been only about two decades since tales began surfacing in the popular press of Hispanic-Catholic families in the American Southwest who lit candles in secret on Friday evenings and retained other long-held family customs bearing unmistakable resemblance to Jewish rites.

Some families abstained from work or travel on Saturday, circumcised newborn boys, drained the blood from their meat, and avoided pork. Some related finding strange capsules containing Hebrew parchments on doorposts in their grandparents' homes, while some noticed Jewish stars and candelabras engraved on family tombstones alongside Christian crosses. Children asking their elders about such mysteries were told, "*Eramos Judios*" ("We were Jews").

As historian Stanley M. Hordes documents in a new book, *To the End of the Earth: A History of the Crypto-Jews of New Mexico* (Columbia University Press), an untold number of crypto-Jews have lived for centuries in an unlikely diaspora scattered across New Mexico and the American Southwest. They generally had no significant involvement with the Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants who arrived in the region after it became part of the United States in 1848.

As Hordes explains, these hidden Jews were descended from Sephardi Jews who fled Spain more than 500 years ago and, travelling via Portugal, Holland and the Canary Islands, first reached New Spain in the late 1500s. Because the Portuguese Inquisition then raged as fiercely as a forest fire, whole communities of conversos or crypto-Jews were forced to uproot themselves overnight.

In escaping persecution, some rushed after new mercantile opportunities in the Spanish territories of the New World. Many would have landed at Veracruz on the Gulf of Mexico, then journeyed to Mexico City, the hub of a rugged new empire in which they were to become adventurers, merchants and explorers.

The Catholic world's anti-Semitic fervour soon infected the Mexican territories, however, and hundreds of suspected "judaicizers" were arrested in Mexico City. It is a fact little remembered today that some 400 years ago, Mexico burned an untold number of crypto-Jews at the stake.

Through extensive archival research, Hordes demonstrates that many Judaic immigrants pushed northward via the Rio Grande into New Mexico, the very fringes of New Spain, where practitioners of "*la ley muerta de Moises*" – the forbidden "dead law of Moses" – could breathe more freely.

To the End of the Earth presents a scholarly history of the origins of New Mexico's crypto-Jews, with detailed portraits of prominent figures such as Juan de Onate (1550-1626), the first European explorer of the upper Rio Grande valley, who protected many crypto-Jews among his exploration party and may have hidden a parallel ancestry.

The most extensively researched book on the subject to date, *To the End of the Earth* also offers a compelling sociological study of New Mexico's conversos in the contemporary period. If Hordes's history is sometimes dry, his descriptions of present-day descendants of crypto-Jews and their practices are enticingly readable.

Why is this history emerging only now? As Hordes notes, descendants of the original crypto-Jews, having lost much of their ancestral heritage, are finally coming out into the open with their questions. In many families, he writes, "specific knowledge of their Jewish heritage ceased being transmitted in the mid-20th century."

But that's hardly the end of the story. According to a recent article in the *New York Times*, numerous Hispanic Catholics in New Mexico, Colorado and Texas have converted to Judaism in recent years after discovering their ancestral Jewish roots.

"I feel like I came home," said one convert, Bernadette Gonzalez, who now calls herself Batya. "The fingerprints of my past were all around me, but I didn't know what they meant."

Oh, those exotic Moroccans!

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the first Moroccan immigrants' arrival in Canada. This column is part of a series.

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

In the last century, the vast majority of North African Jews lived in cities, their homes complete with indoor plumbing and electricity. They dressed themselves in western attire and related well to contemporary European norms. They were fluent in at least one other language beyond Arabic, and depending on the locale, this other tongue could be French, Spanish, Italian or even English.

At the same time, there were rural and mountain communities of Jews whose lifestyles remained untouched and unchanged by time. Aside from their faith as Jews, their dwellings, dress, and deportment blended seamlessly with that of their Muslim neighbours.

In the 1940s and '50s, these Jews were the first to emigrate. For them, the journey to Zion was no less than a messianic realization. In a matter of days, these Jews would travel quite a distance – not just a few thousand kilometres to the Promised Land, but also a few thousand years forward into the modern world.

Comical stories of their adjustment, or maladjustment, abound. Pyjamas were happily worn as street clothes. Inappropriate use was made of the toilet and its water. One family hung chairs on the walls, and when asked why, they said that's how they had seen them displayed in stores! While some of these stories may have been embellished, there is no denying their essence.

The experience of the Jews who immigrated to North America and Europe was wholly different. By and large, they were urban, educated, multilingual and well-travelled. Nonetheless, earlier stories of the Israeli experience in the '40s and '50s would haunt them. "Just how civilized could an African immigrant be?" was the thinking of the day.

One had to politely endure a litany of demeaning questions. Did you live in huts? Did you wear regular clothing? Did you use plates, forks and knives? Did people bathe? Etcetera, etcetera.

One typical immigrant found himself in just such a situation. His boss was an otherwise open-minded, enlightened and kind fellow Jew. He was, however, incessantly intrigued about life in Morocco and never shy to ask questions, particularly about the level of civility, hygiene, education, organization and religiosity.

The immigrant, tired of assuring his boss that his life in Morocco was neither exotic nor primitive, decided to show him first-hand things were like. He did this by inviting him and his wife to his home for a traditional Shabbat meal. Caught by surprise and not knowing what to expect, the boss hesitantly accepted the invitation.

The evening, a traditional one with elegant candles lighting the Shabbat dinner, left the good boss and his wife wide-eyed. In honour of the occasion, the table was set with the finest linen, crystal, china and silver, and the floors were covered with brilliant, hand-knotted Moroccan rugs. A multi-course meal was served – perhaps there was too much food, and it was certainly much too spicy, but it was very tasteful.

"No" was the unspoken word, as in, "No painted natives dancing wildly around a cauldron on an open fire." Here was a normal Jewish family, basking in the warmth of Shabbat.

Jewish Life

Shakespeare still interests us today

Shakespeare: The Biography **by Peter Ackroyd, Random House.**
The Age of Shakespeare **by Frank Kermode, Random House.**

Books
Bernard Baskin

Shakespeare, who was named Man of the Millennium by British BBC listeners a few years ago and has been at the top of many lists of the most influential people of modern times, wasn't always as popular as he is today. His friend and rival dramatist, Ben Jonson, remarked that he wished Shakespeare had "blotted" a thousand lines from his plays.

When Samuel Pepys (1633-1703) attended a Shakespearian drama, he wasn't impressed. Of *Romeo and Juliet* he said: "A play of itself the worst I have ever heard." He also referred to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as "the most insipid, ridiculous play I have ever seen in my life."

Through the centuries, negative criticism of the plays alternated with unstinted praise. Leo Tolstoy was determined to cure the world of its "insane delusion, its collective hallucination" about Shakespeare. But, the formidable modern scholar Harold Bloom is of the opinion that Shakespeare not only reinvented the English language but also created human nature as we know it today. He writes, "The answer to the question 'Why Shakespeare?' must be 'Who else is there?'"

In recent years, there have been at least six major Shakespeare biographies published. Understandably, they overlap, but each contributes keen insights, creative speculation and bits of new information.

This is true of Peter Ackroyd's 500-page volume that tackles all facets of the poet's life against the richly textured background of his time. In 90 relatively brief subsections, the omnivorous author covers all that the general reader would want to know about Shakespeare's world and his genius.

In his new work, Frank Kermode, a distinguished British scholar of 16th- and 17th-century literature, takes the reader on a tour of Shakespeare's England. He vividly paints a picture of London society: religious beliefs, burgeoning population, epidemics, socio-economic conditions, the state of the arts and the rivalry of competing theatres.

Referring to the *Merchant of Venice*, the author reminds us that the character of Shylock has provoked so many interpretations that he has turned into the wandering Jew. He didn't become the conventional caricature depicted in the folklore of the time.

"He was altogether too powerful and perplexing a figure… Shakespeare simply could not write a stereotype. Perhaps, like so many of his principle figures, he is beyond interpretation… unlike some of his fellow dramatists, Shakespeare's Shylock is infinitely more interesting and sympathetic than the stock type. As a result, Shylock has entered the imagination of the world."

The author writes: "I shall try in what follows to keep in mind that just as his was only the grandest of the companies, Shakespeare was only the grandest of the poets writing for the many and under one aspect, a very successful businessman, a type that was common at the time in other professions; but he was also a poet who had certain aristocratic contacts and – as a liveried servant of the Crown, a minor courtier—a man acquainted with much that went on in social ranks both above and below him."

Both of these books provide masterly treatment of the individual plays, deftly interwoven with the flow of colourful narrative. Popular in style, these latest additions to the unceasing Shakespearian canon will be warmly welcomed.

Israel and the Winter Olympics

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

When you picture Israelis facing off against elite international athletes, you might think of them competing in sports like basketball or windsurfing. But how about ice dancing or downhill skiing? That's what they'll be doing when the world's finest meet this month at the 20th Olympic Winter Games in Torino, Italy.

Although this is the fourth Israeli delegation to the winter games, they must be used to being overshadowed by their high-profile summer counterparts. The Israeli Olympic Committee's English web page barely mentions winter sports. **[http://olympic.tapuz.co.il/English.asp]** At least in Hebrew you will learn that Israel first sent a winter delegation to the 1994 Lillehammer Games in Norway, where skater Michael Shmerkin finished a respectable 16th. At Nagano, Japan, in 1998, Shmerkin was joined by Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovski. At the 2002 Games in Salt Lake City, the Israeli contingent grew to five when Israel first competed in short-track speedskating with Olga Danilov placing 14th. **[http://olympic.tapuz.co.il/Torino.asp]**

This year, five athletes will represent Israel in Torino – including a return to the Olympics by Chait and Saknovsky. When the pair won bronze at the 2002 Games in Nagano, it marked the country's first medal at the Worlds. Kerry Meier has put together a fansite that documents the skaters' career. **[www.mieze katze.net/cs]**

This year, Israel will be represented by an alpine skier for the first time at the Olympics. You can see a shot of Ukrainian oleh Mikhail Renzin in action, as well as other members of Israel's team at this photo gallery. **[http://tinyurl.com/8sn5r]**

Although it was not yet reflected at the official Olympic site, *Ha'aretz* reports that two other Israeli competitors will also be off to Turin. In January, ice dancers Roman and Alexandra Zaretsky finished 15th at the European championship in Lyon, France, and made the cut for Torino. Roman, 22, and his sister, Alexandra, 18, were born in Minsk, Belarus, and immigrated to Israel in 1992. Their parents are both skating coaches at Metulla's Canada Centre, Israel's only Olympic-sized skating rink. **[http://tinyurl.com/exq4f]**

The decision to send the Zaretskys to the Olympics has been a controversial one. Although the International Olympic Committee had already granted them a spot in Torino, Israel's Olympic Committee would not give its approval unless they did well in Lyon. Boris Chait, chairman of the Israel Ice Skating Federation (and Galit's father) told the *Jerusalem Post* that Israel should not have waited to give the Zaretskys the green light. Keeping them from Torino would have been "a disaster in the making for the Winter Olympic program in Israel," Chait said before Lyon. "It takes generations to develop world-class athletes in winter sports… Israel doesn't have a surplus of world-class athletes." **[http://tinyurl.com/9bbl7]**

You can learn more about the Zaretskys at their official website. **[www.ice-dance.com/zaretsky/]** During the Olympics, check out coverage at the Jerusalem Post **[www.jpost.com]** and Ha'aretz **[www.haaretz.com]** as well as the Hebrew-language Olympics discussion forum at Tapuz. **[http://forums.tapuz.co.il/olympics]**

And finally, there is Israel's "Frozen Chosen." Reminiscent of the Jamaican bobsled team that caused a stir at the 1988 Calgary Olympics, it turns out that Israel actually has its own bobsled hopefuls. Sort off. Although the team has already participated in two world championships, the Frozen Chosen couldn't get support from Israel's Olympic Committee. **[http://tinyurl.com/88as5]** Writing at Ynetnews, Alan Abbey defends the North American-based team from criticism that it is not Israeli enough. Abbey says the team is undaunted and hopes to compete in 2010 in Vancouver. **[http://tinyurl.com/7kmjn]**

Realistically, none of the Israeli athletes to Torino is expected to come home with gold (or silver or bronze.) That may take a bit of time. After all, it took 40 years of competition until Israel won silver and bronze at the 1992 Summer Games in Barcelona. And it wasn't until 2004 in Athens that *Hatikvah* was played as an emotional Gal Fridman was awarded gold for his incredible achievement in windsurfing. **[http://tinyurl.com/9legv]**

Hopefully, it won't take Israel's winter elite quite as long.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Jewish Toronto

IsraelFEST a city-wide success across the GTA

Hillel hosts annual celebration of Israel

By YONI GOLDSTEIN
UJA Federation

A non-political celebration of Israeli culture and diversity took over the campuses of Toronto universities recently as IsraelFest, an annual celebration of all things Israeli sponsored by Hillel of Greater Toronto, showed participants what Israel is really all about. IsraelFEST celebrations were held at the University of Toronto, York University and Ryerson University.

An estimated 700 students took in the festivities at York University which included a guest lecture by Yossi Vassa, an Israeli-Ethiopian actor; an Israeli-style breakfast and an Israeli-themed Shabbat dinner at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue.

"The Israel experience doesn't end when you leave Israel," says Elise Loterman, Hillel's Arts and Culture chairperson and IsraelFEST chair at York. "We wanted to show Jewish students that there are many ways to celebrate everything Israeli even when you aren't there. IsraelFest shows that Canadians and Israelis share the same values and that they have much in common. IsraelFest shows that the Middle East isn't all about bombs, Hamas, terror and tension. People need to see Israel for what it really is, a country so full of life and culture."

(L to R): Rachel Lifshitz, Hilary Edelstein, Rina Goldberg and Shira Zeliger (4th year Jewish Teacher Education program students) pose in front of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem display at the Israel programs fair at York University. The fair was one of the many educational programs featured at IsraelFest.

At Ryerson University, IsraelFEST enjoyed the participation of both Jewish and non-Jewish students. The weekly "bagel lunch" sponsored by Ryerson Hillel was transformed into an Israeli-style "pita party" and Hillel also sponsored a one-day seminar that focused on the many cultures found in Israel. As well, Hillel organized a Middle Eastern Food Festival, a joint-program with the Ryerson Iranian Student Association, celebrating the food and culture of the two countries. "The Food Festival was definitely the great success story of IsraelFEST at Ryerson," explains Ryerson at Hillel president Jonathan Vandersluis. "It gave us the opportunity to show that Israel and the Middle East are about so much more than politics."

The University of Toronto's IsraelFEST activities attracted another 700 participants over the course of the week. The festivities included an "Israeli Culture Café" in the university's Medical Science building, during which students were encouraged to participate in a silk screen mural painting of the building's walls. The "Israel Culture Café" also featured a falafel stand that attracted many passers-by to a taste they had never tried before. "This type of programming is so important on campus," says Laura Herman, co-chair of IsraelFEST at the University of Toronto. "As Jewish students it is essential that we demonstrate our pride in Israeli culture and celebrate the great developments that the country has made."

The city-wide event was made possible by contributions from UJA Federation, which financially supports Hillel.

Jewish Federations play key role in rebuilding after tsunami

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

Just over a year after one of the worst natural disasters ever, the people of Southeast Asia continue to rebound and start their lives over again thanks, in large part, to the efforts of the Jewish Federations of North America.

On December 26, 2005 an underwater earthquake and tsunami devastated this area, killing more than 230,000 people and forcing five million to restart their lives in poverty and despair. The hardest hit areas were Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand and India.

Immediately following the devastation, UJA Federation – in cooperation with the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), the overseas arm of the North American Jewish community - created its Tsunami Relief Fund, which went on to raise more than $1.4 million – including almost $900,000 in cash. In all, close to $19 million was raised through JDC and its Federation partners to carry out disaster relief and longer-term development programs in the most severely damaged countries.

"The Jewish community of Toronto was one that stepped up to the plate in a very notable way," says JDC spokesman, Joshua Berkman. "Toronto's generosity has enabled, among other things a new village to rise from a refugee camp in Indonesia, the building of 185 modern playgrounds in Sri Lanka, and the establishment of an innovative psychological counseling program in Thailand."

Some funds raised by UJA Federation's Tsunami Relief Fund went to build new playgrounds in Sri Lanka.

In India, JDC partnered with the Disaster Mitigation Institute (DMI) to provide emergency supplies and build multiple-family dwellings. Funds raised also provided thousands of families with food and furnished children with school bags and supplies so that they could resume their studies.

"The scope of this disaster is so great that JDC determined early on that the money we raised from Jews in North America would have the greatest impact if we did not spread ourselves thin, but instead identified and supported specific projects being undertaken by partner NGOs," says Berkman. "These partnerships have allowed us to improve people's lives in a significant and permanent way."

"The fact that we share the expertise learned through our Jewish programs to produce positive change in the larger society adds a dimension that we do not often highlight, but one of which we are truly proud," says Steve Schwager, JDC executive vice president.

Adult March of the Living explores Polish consciousness

Participants are preparing to embark on the 2006 edition of the March of the Living (MOL), and it isn't only high-schoolers who are packing their bags. The Adult March of the Living is readying its own two-week trip, spanning the old Jewish communities and Nazi concentration camps of Poland, followed by a week-long celebration of Jewish life in Israel.

The 14-day trip, which leaves for Krakow on April 23 and returns to Toronto on May 7, is an international initiative sponsored in Toronto by UJA Federation. But while the Adult March does share many trademarks of the popular teenage trip – including participation with more than 10,000 people from all over the world in the three kilometre march to the concentration camps of Auschwitz-Birkenau on April 27 – the itinerary has a different, more mature focus than the main March of the Living.

"Most of the young people who come on the March are in Poland to discover the roots of their grandparents or great-grandparents," explains Shirley Worth, organizer of the Adult MOL. "But for the adults, we hope to help them find a deeper connection."

Participants on last year's UJA Federation Adult March of the Living at the Auschwitz train station as they prepared for their march to Birkenau.

For that reason, this year's Adult March of the Living focuses more strongly on exploring the Polish consciousness both before and after the Holocaust, and the revival of Jewish life in the country. "During Communist rule and in its aftermath, nobody in Europe was ready to deal with their part in the Holocaust," Worth explains. "The people of Eastern Europe are only now starting to be able to deal with the pre-war histories of the Jewish people in their countries."

The Adult March includes visits to Poland's Jewish Historical Society and a walking tour of Warsaw – beyond the Warsaw Ghetto – along with tours of Jewish cemeteries and a number of concentration camps.

The trip was a life-changing experience for Freema Trager, who, along with her husband Joe, chaired the Toronto contingent to the Adult March of the Living last year. "The adult trip is a much more serious one," she explains. "It really puts the survivor mentality into context." Trager estimates that 75 per cent of the Toronto travelers came from families of survivors. "Everyone on the bus had a personal story that drove them to go back to Poland. They were all there to discover their roots and try to capture a sense of what life was like for their parents and loved ones."

For Freema everything came into focus during the group's tour of Auschwitz-Birkenau. "We were standing in one of the camp's gas chambers," she relates, "and a man – who wasn't even on our trip – took out a prayer book and started to read Kaddish out loud while standing on the tracks that brought Jews to their deaths and facing the open ovens."

The Adult March culminates with a celebration in Jerusalem of Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israeli Independence Day, taking MOL participants from a low time in our Jewish existence to one of our happiest and proudest accomplishments.

For more information about the Adult March of the Living, please contact Elana Barrett at UJA Federation at 416.635.2883 ext. 177 or visit www.jewishtoronto.com

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Percentage of students enrolling in Jewish schools increasing

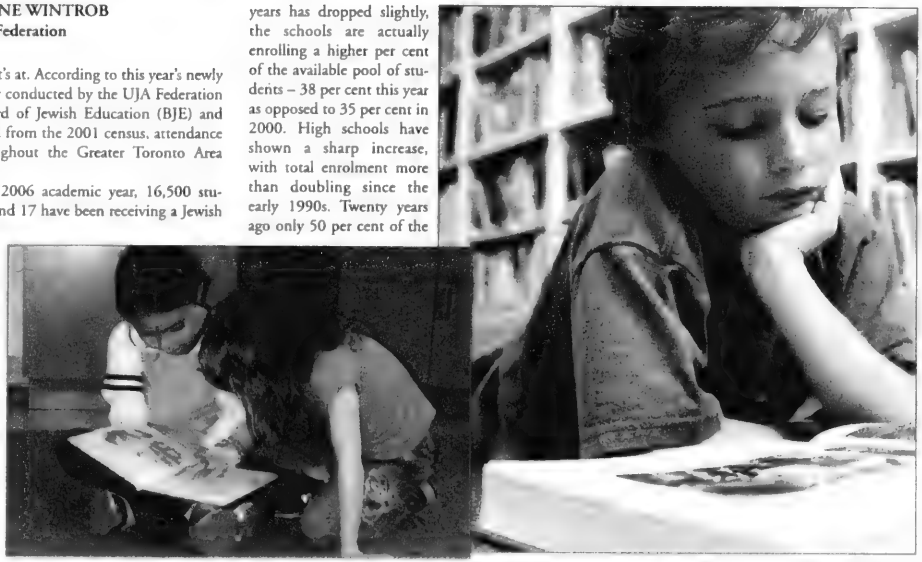
Increase despite fewer Jewish children being born than in the past

By SUZANNE WINTROB
UJA Federation

Jewish education is where it's at. According to this year's newly released population survey conducted by the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Board of Jewish Education (BJE) and based on information obtained from the 2001 census, attendance at Jewish high schools throughout the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) continues to rise.

During the current 2005/2006 academic year, 16,500 students between the ages of six and 17 have been receiving a Jewish education, representing more than half of all Jewish school-aged children living in the GTA. Sixty-one per cent of six to 13 year olds are attending Jewish day or supplementary schools, as are 33 per cent of 14 to 17 year olds.

Canadian census data shows that far fewer Jewish children are being born than in the recent past, but the percentage of Jewish students enrolling in Jewish schools is increasing. Although the total number of students enrolled in Grades 1 – 8 over the past five years has dropped slightly, the schools are actually enrolling a higher per cent of the available pool of students – 38 per cent this year as opposed to 35 per cent in 2000. High schools have shown a sharp increase, with total enrolment more than doubling since the early 1990s. Twenty years ago only 50 per cent of the students coming on board in Grade 1 went on to a Jewish high school, but now 78 per cent of them are doing so.



Twenty years ago only half of the students who began in Grade 1 went on to a Jewish high school. Today 78 per cent are doing so.

"Parents are recognizing the importance of Jewish education for their children and, in turn, we're working closely with our Jewish school teachers and administrators to develop quality materials and innovative programming that they can introduce into the curriculum," says BJE chair Baila Lubek. "We're pleased that the schools are reaching more than 50 per cent of the Jewish children, but we are not resting on our laurels. We would like to reach many more Jewish children, through formal or informal educational programs."

More than 40 per cent of all elementary school students attending day schools live north of Steeles. The construction of Vaughan's new 50-acre Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus at Bathurst and Weldrick will help to meet their needs, says Lubek.

The new campus, an initiative of UJA Federation's Tomorrow Campaign, will include branches of United Synagogue Day Schools (USDS), Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) and, hopefully, other schools to follow. CHAT is set to open in time for the 2007 school year and the Lebovic Campus branch of USDS is scheduled for completion in 2008.

One of these York Region students is Kyle Borenstein, a graduate of Associated Hebrew Schools and now a Grade 12 student at CHAT's current Richmond Hill Campus. He says if it weren't for Jewish day school, he may never have learned Jewish law, Jewish history or Hebrew language.

"In today's society, being able to have the time to formally teach Jewish children on our own is very difficult," says Borenstein, 17, who plans to attend Yeshiva in Israel next year. "Growing up in a Jewish educational system has allowed me to learn all these different areas of Jewish studies from qualified teachers, including teachers who have come from Israel not only to educate me but to also give me an Israeli experience. I now have all the basic tools I need in order to move on to the next phase of my life and to continue to live a Jewish life. When I get to Yeshiva next year, I won't have to start at square one. I'll be able to continue from where I am now."

Marlon Danilewitz agrees. The 18-year-old attended Bialik Hebrew Day School before heading to CHAT Richmond Hill and has spent much of his day school experience involved in athletics, peer counseling, student council, and anything else he could get his hands on. He believes having a Jewish education has set him up for life.

"It all flows from my identity," says Danilewitz, also from York Region. "I am Jewish first, a mensch second, and then the loyalty to whatever country I reside in. I am considering pursuing my Jewish education further in Israel for a year. However, I know without a doubt that when I enter the university world I will be a Jewish leader and supporter of Israel."

UJA Federation establishes Netzarim Fund

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

Following this summer's heart-wrenching disengagement of close to 10,000 Jews from their homes in Gaza and the northern Shomron region, the former residents continue to face the painful and arduous process of starting their lives over again.

To help them rebuild their lives and get them back on their feet, UJA Federation - in cooperation with The Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI), UJA Federation's overseas partner, and the Government of Israel - has created the Netzarim Fund, which is raising money, supplementary to the UJA Federation annual campaign, to assist with the creation of new communities for Jewish life in the Negev area.

The UJA Federation Netzarim Fund was created to raise funds for new Jewish communities in the Negev.

A delegation from these groups held a series of parlour meetings in Toronto recently to explain the current situation and their future plans.

Spearheaded by Toronto philanthropist Kurt Rothschild, the concept of the fund was brought to UJA Federation president Ted Sokolsky after some donors, expressing concern for the fate of the former Gaza residents, came to Rothschild with large donations.

"I went to Ted and suggested to him that I would like these donations to go through UJA Federation," said Rothschild. "We must do whatever we can to help these people who are facing such hardships. The residents of Gush Katif alone contributed so much to the development of Israel, including $150 million a year in exports from the 21 settlements they built there. Now, we must give back to them."

"Coincidentally, many donors had already come to us before Kurt approached me, for similar reasons," said Sokolsky. "Because of our strong affinity to the building and flourishing of the Negev and our desire to assist in true nation building – and knowing that JAFI was deeply involved in the project – this was something that UJA Federation was glad to coordinate."

Money raised by the Netzarim Fund will go to augment allocations being provided by the Government of Israel.

"The government funds are going to infrastructure projects in the area such as permanent housing, new roads, electricity and water," said Rothschild. "Funds we raise will go to the other important social, recreational and educational needs such as playgrounds, kindergartens and schools."

"The fact that members of Toronto's Jewish community are donating so generously to the Netzarim Fund – above and beyond their annual UJA Federation gifts – is yet another testament to their compassion," said David Engel, chair of the UJA Federation Board.

To contribute to the UJA Federation Netzarim Fund, please contact Aviva Malka at 416.631.5680 or at amalka@ujafed.org

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Security barrier called Sharon's greatest legacy

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's role in creating the Israeli security barrier had moral and political implications for the Israeli and Palestinian people, says Isabel Kershner, author of *Barrier: The Seam of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*.

"Sharon set in motion the beginning of the partition that defines where Israel begins and ends," but he did not actually want it. Sharon preferred offence to defence, Kershner told the audience at Holy Blossom Temple recently.

In September 2000, exactly as the intifadah was breaking out, Uzi Dayan was appointed to head the National Security Council. It was Dayan who felt that a fence that could delineate responsibility for who controls what and where was necessary, said Kershner, an associate editor of *The Jerusalem Report* who moved to Israel in 1990.

"Under the mounting pressure in the spring of 2002, Sharon approved the fence project," she said. At the time, 80 per cent of Israelis saw the wall as an answer to the bombings.

To illustrate the effect of the security barrier on the Israeli people, Kershner mentioned the West Bank Jewish settlement of Alfei Menashe, located near the Green Line, Israel's pre-1967 border.

According to the initial barrier map, Alfei Menashe was going to be on the Palestinian side of the wall.

Hisdai Eliezer, the mayor of Alfei Menashe, felt that this was the beginning of the end for his little "quality of life" settlement, Kershner said.

"Eliezer stalked Dayan… It worked," she said.

After two weeks, Sharon arrived and surveyed the scene. He agreed that the wall could not leave the settlement out. They redrew the line and Alfei Menashe was in.

Although the Israelis were victorious, the amendments to the map subsequently forced five tiny Palestinian villages to become trapped in the barrier that forms the Alfei Menashe enclave.

"Villages don't know if they have won or lost. It just shows that the fence route is really a hodgepodge," Kershner said.

Despite the problems surrounding the building of the barrier, terror in Israel's northern section has dropped 90 per cent in the first year. "We have unarguably seen a reduction in violence," she said.

"I want to stress, for Israelis, this barrier is a last resort. No one wants to spend billions of shekels. But it is still a winning concept and it gives Israelis a sense of security," she added.

"If anything, Sharon left Israel with a strength it never had. This barrier is Sharon's greatest legacy," Kershner said.

She noted that Israel is "living through rapid change."

When Sharon established the Kadima party in November 2005, "suddenly we had a third party that provided a way forward," she said.

Once Sharon fell ill, people wondered if the party would continue. "I left a country… that was self-assured. Israelis are rallying around Kadima and the acting prime minister," she said.

Alienation spurred modern Jewish politics: scholar

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

In the late 19th century, young Jewish men who had left their small-town communities for big cities in eastern Europe felt alienated and depressed, which led them into Jewish politics, an Israeli academic says.

Scott Ury, a Jewish studies scholar at Hebrew University, gave a talk at the University of Toronto last month titled *Communities and Crisis: The turn to Jewish Politics in Modern Eastern Europe*. His presentation was this year's Ray D. Wolfe Memorial Lecture, sponsored by *The Canadian Jewish News* Fund in honour of the paper's former president.

Ury, the 2005-06 Ray D. Wolfe doctoral fellow at Hebrew U, where he is completing his dissertation on eastern European Jewry, discussed the transformation of Jewish society in late 19th century.

"While alienation and the larger sense of hopelessness and helplessness were motifs of 19th century European society, they were also integral parts of Jewish society and culture at the time," he said.

"What *haskalah* [Jewish Enlightenment]-inspired ideology, informal circles of friends, and traditional association could not deliver, modern politics, both Jewish and non-Jewish, was often able to provide."

Ury bases his theory on letters written by young Jewish men who lived in the late 1800's.

David Green, who later became to be known as Israeli Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion, and Yosef Hayyim Brenner, an author and socialist, were examples of young men who moved from small European towns to big cities, and they chronicled their difficulties in adjusting to urban life in their letters.

"While many Jewish migrants were able to find temporary solace in friendship circles and other support groups… these networks of predominantly male friends ultimately failed to resolve the larger underlying issues that plagued this generation," Ury said.

The friendship circles were not enough to quell a sense of loneliness, despair and alienation brought on by migration and urbanization, he said.

The hopelessness they felt led them to seek work that would bring meaning to "their otherwise superfluous lives."

Theoretically, the search for friendship, community and belonging could have alleviated the effects of modernity, Ury said, but "work in which they could invest their entire souls, work that would make them forget their down-trodden thoughts," was what laid the foundation for modern Jewish politics.

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Hamas messages must be challenged, watchdog says

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The recent Hamas victory in Palestinian parliamentary elections does not represent any real change in terms of policy toward Israel, according to Itamar Marcus, director of Palestinian Media Watch.

"All these principles from the Hamas charter [like Israel and Jews not having the right to exist] were actually being said all along by the Palestinian Authority in their textbooks [and on the PA's official television station]," Marcus said.

"If people had just been listening, they would have known that this was the direction in which their supposedly moderate leadership was leading the people," Marcus told a capacity crowd at Kehillat Shaarei Torah last week.

"We're not getting different leadership in terms of its ultimate goal. We're getting leadership that says it openly."

For peace to exist, he said, the Palestinian Authority will need a "completely different" leadership.

"If the western world isolates them to the point where leadership begins to collapse, then we have the potential for beginning a peace process... I don't think it will happen with any of the leaders we've seen."

Even if Iraq and Saudi Arabia fund the PA, without western political support, there could be such a collapse, Marcus believes. "If we continue to give them money and political support, we're not going to have peace."

His Jerusalem-based organization has spent the last eight years monitoring Arabic-language media – including sports pages, entertainment news and crossword puzzles – to learn what Palestinians have been saying among themselves, and particularly what message they were giving their children.

Marcus – who was a member of the Israeli delegation to the Tri-lateral (American, Israeli and Palestinian) Committee to Monitor Incitement, established under the Wye Accords – has presented PMW findings in Europe, the United States and Israel. He said that many Israeli politicians were not previously familiar with the material.

The organization, which currently operates on a $250,000 (US) annual budget, is trying to obtain more funding to expand its efforts.

In his presentation, Marcus cited a slew of everyday examples, all sanctioned by the former leadership of the Palestinian Authority: a teenagers' soccer tournament in which each team was named for a suicide bomber; a UNICEF-supported summer camp named for Wafa Idris, the first female suicide bomber; a Grade 10 history text published in 2004 that cites the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, a czarist-era hoax alleging a Jewish conspiracy to take over the world; "historical" television programs portraying Jews as "monstrous, almost sub-human" caricatures; new school textbooks in which it appears that Israel doesn't exist; music videos that encourage violence; crossword puzzles with clues like "Jewish character trait" for the word "treachery;" and even a show for preschoolers in which a Muppet-like character talks about using an AK 47 [assault rifle] to commit a massacre.

"The message is incessant: Israel has no right to exist," said Marcus.

It will be difficult for Hamas to soften its message because its ideology is religion-based, he said. "They are sincerely religious. To say Israel has a right to exist is [for them] a rejection of Islam. I don't believe they are going to do this."

The Hamas charter is "literally a call for genocide in order to get to redemption."

Marcus showed a PA television diatribe by a Palestinian Muslim religious leader, who referred to Israel as a cancer, that Marcus said was significant for its complete lack of reference to land.

"To the world, [Palestinians] talk about the occupation. To their own, they talk about Israel's existence," he said.

The messages that Israel and Jews have no right to exist – and that Palestinians must be willing to die for Allah – must be challenged, he said.

"Eventually the western world must recognize that if they want to promote peace, there will not be a peace process on paper until there's a peace process in education as well, because only then will we be able to have serious peace into the next generation."

BUILDING CHARACTERS: Netivot HaTorah Day School launched its annual CHAZAK – Choices, Accountability, Zeal, Action, Kavod – program with a play written by Grade 6 students Eliana Sutton, centre left, and Stephanie Bergman, centre right. Also pictured, from left, are Sarena Kay, Adi Watemberg, Ariella Sibony, Rivka Sabovich and Amanda Lax. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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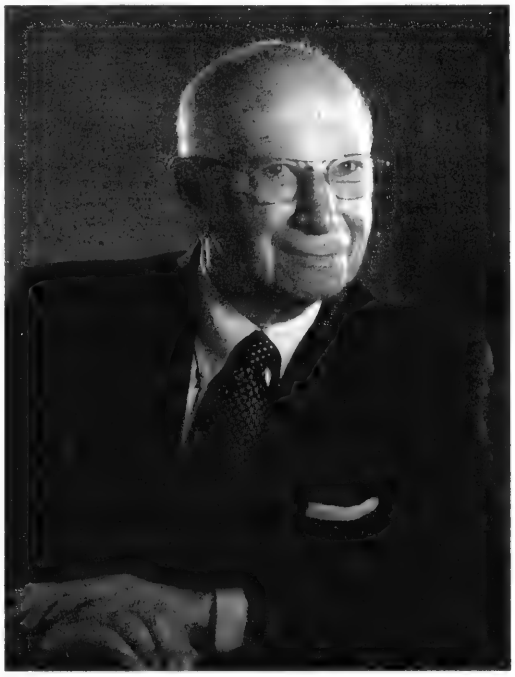

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As founding president of the Baycrest Foundation from 1980 to 1990, and then as a consultant until his retirement in 2001, Sam continued to dedicate his life to enriching the quality of life of the elderly.

Sam's legacy and vision live on and inspire all of us who work at Baycrest.

Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family and friends. He will be truly missed and long remembered.

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Camps for kids affected by terror seek counsellors

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

The Koby Mandell Summer in Israel Programs, which help young victims deal with the aftermath of terror attacks, are reaching out to North American teens to join them for the summer.

Shuki Taylor, 26, co-ordinator of the programs, was in Toronto recently to spread the word about the two camps – an overnight camp and a brand new day camp – and speak to teens about volunteering their time as counsellors.

The camps, part of the Koby Mandell Foundation, are named for the son of Rabbi Seth and Sherri Mandell, who in 2001 at age 13, was stoned to death along with his friend Yosef Ish Ran, by Arab terrorists.

Koby's parents set up the foundation in order to help people translate the pain and suffering of tragedy into positive personal growth, deeper interpersonal relationships and active community leadership.

The foundation offers programs that provide relevant informal education and emotional and psychological support in formal group discussions and informal interactions.

The camps were formed for children ages seven to 18 who lost a loved one to terror, but Taylor says they have now extended their mandate to include youth in any type of crisis.

Most of the counsellors are former Camp Koby campers.

"With camp activities and therapeutic programming, kids have a great time and feel free to express their feelings to peers who really understand," Taylor says.

He got involved with the organization after he started a program for teens who lost friends in terrorist attacks.

"I knew that kids are reluctant to see therapists, so I asked some counsellors with experience in informal education to run support groups. It was hugely successful."

North American teens who join the camp program – there are about 40 spots available – will have the opportunity to learn the healing and recovery process through "light therapy," which involves art, music and drama.

"They will also learn how to run Israel advocacy programs in their schools and synagogues. The idea is to create a wider unification of the Jewish people," Taylor says.

Davida Shiff, a Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto student who worked at Camp Coby last summer, says she was "particularly moved by the strength and dedication to others that the campers demonstrated, despite the losses they have suffered.

"Unlike in the outside world, [they] are free to laugh without anyone questioning [their] right to have fun or to forget their pain for a moment. In the same way, if [they] cry, no one criticizes or judges them.

"These children exhibited a kindness towards each other [that was] unusual at any age. The ability of the campers to both empathize with and provide support for each other is inspiring."

Taylor says the type of teens who apply are those who can spend six weeks focusing on other people."We get a lot of support from people who want to do something meaningful, but we also want people to be part of what we do."

The cost to volunteer at the summer in Israel program is $5,490 (US) for the overnight camp, or $5,290 (US) for the day camp. Tuition includes round-trip airfare from New York and all program elements including touring and seminars.

For information, e-mail summer@kobymandell.org.

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Can this leopard change its blood-stained spots?

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Hamas' unexpected landslide victory in the Jan. 25 Palestinian election resulted in a deluge of media reports and analysis. Each of the major Canadian dailies – the *Globe and Mail*, *National Post* and *Toronto Star* – published an editorial on the Hamas win, urging the international community and the Canadian government not to deal with the terrorist group unless it truly moderates its ways.

The Jan. 27 *Globe* editorial, "The elected Hamas," said that while the democratic will of the Palestinians must be respected, Israel and foreign governments have every reason to be fearful of what a Hamas victory portends.

The *Globe* noted the irony in the fact that Palestinian voters rejected President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party due to its ineptitude and corruption, and voted in a terrorist organization "pledging to establish peace, order and good government." (While Hamas did pledge to restore order and good government, it certainly did not promise peace with Israel). And a further irony was that "a terrorist organization has come to power by democratic means."

The *Globe* called on Hamas "to embrace non-violence by renouncing its intention to wipe Israel off the map and accepting Israel's right to exist side by side with a Palestinian state. Otherwise, the new Hamas government cannot expect the European Union and others to continue financing the Palestinian Authority."

However, the editorial concluded on a small note of optimism: "Incredible as it may seem, Hamas' victory in the topsy-turvy Middle East could be a slim opportunity for peace."

Like the *Globe*, the *National Post* editorial "The Pity of Hamasistan" (Jan. 27) allowed for the possibility that voters chose Hamas over Fatah from a desire to end corruption and achieve a better economic future, rather than to continue waging war on Israel. But "whatever [the] voters' motivation, they have empowered a terrorist movement that officially rejects the state of Israel's existence – indeed, that rejects any dialogue with Israel whatsoever."

The *Post* predicted that with Gaza already in chaos and foreign donors threatening to withhold money unless Hamas drops its extremist agenda, "there will be less pressure on Israel to make painful territorial concessions in the more strategic West Bank." Perhaps.

While more cautious than the *Globe*, the *Post* also said the situation could change if Hamas "makes a sincere and convincing show of renouncing terrorism in coming years, or if it is voted out of office." For now, the *Post* concluded, "the Palestinians seem a people incurably drawn to terrorism and its practitioners."

The Jan. 27 *Toronto Star* editorial, "Palestinian blow to Mideast peace," quoted Hamas' founding charter, "a poisonous text that refers to 'the Jews, the merchants of war.'... It denounces 'the Nazism of the Jews.' And warns that 'leaving the circle of conflict with Israel is a major act of treason.'" (This, of course, is being taught to Palestinian children in Hamas-run schools.)

The *Star* also warned: "Unless Hamas repudiates all this, Palestinians are fated to be led by a pariah regime and may well be shunned by the world." (Richard Gwyn summed up the dilemma facing Hamas and the West, when he wrote in his Jan. 31 *Star* column: "Somehow, democracy has to be preserved while religious totalitarianism and terrorism and racially inspired genocide have to be eliminated.")

Most Israeli analysts, including those on the left, doubt that Hamas will change. Unlike the secular PLO, which at least renounced rejectionist passages in its charter (even if that charter has never been rewritten as promised under Oslo), the religiously fundamentalist Hamas cannot retract its core anti-Jewish/anti-Israel (and anti-Christian) commitments.

"The essence of Hamas," argues Israeli writer Yossi Klein Halevi, "is a commitment to destroy the religious affront of Jewish sovereignty. For Hamas to 'moderate' would mean turning into an apostate of its own most sacred truth. If the process of moderation didn't happen to the less devout Fatah, which continues to reject Israel's legitimacy and now opposes terror only on temporary tactical grounds, it surely won't happen to Hamas." ("End Game: The Rise of Hamas and the Fall of Palestine" the *New Republic* online, Jan. 26.)

The hint by a small number of Hamas "spokesmen" that Hamas may agree to a long-term ceasefire with Israel is misleading rhetoric meant to forestall the cutting off of much-needed Western aid. It should not be seen by the world as a sign of genuine moderation.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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To Your Health

DENTAL HEALTH — *see page B3*

HOLISTIC NUTRITION — *see page B8*

MOKSHA YOGA — *see page B10*

FIGHTING ADDICTIONS — *see page B14*

Made-to-order medications: *Thinking outside the bottle*

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

Pharmacist Murray Shore is enthusiastic about compounding medications – a growing and sometimes controversial field that creates custom-made drugs to meet individuals' needs.

For Shore, who owns the Toronto Compounding Shoppe, compounding is a creative endeavour. He works with physicians to solve medication problems – distasteful flavours, ingredient allergies, infants' tiny doses, nausea drugs that can't be taken orally – with custom formulations created for individual patients.

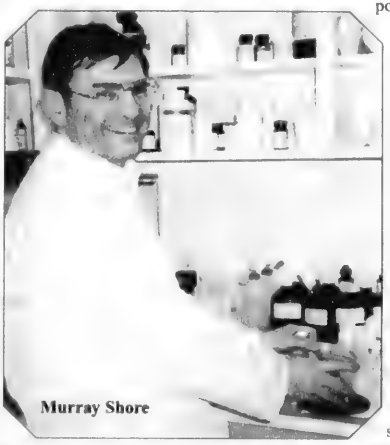
"Many pharmacists don't think out of the box," Shore says. Compounding calls for "peripheral thinking," using known drugs precisely to solve unique problems.

Compounding is not new. Seventy years ago, 60 per cent of all medications were compounded, and in Europe, many still are, but with the growth of drug companies, it represents only one per cent here, although consumers are starting to look beyond "one-size-fits-all" medications.

As the number of compounding pharmacies increases – there are now more than 3,000 worldwide – many are calling for greater regulation to ensure quality control and pharmacist education.

"I am quite concerned about the safety of compounded products," says Dr. Bruce Bouts, an Ohio physician and pharmacist.

Yet for many consumers, compounding serves a perceived need. In the heart of Toronto's Jewish community, one of Shore's specialties is kosher variations of mainstream medications.



Murray Shore

Materna, for instance, a popular prenatal supplement, contains non-kosher ingredients. Shore offers a compounded kosher version for the same price. He also makes ibuprofen syrup, since children's Motrin and Advil contain non-kosher glycerin.

Compounding isn't just for the humans in the family. Pharmacist Richard Stein, of The Medicine Shoppe on Bloor Street, says flavour is crucial in veterinary medication: "cats must like the taste." He compounds needed medications in flavours like tuna, beef, chicken, liver. While felines may love them, the smell can sometimes overwhelm humans, he says.

Compounding can also fill a demand for natural products, like hormone replacement therapy (HRT) using "bio-identical" hormones from soy and yam. And with compounding, not every drug has to be taken as a pill. Stein makes natural HRT in both oral and non-oral dosage forms, including capsules and suppositories.

Varying dosage forms can make a drug even more effective, he says. Topical medication for a child's mouth infection probably won't stay on for long. But if the child is given it as a gummy bear to suck on, it may work better. Stein cautions that dosages may not be exact when compounded in "candy" form (he, like Shore, also makes lollipops and popsicles), but that's not always crucial.

In compounding, "nothing is fixed," Stein says. Rather, pharmacists find solutions, saying, "in theory, this might do the job." While critics charge that this violates the evidence-based spirit of western medicine, in cases where patients cannot take another medication, Stein says it's worth a try.

Despite the generally higher price of compounded drugs, Stein and Shore both point out that they can actually save money, especially if nothing else will work. For example, the parents of a 2½-year-old came to Stein because the child couldn't take oral Biaxin for an ear infection. After three days of taking it in suppository form, the child was better.

It's also worthwhile to create smaller dosages that let patients taper off a particular medication. And Shore says most insurance companies do pick up the tab, though patients must pay first, and then seek reimbursement.

Other forms available include transdermal creams (active ingredients are absorbed through the skin), puffers which "spray" a topical powder evenly throughout the mouth, sublinguals (tablets placed under the tongue) and troches (lozenges).

Stein doesn't create injectable or inhalable drugs, which must be completely sterile. He says the biggest issue with these is liability.

In a tragic U.S. case, a small meningitis outbreak was caused by a compounded injection that was not sterile. There have been other unfortunate results with transdermals and other dosage forms, like a baby who developed testosterone toxicity after receiving a cross-contaminated cream.

Bouts recommends against any compounded drugs that are to be injected or inhaled, as well as sustained-release capsules, since dosage-release timing may vary dangerously.

"Pharmacists advertise precise and individual dosing, [but] studies show the opposite is true," says U.S. FDA expert Sarah Sellers. Sellers, a pharmacist, is strongly opposed to most compounding, particularly for non-essential uses such as reflavouring and kosher formulations.

Sellers concedes that "in rare cases, a pediatric patient may require a compounded product," but warns that because dosages may not always be precise, there's more "potential for poisonings and sub-therapeutic dosing."

In the United States, compounding is also becoming big business, with pharmacists recommending "in-house" versions of standard drug-company medications. "We don't do that," Stein says. "What's the point?"

Continued on page B7

To Your Health

Cover FX hides skin disorders without irritation

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

After spending 15 years searching for cosmetic products for patients with extremely sensitive skin – and being unable to find what she was looking for – Lee Graff decided to take the matter into her own hands.

Six years ago, Graff became the president and co-founder of Cover FX, a cosmetics company she says is finally catering to the needs of people who need the products the most.

When Graff began her career in 1985 as a corrective makeup specialist at the CosMedic Clinic at Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre, she searched for products to bring back to the clinic to use on patients suffering from skin disorders, scars, burns and sensitive skin.

But she said finding a product that offered good coverage, looked natural and didn't irritate sensitive skin was not easy.

"I became frustrated with the lack of choices because everything was heavy. So, either you wore it and it was obvious that you were wearing a lot of makeup… or it caused irritation to the skin, making [the patients'] skin conditions worse," Graff said.

She spoke to Dr. Neil Shear, the head of dermatology at Sunnybrook, about her difficulty in finding the right cosmetics, and he suggested that if she knew exactly what she wanted, he could introduce her to a chemical engineer who could help turn her vision into a product.

At the time, Jenny Frankel held a job as a product developer at MAC Cosmetics, a leading cosmetic company. She agreed to meet with Graff.

"MAC is more about glamour and runway looks. When I met Lee, all of a sudden, everything else became frivolous. It became more about health than beauty," Frankel said.

In 2000, Graff, Shear and Frankel combined their efforts and expertise and developed a line of cosmetics called Cover FX that met the standards Graff had been searching for.

Before and after photos of using Cover FX.

"We realized that it wasn't enough for people to be told that it is only what's inside that counts," said Frankel, vice-president of the company.

She added that they spent a year and a half testing different textures and consistencies. They also created a 40-shade palette based on the skin tones of different ethnicities, to reflect Toronto's melting pot of different races.

Aside from powder and liquid foundations, Cover FX also makes bronzers, lipsticks and pressed powders.

But the most important feature of their line is that every product has a therapeutic benefit, ensuring that even people with the most sensitive, intolerant skin can enjoy it, Frankel said.

Shear co-developed an oil-free, fragrance-free, non-comedogenic (it doesn't clog pores and thus cause acne) line that offers protection from the sun and the environment, all the while concealing a patient's imperfections.

After testing the product on 1,500 people suffering from rosacea, a skin condition characterized by redness, pimples and broken blood vessels, Graff and Frankel knew they had filled a void in the cosmetics world.

Since CityTV ran a segment about Cover FX last year, the demand for its cosmetics skyrocketed to the point that there is a year-long waiting list for certain products, Graff said.

Last month, Graff was interviewed on the *Today Show* with Katie Couric and Matt Lauer and demonstrated their products on live models.

Cover FX is distributed across Canada at more than 250 Shoppers Drug Mart locations, select Jean Coutu and Racine pharmacies in Quebec, dermatology clinics and spas, as well as Nordstrum locations in the United States.

While the products were initially designed to give better coverage and more options to people who are limited as to what they can use, Frankel said that regardless of what a person wants to conceal, anyone can use the product.

"If all you know is minor under-eye circles, you want to cover it up because you think the whole world is looking at it," Frankel said.

"People are more confident about facing the world because when you look good, you feel great," Graff added.

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To Your Health

Poor dental health linked to variety of ailments

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Dr. Howard Tenenbaum is a leading expert on periodontal (gum) disease and dental health and he has some important advice about your teeth. Brush and floss before every meal.

Not very surprising, that, but, whoa, did he say before every meal?

Haven't we been taught for generations to brush after a meal? So as to remove food particles that may cause tooth decay?

Yes, the doctor acknowledges, it is a good idea to rinse away any food that may remain in the mouth after eating, but if you want to truly affect your health in a positive way, clean your mouth before eating.

Tenenbaum, associate dean, diagnostic and biological sciences and professor of periodontology at the University of Toronto, has a somewhat counter-intuitive explanation for this approach to good health.

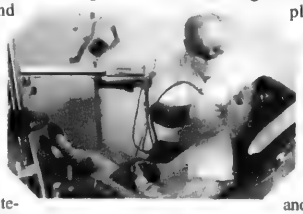
By brushing and flossing before you eat, you will reduce the risk of developing teeth that are sensitive to cold and heat. Bacteria in the mouth, he said, feed on starches and create acid, which softens the enamel on teeth. When you brush, you remove microscopic amounts of tooth enamel, leading eventually to sensitive teeth.

There are other good reasons to brush and floss and visit a dentist regularly, he continues.

Research that has become more persuasive in the last few years indicates there is a correlation – if not yet a proven cause and effect – between some oral diseases and systemic illnesses within the body.

Diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis, respiratory ailments and low birthweight/early delivery babies all have been linked to poor dental health, he said.

Researchers studying the data are coming to believe more and more that these illnesses can be traced back to bacteria residing in the mouth. By brushing and flossing, many of those bacteria are removed and are not present to interact with carbohydrates and sugars in food. That keeps tooth decay down, but it also keeps down the number of bacteria that could cause or worsen gum disease. And it's bacteria entering the body through bloody gums that researchers believe can cause havoc in the body.



Something like five to 15 per cent of the population suffers from gum disease, Tenenbaum said.

Diabetes is the illness in which the link to gum disease is most evident. People with gum disease seem to develop diabetes and people with uncontrolled diabetes seem to develop gum disease. Gum disease does not cause diabetes, but it makes it hard to control the disease, he said.

The causal connection is still unclear, but research shows if you treat gum disease, you make it easier to control diabetes, he noted.

As for heart disease, stroke, osteoporosis and pre-term infant births, a cause and affect relationship has not yet been found. Researchers, however, have "biologically plausible explanations."

For example, bacteria can enter the bloodstream through diseased gums and cause blood platelets to clot together, possibly leading to a heart attack, he said.

Pneumonia, particularly in elderly patients confined to bed, has also been linked to gum disease. Current thinking suggests that bacteria in the mouth can be aspirated, inhaled and cause fluid buildup in the lungs.

A "weak association" has also been founded with osteoporosis – weakening of the bones – while research in the United States has also found a statistical connection between low birth-weight babies delivered prematurely and mothers' gum disease. A later study in England did not find that link, he added.

Smoking may be the most important factor that ties all these findings together, Tenenbaum, who also runs a clinical practice at Mount Sinai Hospital, said. It is a significant factor in heart disease, pre-term births, osteoporosis and gum disease.

Some epidemiologists even suggest that if you take smoking out of the equation, all disease associations would disappear.

"Smoking may be the central issue, here," he said. Lab tests show cigarette smoke's hydrocarbons can damage bone.

Dr. Jeffrey Erlich has been following the research on the link between gum disease and other illnesses for some time. A dentist in private practice for 30 years, Erlich said, "Most people with serious gum disease have not seen a dentist.

"The most recent studies say it's not reasonable to tell your patients 'floss or die'. But there is such a strong correlation – you'd have to be reckless not to pay attention to it," he said.

Erlich noted that the damage from gum disease is irreversible.

Gum disease is a chronic ailment and antibiotics are not a permanent fix. But to add further weight to the links between dental health and other illnesses, he noted it is recommended that anyone undergoing a dental procedure take antibiotics if they had recent medical procedures like a joint replacement.

"Statistically, flossing adds three years to your life," he said, though he notes it's not clear if that's only because of the flossing or because people concerned about dental health are also concerned about their general level of well-being.

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To Your Health

Organization cares for elderly after the hospital

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

Lisa Wiseman and her staff of registered nurses and caregivers are thrilled to be celebrating the 10th anniversary of Eldercare Home Health.

"I didn't think it would be 10 years," Wiseman said about the in-home elder-care company she founded in December 1995.

Lisa Wiseman

Wiseman, a registered nurse and former nurse manager at the Queen Elizabeth Centre and Baycrest, was concerned with the level of assistance elderly patients were receiving when they left the hospital.

"Once the patients were discharged into the community they were not getting the support required for a safe recovery. The patients were not doing well because they didn't have the basics," Wiseman said.

She complained about this for years until her colleagues finally said, "If you think you can do better why don't you try."

Ten years later, Eldercare Home Health has become one of Toronto's most respected in-home elder-care providers.

"I think it's a great way to provide care. You can see the results – it's making people's lives better," Wiseman said.

Her team of 70 registered nurses and caregivers are dedicated to meeting the needs of their 80-, 90- and 100-year-old clients. The caregivers provide their patients with companionship and assist with bathing, personal care, meal preparation and all activities associated with daily living. They also arrange for physiotherapists and other professionals to provide assessment and treatment as required.

"It is really important that we understand the needs of the clients and do things specifically for them," Wiseman said. This includes pairing the Jewish clients with caregivers who understand Judaism and kashrut.

The caregivers have even attended weddings and bar/bat mitzvahs with their clients.

"Sometimes our patients need help getting dressed for a special occasion or they can't dance the whole evening, so we send a caregiver. We have done quite a few events like this," Wiseman said.

Fran Wolfe, a geriatric nurse clinician in emergency at North York General Hospital, is so impressed with Wiseman's assessment skills and her ability to match a client with the perfect caregiver each time. Wolfe said Eldercare Home Health is the only private agency she uses for her patients.

"The feedback I receive is always very positive. The clients and their family members are always very happy and pleased with the help," Wolfe said.

"In all my years knowing Lisa, I have never heard about one caregiver not getting along or meeting the needs of the client. This is a testament to Lisa's skills in hiring people who are excellent caregivers," she added.

Herald Geller was also impressed with the care and attention his 90-year-old mother, Anna Geller, received from Eldercare Home Health while resiging at Baycrest.

"My mother's recovery is in no small part due to the caregivers and the attention they have given my mother," wrote Geller in a letter to Wiseman.

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To Your Health

Long-term care insurance key to independence, dignity

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

It's a tough scenario to envision, maybe even harder than drawing up your own will: what will happen if you're incapacitated for life? Will you live at home or in a facility? Who will foot the bill? A growing number of Canadians are answering these questions with long-term care (LTC) insurance.

Everybody hopes for a long, active, healthy retirement, but it doesn't always happen. Statistics show that almost one-third of us will be disabled by the age of 75 and almost half by age 85.

The most common type of long-term care insurance functions much like disability insurance, as an income supplement following a triggering event. Long-term care insurance hinges on six standard activities of daily living (ADLs): bathing, dressing, eating, maintaining continence, toileting and transferring.

Most LTC claims begin when a policyholder requires assistance in at least two out of these six ADLs, or experiences cognitive impairment. Once a claim starts, following an "elimination period," benefits can either run for a specified period or indefinitely – the rest of the policyholder's life.

Policy costs vary depending on gender: women – who generally live longer – can expect to pay about ten per cent more. For a non-smoking male in his 60s, a typical policy might cost $3,388 annually.

But the major factor in the cost of a policy is age. "The older you get, the more expensive it becomes," says David Breslin, a semi-retired toy manufacturer who entered the LTC insurance business in December 2004. Costs rise steeply – even triple – once you grow closer to an age at which you may need care. You must also be fully independent in all ADLs when purchasing a policy.

"We're very busy; there's a lot of interest," Breslin says. While anyone 30 and up can buy a policy, most are between 45 and 65. "The meat of the business is someone in their 50s who either has a parent who requires [care] or is disabled to some degree and they [the children] see the writing on the wall."

Breslin grew interested in LTC insurance when a family member spent several months at Baycrest following a stroke. The family member was later sent home, but still required care. "He's going to be 94 at the end of [January]," Breslin says. "He's not sick, he's just 94."

This is an important distinction: someone who's too well for an institution may still not function independently. Breslin's relative currently "pays $50,000 yearly for a caregiver who helps him with transferring: from the couch to the bathroom to the kitchen." For eight hours a day, seven days a week, the caregiver "helps him bathe, helps him dress – he's pretty sharp, but he's still 94."

"Luckily, he can afford it," says Breslin. For those who can't, government assistance is minimal. A low-income senior might have help with showering, "every couple of days. If you're alone, that's it."

When Breslin saw the actual costs of care, he purchased a policy… and started his new business, assisting others in choosing LTC insurance.

"The beauty of [it] is that you can stay at home," he says. "Ninety-plus per cent want to stay at home, no matter what." Having the income guarantees flexibility, in most cases, to decide which type of care is most appropriate.

"It gives you an income and protects your assets." It also protects two generations – parents and children. Parents can keep their dignity, their lifestyle. "They don't have to go to their children for help. You can remain independent even with a serious setback."

Breslin pauses briefly to crunch the numbers. "[LTC] insurance will give you $5,000 a month in tax-free benefits… What you have to have in the bank to generate the money to pay for that, at five per cent, it's like $2.5 million. How many people have that money? And if they do, they're reluctant to spend it."

Though he's happy there's enough interest to stay busy, he says he's still "trying to create an awareness." LTC insurance has been around in the United States for 18 years but is still relatively new here.

"In the U.S., LTC [insurance] premiums are tax-deductible. If people went to their MP and made this a tax deduction… [the government] would save so much money. This would take off in a second."

Maybe a tax deduction would be just the thing to make that tough scenario – the prospect of disability and long-term care – a little easier to swallow. Breslin can be reached at 416-920-8008.

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To Your Health

Modern midwifery in Ontario: 10 years and beyond

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

During my most recent pregnancy, I returned from a prenatal checkup and my daughter, who is eight, asked what the doctor said. I told her I wasn't seeing a doctor, but a lady who helps other ladies have babies.

"Oh," she said, "kind of like a midwife?"

To my kids, midwifery – from the story of Shifrah and Puah in the book of Exodus – is the most Jewish thing in the world. But midwifery has come a long way since these heroic women rescued babies from Pharoah's soldiers, especially in Ontario, where 2004 marked 10 years since it was integrated into the health-care system – fully licensed and government-funded.

A midwife (which means "with woman") is a specialist in normal and low-risk birth. Accredited midwives are primary caregivers available to clients 24 hours a day, seven days a week, throughout pregnancy, during labour and for six weeks afterwards.

For many, the biggest surprise is that it's not just for home births. "We can and happily do deliver in hospitals," says midwife Naomi Brooks, who practises with Toronto's Midwife Alliance.

If a woman prefers to stay home, a midwife can also help, once she determines that it's safe for mother and baby. "One-third will initially choose home [birth]," Brooks says, but "maybe half of those actually end up with a home birth."

Deanna Caro, who gave birth with a midwife last year at Mount Sinai Hospital, found it "comforting to know that the medical equipment and personnel are there if you need them, and if you don't, you can just labour undisturbed." She delivered naturally and chose to take her baby home the same day.

Prenatal appointments often bring other pleasant surprises. "There are 45-minute scheduled appointments," Caro says. "They really take their time to address any concerns that you have."

Brooks says midwifery operates on the principle of informed choice, whereas obstetricians use informed consent, where they say, "I'd like to do this to you, OK?" without presenting other options.

With informed choice, "we try to let you know if there are other choices available and what the implications are… down the road."

Choosing home or hospital birth is one example, as is – in certain cases – a woman's choice to try delivering vaginally following a Caesarean section.

There are currently more than 300 registered midwives in Ontario, regulated by the 1991 Midwifery Act, which also outlines their responsibility to transfer care to a physician under certain circumstances, for example in a breech (bottom-first) baby or if the mother has high blood pressure.

The midwife weighs a baby at home with a hanging scale.

"There are a lot of misconceptions about what midwives do," Brooks says, some going back to superstitions involving midwifery and witchcraft. "[Midwifery] is a five-year university program with a very in-depth clinical training; we're trained by obstetricians and midwives."

Just to graduate, she says, midwives must participate in at least 100 births.

There isn't much a midwife can't do to support a healthy pregnancy and birth. Midwives perform diagnostic tests, order ultrasounds, administer pain relief, suture tears and even write certain related prescriptions. Unlike in some parts of the world, "we don't need to rely on the good graces of a friendly family doctor or obstetrician in order to get routine tests done."

But despite high-tech conveniences, modern midwifery is still high-touch, especially during labour and following birth, when many physicians leave the scene. Midwives can also offer choices like water births or including extended family or children.

Caro appreciated having familiar women at her baby's birth and afterwards. Should an emergency require a doctor's intervention, the midwife can usually remain as an observer and assistant so that she's still there for the mother.

Brooks reassures clients, "What makes home birth safe is that we don't stay home if it's not safe."

After birth, a midwife usually performs all mother and baby care at home. Caro's midwife visited on Day 1, Day 3 and Day 5.

Continued on page B16

To Your Health

In-vitro fertilization can help some couples

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

The birth of a child is commonly viewed as one of life's greatest miracles, a belief that makes it particularly crushing for those who yearn for a baby but are unable to have one.

About one in every eight couples in Canada experiences some form of infertility, generally defined as the inability to conceive after having unprotected sex for at least a year.

While about 15 per cent of the factors contributing to infertility are still a mystery, medical professionals have identified a number of key reasons for it.

Dr. Ellen Greenblatt, clinical director of the reproductive biology and IVF (in-vitro fertilization) units at Mount Sinai Hospital, says things that can impede a couple's ability to conceive include ovulation problems, fallopian tube damage or disease, and low sperm counts.

"Part of it also relates to age, [especially] in urban centres, where people tend to start their families later," says the doctor, who is also an associate professor at the University of Toronto.

The course of action couples with infertility problems decide to take if they are intent on having a baby depends on the nature of their problem.

Greenblatt, a specialist in IVF, says the patients fall into two main categories.

"The first are patients that have an absolute need for IVF [because] they have bilaterally blocked fallopian tubes or no fallopian tubes," she explains.

"The other group of patients… [generally] have really severe sperm problems."

Greenblatt notes some other patients who choose this assisted reproduction method may be couples who have long-standing infertility issues or women in their early 40s who are looking for an aggressive treatment because of their age.

IVF is a detailed medical process. The treatment initially involves using medications to stimulate the development of multiple eggs.

Once these eggs develop and mature, they are removed from the woman and mixed or injected with sperm, either from her partner or a donor.

After the eggs and sperm fertilize and grow into embryos, an average of two embryos are put back into the women's uterus, in the hope that a healthy pregnancy will follow.

Since IVF started being performed in the late 1970s, thousands of babies have been born this way.

The Canadian Fertility and Andrology Society (CFAS) reports that about one-third of women under the age of 35 who go through IVF successfully give birth. That dips to 22 per cent for women between 35 and 39.

The rates of congenital abnormalities for those born via IVF aren't any different than those born naturally, according to the CFAS.

As with any procedure, there are drawbacks. For instance, women may experience side effects from the fertility medication they take, or in some unusual cases, ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome may arise.

"Probably the greatest complication is the risk of multiple pregnancies," Greenblatt says.

There is also a significant price tag for IVF.

In the orthodox Jewish community, some find reproductive technologies objectionable.

But, Greenblatt says, "Halachah is subject to interpretation. It really depends on who is interpreting it and which rabbi you go to for advice."

For those who see some aspects of IVF as contrary to Halachah, such as the need to produce a sperm sample, Greenblatt says there are innovations.

"To produce the [sperm] sample needed, a couple can have intercourse with a condom that has a hole in it," she says.

"So theoretically, there's still a chance the wife would be impregnated and we are able to collect the sperm sample."

IVF and other forms of fertility treatments can be emotionally demanding for couples.

Greenblatt notes there are a number of supportive community groups that cater to orthodox couples, including A TIME (a Torah Infertility Medium of Exchange) and Small Wonders.

For more information about the IVF program at Mount Sinai, visit http://www.mtsinai.on.ca/ReproductiveBiology/Programs/ivf.htm.

Creates small, customized orders

Continued from page B1

Bouts says patients should avoid compounded drugs if a generic or brand-name version is available.

And, while some U.S. pharmacies make large quantities to compete with drug companies, Stein creates only small, customized orders to fill individuals' needs.

He also credits the backlash, at least in part, to pharmaceutical companies' fears. But "we're not a threat to 'Big Pharma' – we're an add-on." He favours voluntary self-regulation through organizations such as the International Academy of Compounding Pharmacists.

Despite concerns, compounding continues to grow as patients become aware that it can help "make the medicine go down."

Shore says "doctors will call and ask how to do something," and Stein is enjoying "more and more challenges," and loves the professional satisfaction.

Reflecting on all the pregnant women he's helped, all the Crohn's patients, the teenagers and especially all the babies, Shore is also clearly convinced he's changing medicine for good.

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To Your Health

Nutritionists can help make lifestyle changes

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

According to holistic nutritionists Barbara Silverstein and Ester Kagan, a healthy lifestyle is all about balance.

"Our goal is to help our clients balance a healthy diet with an active lifestyle," Silverstein says.

The two got together when their children were students at the Toronto Heschel School and the women discovered they were both taking courses at the Institute of Holistic Nutrition, as they both wanted to learn more about the role of food in preventing and fighting disease.

They soon realized they also shared an interest in weight loss, and eventually went on to form Natural Balance Weight Loss Centre.

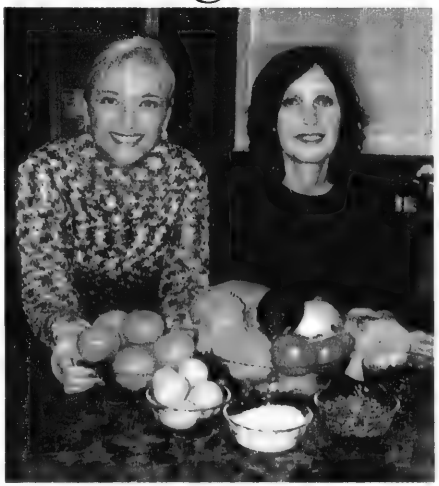
Silverstein, who trained as a social worker, says one aspect of holistic nutrition is to look at the whole person. "We don't just give our clients a list of foods, we encourage them to make lifestyle changes.

"There is often an emotional component to eating, and we try to address that so we can help our clients stop the behaviour."

People who are overweight often have high cholesterol and blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis and gastro-intestinal ailments," Kagan says.

"As they lose weight, many of these conditions improve. People with Type II diabetes can even lower their medication through weight loss and exercise."

Some of their weight loss clients have chronic conditions such as bowel disorders, gall bladder problems or acid reflux,



Ester Kagan, left, and Barbara Silverstein
[Carolyn Blackman photo]

and the nutritional plans must be customized accordingly.

While many of their clients follow customized diets, there is an underlying common denominator to most of the plans, Kagan says. "The basic diet is health-promoting. We limit processed food, white rice, white bread and sugar. Those are foods that are detrimental to our health. Try whole foods, grains and legumes because they are fibre-rich."

They also encourage clients to eat lots and lots of fresh vegetables, which are "critical to long-term healing and weight loss," Silverstein adds.

She stresses the importance of maintaining a healthy balance of carbohydrates and protein because "over the long term, high protein diets are wearing on the organs and bones."

Having treats, however, can fit into a holistic lifestyle, she says. "We all socialize around food. If you eat well most of the time, eating a piece of cheesecake or enjoying a rich gourmet meal on weekends is fine.

"Our aim is to have people feel comfortable around forbidden foods. They shouldn't berate themselves for eating something. Enjoy it and move on…

Jenn Rosen

"When embarking on a healthy lifestyle people need to think in terms of long-range goals," Silverstein says. "Changing your lifestyle is a slow and gradual process, but it works over time. It's like the tortoise and the hare. Ultimately slow and steady wins the weight loss race."

Holistic nutritionist Jenn Rosen, a graduate of the Canadian School of Natural Nutrition, says that what you apply to your body is as important as what you put in your body.

"Everything you put on your body goes into your bloodstream, so if you're putting on toxins it's as if you're eating them."

Rosen, who markets personal care products, says consumers should read the ingredients on these products just as they read ingredients on food labels. "[Try] to stay away from propylene glycol [in such products] as skin care, shampoo and baby wipes. That is the [same substance] used in antifreeze.

"Children whose bodies are still developing can get six times the toxins [of an adult]. It is crucial to be aware of what you're using."

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To Your Health

Eating healthy without the stress

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

People who say they are simply too busy to cook and eat healthy to lose weight no longer have that excuse to fall back on.

With services in Toronto such as Nutrition in Motion, eating healthy has never been easier.

For those who enjoy eating gourmet meals, but are too busy to maintain a healthy diet, Cliff Peskin and Rebecca Malen will help by delivering South Beach diet-inspired meals right to your door.

After taking a medical course on health and nutrition while volunteering in the army medical corps in Israel, Peskin returned to Canada and decided to start a company that would help Canadians who are addicted to fast food make healthier choices.

A year-and-a-half ago, he started cooking low-fat meals in his parents' kitchen, put up posters in the Forest Hill Village and built a website in hopes of advertising his new venture.

As word of Peskin's project spread and it gained popularity, he moved out of his parents' kitchen into a bigger one and hired chefs.

Today, the 26-year-old company president and Malen, 22, the vice-president and co-founder of the company, have moved into an office at Bathurst Street and Eglinton Avenue and work with Catered Affairs by Chapman's, a Toronto-based catering company.

The program begins when Malen, who is also a personal trainer and a weight loss analyst, puts information about a client into a database and generates meals and recipes based on their individual needs.

The meal plans are then given to Chapman's, where the meals are prepared, and every day, the client receives a cooler bag with three gourmet meals, and two nutritious snacks.

The kinds of dishes that are available include Asian beef salad, Italian zucchini frittata, and veal forestiere.

Peskin said Nutrition in Motion also has a program called Nim Kids, which is tailored to children who are battling their weight.

Children eat healthier versions of the meals they love, such as pita pizzas and chicken fingers.

"We have healthy meals to get children in better shape, and it teaches them what's healthy and what's not," Peskin said.

The response to the service has been phenomenal, Peskin said.

His company serves about 60 to100 people a day, and even has clients who have been with the program for eight months.

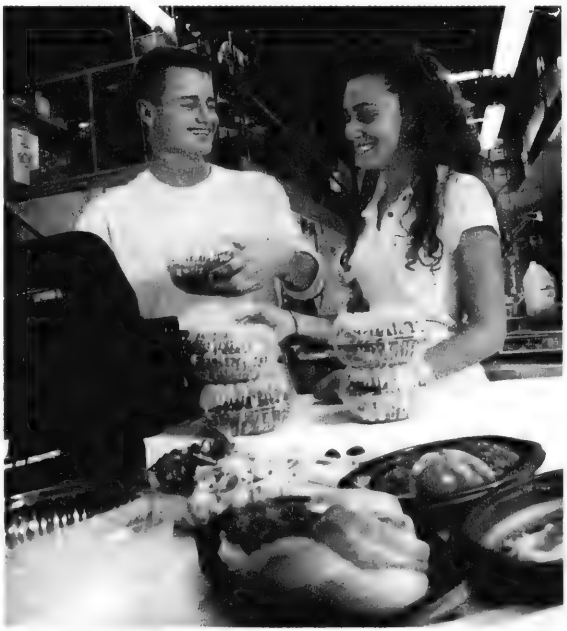
"They have no intention of stopping," Peskin said of his long-term clients. "It can become slightly addictive."

One of the most rewarding aspects of his job, he added, is when people write about the success they've enjoyed because of the program.

"They say, 'I've lost 50 pounds, you've changed my life. I don't know where I would be without your service,'" he said.

The food is not kosher. However the company doesn't serve pork or dishes with both milk and meat, and kosher meals are available upon request.

For more information about Nutrition in Motion, call 416-486-1646.



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To Your Health

Moksha yoga is really hot stuff

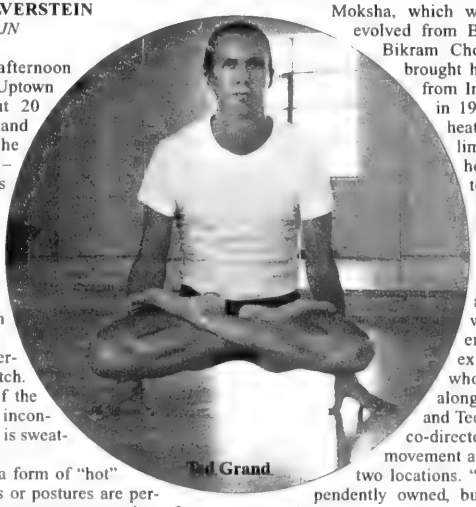
By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

At first glance, the afternoon class at Moksha Yoga Uptown seems typical. About 20 people of different sizes and shapes – many, clad in the trendy Lululemon yoga gear – contort their bodies in various poses.

They move in unison as they follow the directives of the young, lithe instructor leading them in the practice of Moksha yoga, literally one of the hottest forms of yoga in the country.

The pace is slow and deliberate as people breath and stretch. Despite the low-key nature of the class, there is an obvious incongruity: everyone in this studio is sweating profusely.

That's because Moksha is a form of "hot" yoga, which means the asanas or postures are performed in rooms heated to temperatures anywhere from 99 to 102 F or 39 to 41 C.


Ted Grand

Moksha, which was devised in Toronto, evolved from Bikram yoga, named for Bikram Choudhury, the guru who brought his system of "hot" yoga from India to the United States in 1972. He claimed that the heat made the muscles more limber and that the sweat helped the body release toxins.

In the late 1990s, the Bikram yoga movement grew and spread to Toronto. The creators of Moksha initially trained as Bikram teachers, but went on to create a different hot yoga movement, explains Natalia Brajak, who co-founded Moksha along with Jessica Robertson and Ted Grand. Brajak is now a co-director of the Moksha yoga movement as well as a co-director of two locations. "All the studios are independently owned, but we function within a community."

She's quick to point out the differences between Moksha and Bikram yoga: "We practise upper body strengthening poses and hip openers that you wouldn't find in the Bikram. We also practise different sequences and the number of poses are different. We do more poses in a class [than Bikram]."

She notes that Bikram follows a more rigid order of postures. "In Moksha, there's more variation from class to class and we introduce modifications for students, whereas Bikram sticks to the sequence they always practise."

Brajak adds that Bikram requires the use of a carpet. "We didn't think it was healthy to sweat on a carpet. Our floors are reclaimed hardwood or cork, a sustainable product. We're very environmentally conscious."

She stresses that the heat relaxes the muscles. "It makes the connective tissue more pliable and that helps improve flexibility and reduces potential stiffness and soreness the next day.

"It seems to be the perfect temperature for a person to sweat, but it's not so intense as to cause thermo-dehydration."

Brajak notes that the temperature in the room is the same as that outdoors in some parts of India. "You would be in that heat and humidity."

Moksha aims for a "calm mind, fit body and inspired life," she says. "The practice helps us to see and live in the world in a more calm and peaceful way and to improve our physical heath."

The various poses are beneficial for hormone regulation and glandular function, she says.

Brajak explains one of the reasons the new movement was formed was because Bikram yoga training could only be done in Los Angeles and the cost for teacher training was prohibitive for many people, given that the trainees were required to live in LA for two months. "We wanted to provide more local and accessible teachers training."

She says Moksha yoga has experienced significant growth since its launch in May 2004. There are five studios in the Greater Toronto Area – three in Toronto, one in Oakville and one in Richmond Hill. Nationally, there are studios in Vancouver, Calgary, and Montreal, with new studios set to open in Edmonton and Halifax. There is also international interest: there is a studio on the verge of opening in Trinidad, and Moksha classes are being offered in yoga studios in England,Taipei and Hong Kong.

"It's great. We're excited about how things have taken off," Brajak says. "We took a big chance by making the changes and creating Moksha. We followed our hearts."

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To Your Health

Pilates can help with sciatica, herniated discs

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

To the outside world, Tracey Foreman, a long-time gymnast and gymnastics coach looked like the picture of health. However, unknown to most people, Foreman suffered from chronic pain.

"I had a bad back and a bad knee. I tried chiropractors and physio for two years. Nothing helped. I did not know what it was like not to have pain."

One day, she tried Pilates, a form of exercise that incorporates stretching, breathing, and the strengthening of the core or abdominal muscles. Foreman found that her pain dissipated for six hours. "I couldn't believe it," she recalls. "The next time I did Pilates, I was pain-free for two days. I just kept going back. Eventually, I had no back pain. I was a completely new me."

Foreman, who was a personal trainer at the time, went on to become a certified Pilates instructor. She has been teaching for seven years and in 2001, she opened what is now called the Fluid Pilates and Fitness Studio (416-785-5905), in the Lawrence Avenue and Bathurst Street area (485 Lawrence Ave. W.). For about the last two years, she has been sharing space with colleague Mark Gutkin. They both offer private and semi-private, as well as small group classes.

"We're more of a boutique Pilates studio," Gutkin says. "There are generally less than eight people in the group classes. The advantage of a small studio is that people get the type of attention they need to do the exercises and the moves properly and to eliminate any chance of injury."

Gutkin, a certified Pilates instructor for seven years, as well as a Thai yoga message practitioner, also became involved in Pilates as a means of dealing with pain. He had an injured shoulder that did not heal until he took up Pilates.

Pilates is named for Joseph Pilates, the originator of the technique. Pilates emigrated from Germany in the 1930s to escape the Nazis and settled in New York City, where he opened his first North American movement studio. Gutkin notes that while some of the origins of Pilates comes from yoga postures and stretches, Pilates emphasizes practical and active living, in contrast to yoga, which tends to be geared to enhancing meditation.

"In yoga, you're also holding the poses for a long period," says Foremen. "Some people can't hold the poses that long. In Pilates, you're moving through the poses constantly. Moving makes you fluid and mobile like you were when you were a kid."

She says that when she started out as a Pilates instructor, much of her work was in helping to rehabilitate people with injuries. "Pilates can help people with certain aches and pain, like sciatica and herniated discs. Now, many of the people I started with are pain free. They just come for fitness and to maintain their gains."

Tracey Foreman and Mark Gutman, pilates teachers at Fluid Pilates and Fitness Studio, demonstrate how to use the specialized equipment. [Barbarta Silverstein photo]

Gutkin's work also tends to be rehabilitative in nature. In fact, he has created Restore Your Body, a program of small group classes geared to people middle-aged and older, who are contending with chronic pain. "It's a path to pain-free living," he says. "I devised the program because so many people over 50 have daily aches and pains that become cumulative over time."

Pilates, according to Foreman, also offers many additional health benefits: it stimulates the circulatory system, increases energy levels, releases toxins and boosts endorphins, mood-enhancing chemicals produced in the brain.

Another advantage of Pilates is its appeal to a wide age group, continues Foreman. "My clients range between 14 and 80. The majority are in their early 30s to early 70s. I have an 80-year-old client who's in better shape than most people I know."

Both instructors recommend starting with some private lessons to learn the basic techniques. Foreman points out that people derive more benefit from group classes when they start with private sessions because they and their instructor have a better understanding of their bodies. "I know if their shoulders are tight or if their hips are not aligned and where their imbalances are."

She advises doing Pilates at least twice a week, with three times a week being ideal.

Pilates is also a great way to improve your appearance, she adds. "You're streamlining the body. The muscles become long, lean and toned, but not bulky.

"You can also burn up to 400 calories in a class because it's cardiovascular exercise. When I first started doing Pilates, I went down two full clothing sizes."

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Wen-Do teaches women, girls 'to fight back'

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

After taking a basic course with Wen-Do, a women's self-defence organization, Joy Levy began a new career.

"I loved what they had to offer, and I took the path of becoming an instructor," says Levy, 32, a Thornhill mother of two young children.

The philosophy behind Wen-Do, a feminist based non-profit organization, is that in a male-dominated society, women's experience and fear of violence is typically different from men's and, therefore, it's vital for women to have access to self-defence courses taught by and for women.

Wen-Do believes that women – whether they are old, young, athletic, non-athletic, disabled or non-disabled – can use their bodies effectively to resist or defuse violent situations.

"We teach women and girls to be resourceful and to surprise their attacker. They learn to aim at vulnerable targets where their strength will be effective, and not to struggle against the attacker's arms or chest. Even running is a form of self-defence," Levy says.

"There is also a lot of verbal self-defence. This is our chance to find our voice and our inner strength. If a woman is in trouble she should yell '911.' If she yells 'Help,' she's not explaining what she needs."

Citing Wen-Do statistics, Levy says that 81 per cent of women who run, 68 per cent of women who use physical force, and 63 per cent of women who yell or scream will avoid sexual assault.

Joy Levy

Any girl has the right to go out on the street, Levy says, "and we teach them to fight back. Too often, women are told to control their behaviour for safety's sake. That is the wrong message. Wen-Do does not blame the victim.

"But we don't just teach physical techniques. We combine the martial arts with discussions about harassment and domestic and sexual assault, and we inform women about their rights."

For instance, she says, we may teach elementary school girls about bullying, talk to teens about sexual harassment, and teach young adults about their rights in the workplace.

"We talk a lot about why things happen and where they could happen," Levy says. "The most likely places where a woman could be attacked are at home, at school, or at work. Out on the street is fourth on the list."

Wen-Do instructors spend time relating success stories, such as one about a five-year-old girl who fought off an attacker. "These stories are empowering and enlightening."

The organization runs basic 15-hour courses that are open to the public, and courses can be run privately, Levy says.

"We try to keep classes down to about 20 women. For me, teaching the course has been tremendously rewarding. I've met women from all walks of life, and I've grown a new appreciation for womanhood," she says.

"Girls come in and tell my they have no strength, but they leave saying 'I didn't know I could do that.' It's not about strength. It's about how we use our body parts."

Class time is also a time for women to get together and talk about current issues, Levy says. "They can talk openly, and they know it's confidential."

For more information on Wen-Do, contact Levy at joy.levy@rogers.com or at 416-520-9901.

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To Your Health

Repetitive strain can come from work or play

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

Sitting at your desk while you punch away at the keyboard and click on a mouse can be taxing on your body.

Over time, the drooped shoulders, craned neck and wrist use may cause a repetitive strain injury, or RSI.

"RSI refers to an injury where muscles get overused," says Dr. Heather Tick, director of the RSI Clinic at the Integrated Pain Treatment Centre in Toronto.

"We're constantly injuring ourselves in our daily lives and constantly repairing ourselves, but the time you run into trouble is when the injury exceeds the ability of the body to heal. Then you start collecting injuries."

Dr. Heather Tick applies a treatment to a patient.

More than two million Canadians suffer from RSI.

Tick says patients will typically come to the clinic complaining about pain in their forearm, such as in the wrist or elbow, or lamenting that their neck gets stiff or that their shoulders feel achy.

While office work is a frequent culprit, Tick says overuse of muscles from pleasurable activities, such as playing the piano, can also contribute to RSI.

After questioning patients about their pain and their lifestyle habits, Tick says, she does a comprehensive physical examination.

"From top to bottom, I look at the alignment of the spine, alignment of their shoulder posture and of the head," she explains.

"I look for a specific physical sign… to show muscle shortening, because this is generally a condition of shortened muscle [which leads to] reduced range of motion."

Once the physical signs of RSI have been identified, Tick offers her patients treatment options ranging from workplace stretches to intramuscular stimulation (IMS).

"IMS [involves] the use of acupuncture needles, but not in the theory and practice of Chinese medicine, but based on what we know from western medicine in terms of function and dysfunction of muscle," she says.

"Needles are put into the tightest part of the muscle, which gives them the quickest release and gets the range of motion back the fastest."

Some of the other treatment options include trigger point release, physiotherapy, massage, Pilates exercises and stress management sessions.

At the clinic, which opened in 1993, Tick and her colleagues employ a holistic practice, whereby mind and body are approached in a joint fashion.

"The mind is an integrated part of the body," Tick says.

"We are extremely aware you cannot separate one from the other."

That's why the treatment centre's staff includes experts in physical, psychological and emotional health who work as a team.

"Whether it's the person doing the acupuncture or the person doing laser therapy, we collaborate around the care of our patients," Tick says.

While some medical professionals were initially leery of RSI diagnosis and treatments, Tick points to the high rates of treatment success to illustrate the clinic's effectiveness.

"Worker's compensation started telling us that their rate of success was 13 per cent and we are better than 70 per cent," Tick says.

"This is a high success rate with a patient group that traditionally has a low success rate."

What's more, in about 95 per cent of cases, Tick says, the patients she treats are able to continue working despite RSI.

"Therapy does work, and we can keep the vast majority of our patients at work, productive in the jobs they want to do," she says.

Tick concedes that many of our lifestyle choices, including the enjoyable and seemingly healthy ones, can result in RSI.

That's why balance is key.

"It's important to balance the types of activities we do," she explains.

"When you see people who are keyboarding for a living and then they spend their evening surfing the net, not gong out for a walk, they're at higher risk."

Prevention also goes a long way in stopping strains before they start.

"Dong workplace stretches for the neck and forearm is useful," she offers.

"I also like the option of a sit-and-stand workstation, where you have the option of moving your equipment up or down and… having somebody with ergonomics knowledge look at the works station and how people are using it."

To get in touch with the Integrated Pain Treatment Centre, call 416-944-9008.

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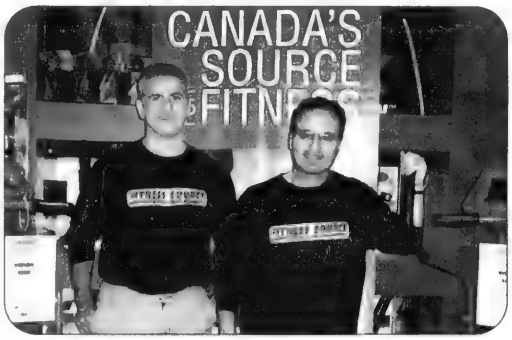

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To Your Health

JACS: where kids with addictions can go for help

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

When Gordon Hayward speaks to the parents of children battling addiction, he encourages them to realize they have much to be thankful for.

"I tell everyone I'm jealous that their kids are alive and that they have an opportunity to learn," he says. "That opportunity was denied to me through ignorance."

Seventeen years ago, Gordon's son Benji, 14, drowned in Lake Ontario after taking LSD during a rock concert.

In retrospect, Hayward not only wishes he had helped his son before it was too late, but also laments that there was no established Jewish organization for addicts to offer support.

Today, people like the Haywards do have somewhere to turn.

JACS Toronto, which stands for Jewish Alcoholics, Chemically Dependant Persons and Significant Others, is a place where addicts and their families can discuss their dilemmas, as well as a conduit to effective treatment options.

Zalman Goldman, right, director JACS Toronto, and Gordon Hayward, chair of the outreach and education committee.

"If someone has a problem with drugs, we very quickly refer them to whatever treatment is appropriate," says JACS Toronto director Zalman Goldman.

Meetings are held at the group's 858 Sheppard Ave. W. location in an anonymous, non-judgmental format.

"If we have a mother who is crying about her daughter who is 15 and out of control, we direct her to where she can properly get help," says Hayward, who chairs the agency's outreach and education committee.

"When kids come, they find that they're not alone and are here with other Jews."

There are also Friday night dinners and out-of-town retreats.

An educational program for teens, named in honour of Benji Hayward, sends volunteers to schools to discuss the dangers of addictions and inform youths about available resources.

"In the last six or seven months, we've gone and spoken to more than 7,000 teenagers... in public high schools that have very high Jewish student ratios," Goldman says.

The speakers have also gone to camps, and Goldman notes they would like to increase the number of schools they address.

"There are 1,300 Jewish teenagers in this city... but since September, we have only seen 60 of them," Goldman relates.

Since starting up in 2000, JACS has received more than 8,000 individual crisis calls.

The group has four staff members, more than 100 volunteers and five committees.

Although JACS receives funding from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, money is tight and the group is always looking for ways to raise cash.

They recently celebrated their fifth anniversary with a fundraiser at Vaughan City Playhouse, with a performance of *Fiddler on the Roof*.

"What we wanted to do... was find an event where people could have a good time that was family-oriented, and at the same time, raise money," Goldman says.

Continued on page B15

To Your Health

Addictions, substance abuse affect 10% of us

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

Addictions and substance abuse have been deemed "gentile" problems by some in the Jewish community.

The reality is that like our non-Jewish neighbours, this disease affects the lives of many of our own.

"Communal numbers say 10 per cent of [Jews in the Greater Toronto Area] are affected," says Zalman Goldman, director of Jewish Alcoholics, Chemically Dependant Persons and Significant Others (JACS) Toronto, a support and treatment referral agency.

"But I've never met a [Jewish] person who doesn't know someone who is [an addict]."

Goldman says Jewish addicts are a diverse group, spanning all denominations and social strata.

"Addiction is a disease," he says.

"People need to cover up what's going on in their life and will find whatever substance, sport or whatever it takes to make them feel comfortable."

While many of us may find an alluring interest that we engage in often, that doesn't make us addicts.

Experts believe that when you reach a point where you're channelling most of your energy toward gambling, shopping or whatever it may be and your life is being negatively impacted as a result, you are an addict.

Addicts are also usually unable to control their addictive behaviour and may be strongly in denial about their problem.

Studies have shown some people may be genetically predisposed to addictive behaviour, and if you grow up in a setting where addictive behaviours were modelled to you, such as in a home with parents who smoke, that may be a factor contributing to your own addiction.

Before an addict endeavours to seek help, they generally need to come to grips with the fact their addiction has serious repercussions.

Such a realization can be quite painful and may not arise until a major life incident shakes their world significantly, such as being arrested or getting into a serious accident.

So where do addicts turn for treatment?

It depends on the specifics of the problem.

"If it's alcohol or drugs, there are different centres to go to," notes Gordon Hayward, a JACS volunteer who chairs the agency's outreach and education committee.

For instance, while a detox centre essentially clears a substance out of a person's system, actual treatment may take the form of professional counselling, medication or completely changing your social circle.

Every week, JACS hosts meetings for addicts and their families to anonymously discuss addiction-related issues and then helps people find treatment options.

"Kids have the opportunity here to express themselves," Goldman says.

"If you said 'I have a problem with drugs,' [we will] very quickly refer you to whatever treatment is appropriate."

Hayward, whose son, Benji, lost his life from drugs as a 14-year-old, says addicts and their families take comfort at meetings when they realize so many others are battling the same demons.

"When they come in and start to listen to other people's stories… they feel comfortable," says Hayward.

"When they're ready to speak up, they will."

To reach the JACS 24/7 hotline, call 416-410-JACS, ext. 5227, or visit www.jacstoronto.org.

Numbers affected is significant

Continued from page B14

"We sold more than 500 tickets for an event with 380 seats!"

It is believed that about 10 per cent of Toronto's Jews have an addiction, and if the number of friends and relatives these addicts have is taken into consideration, the number of people affected by the disease is significant.

"I've never met a person who doesn't know someone affected [by addiction]," Goldman says. "The focus is mostly on drugs and alcohol, but there's also sex, gambling, shopping and much more. We still don't really know how deep it goes."

Goldman emphasizes that while JACS has Jewish dimensions, anyone is welcome to get in touch with them, regardless of how observant they may or may not be.

"A big key word is pluralism," he says. "We're there for every Jew, no matter how involved or unaffiliated they are."

To contact the JACS 24/7 hotline, dial 416-410-JACS (5227). You can also visit JACS online at www.jacstoronto.org.

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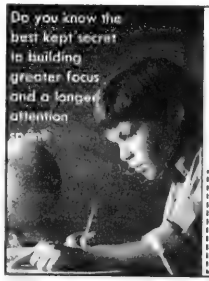

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Doctor brings the future to field of rehabilitation

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

RoboNurse, LifeRail and SturdyLift may sound like children's toys, but these devices are actually designed to assist people with disabilities overcome the day-to-day challenges they encounter, particularly later in life.

Dr. Geoff Fernie, vice-president of research at the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute and a professor in the department of surgery, biomedical engineering and rehabilitation at the University of Toronto, has devoted his life to understanding physical and cognitive disabilities and developing technology that helps people faced with these challenges.

Dr. Geoff Fernie

As an undergraduate in England, Fernie had a summer job at a school that was also a hospital for children with disabilities. His interest in providing disabled children with powered artificial limbs came out of that experience.

"I love kids. I fell in love with the whole area. These were challenges that were worth solving to me," Fernie said.

He moved to Canada in 1973 and joined the University of Toronto's department of surgery. Since then, Fernie has taken on countless prestigious positions at various hospitals in Ontario. They include stints as research director at West Park Hospital in Toronto and director of the Centre for Studies in Aging at Sunnybrook and Women's College Health Sciences Centre.

Over the past 30 years, Fernie has continued to work on devices to help those with disabilities. His team of students and researchers, Pam Holliday, Gerald Griggs and Brian Maki, have invented many of the mechanical assistant devices that are currently on the market.

RoboNurse, a patient-lifting, positioning and moving machine, was designed by Fernie and his team to reduce caregiver injuries. The lifting device enables patients to be transported from place to place without the limitations of a fixed overhead lift.

"I am proud of everything we have done. I can't dwell on it because there are so many other problems. I am always looking forward," Fernie said.

Currently, Fernie is working to improve the robotic nurse, developing a new toilet system for people in wheelchairs and continuing to test an anti-collision wheelchair, designed to allow patients with dementia to move around without bumping into something or injuring someone, Fernie said.

He is also working on a whole range of infection-control technology for hospitals. If successful, hand-washing equipment will ensure that people's hands are clean when dealing with patients in institutions, he said.

The winter is problematic for people with disabilities. During the cold months, elderly people often experience isolation and their wheelchairs and walkers do not function properly, Fernie said.

"The death rate actually increases by 60 per cent on a cold day," he added.

Fernie and his team of researchers and students are working to improve the living conditions of elderly people during the winter months.

"I still try to keep my hand in the business. I love being a researcher," Fernie said.

First province to regulate midwifery

Continued from page B6

She added one visit because the baby "was starting to lose weight and show signs of jaundice." To Caro, this is just a small part of the support her midwife offered.

Ontario was the first province to regulate and fund midwifery and create an undergraduate education program, becoming a model for the rest of the world. Even across Canada, there are few universal statndards: it's regulated in some provinces, funded in a few. Here, over seven per cent of births are now attended by midwives, with a client satisfaction rate of over 98 per cent.

Yet, according to the Association of Ontario Midwives, only 57 per cent of women seeking midwives can currently be accommodated. But Premier Dalton McGuinty recently committed an additional $13.8 million, with plans to add 50 new midwives, and Health Minister George Smitherman has said it is a good way "to invest our precious health-care dollars."

Midwifery makes good financial sense: each midwife-assisted hospital birth saves the province about $800 – home births save $1,800 – because there are fewer medical interventions, a C-section rate of 12.7 per cent versus 20.6 per cent for family doctors, and fewer, shorter hospital stays. Rather than the fee-for-service model practised by physicians, midwives receive a flat rate. With more and more physicians leaving the baby-catching business, midwifery will continue to thrive.

"There's no question" she'd have a midwife in future, Caro says, "if there was one available." She's known some people who called too late to get their first choice of midwife or hospital. Women are encouraged to call as soon as they know they're pregnant. No doctor's referral is needed.

For many, like Brooks, midwifery is a second career – a strong personal choice to help women birth their babies. "It's something I'd always wanted to do."

Despite stethoscopes, Dopplers (audio devices for listening to babies in utero) and syringes, as my daughter reminded me, today's midwives are very much the heirs of those dedicated biblical midwives.

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On Campus

York group hosts Israeli filmmaker

By KYLE GORDON
CJN Intern

As part of its ongoing attempt to further peace and tolerance among pro-Israeli and pro-Palestinian students, the York University group Shalom-Salam hosted a lecture and screening of the documentary *Checkpoint* by award-winning Israeli filmmaker Amit Breuer.

"We were interested in finding out why an Israeli-born woman would want to produce a film about checkpoints," Miriam Yosowich, co-president of Shalom-Salam, said at the Jan. 24 event.

Checkpoint, Breuer's feature length film that she produced in 2003, documents the treatment of Palestinian civilians by Israeli soldiers as the Palestinians attempt to pass through checkpoints in the West Bank. Israel says the crossings, which regulate the travel of Palestinians, are in place in order to combat terrorism.

Breuer admitted that when she was first approached to produce the film by director and former checkpoint guard Yoav Shamir, she was hesitant.

"I thought, 'What else can we say.'"

Six months later, Breuer reviewed Shamir's footage and decided that it was important to make Israelis aware of the situation. "We care about improving ourselves as a country," she said.

"The checkpoints are a tragic meeting place for Palestinians and Israelis. I personally hope that these checkpoints will not stay long. They are not necessary," said Breuer.

During the discussion period, an audience member asked Breuer, who moved to Toronto two years ago, if the process of allowing Palestinians to pass through the checkpoints is as arbitrary as the film suggests.

Breuer responded with uncertainty. "I have gotten lots of answers when I've asked," she said.

Often times, she said, decisions about who gets through have to do with rumours circulating about suicide bombers hiding in certain towns. This can cause a checkpoint to close or create delays. Some soldiers try harder than others to let the Palestinians pass, Breuer said, adding that the bottom line is "The policy is not clear."

In the documentary, Palestinians are often denied access simply because soldiers do not feel like allowing them to pass. Palestinian men and boys are frequently detained for hours in inclement weather without food or water, and children without identification are turned away.

Referring to the controversial subject matter and the uneasy response to her film from Jews living outside Israel, Breuer declared, "I don't choose my film subject based on what the majority feels."

Checkpoint has been shown at more than 60 film festivals and has received many awards, including the best international feature award at the 2004 Hotdocs Festival in Toronto and the award for best long documentary at the 2003 International Documentary Festival Amsterdam.

"It's a great achievement. I appreciate everyone who comes to see it. It's not easy to watch," Breuer said.

Renovated Hillel House re-opens

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL – An approximately $2-million renovation of Hillel House on Stanley Street has been completed, its first major facelift since the Jewish student organization moved in almost 60 years ago.

The graceful three-storey Victorian home, which is about 120 years old, has had decades of wear and grime peeled away to reveal its pristine plaster ceiling mouldings and ornate woodwork at their best. The majestic banisters, fireplaces and stained-glass windows have also been restored.

But, more importantly for the 400 or 500 young people, primarily McGill and Concordia University students, who pass through its heavy wooden doors each week, Hillel House is now a comfortable, well-equipped place to hold their activities, or to just hang out. Hillel recently showed off its new digs with an open house featuring free hot dogs and beer.

On the ground floor, there's now a spacious lounge with comfy sofas and a large-screen cable television, and Yossi's Dizengoff Cafe has a fully upgraded kitchen and the high-ceilinged dining room has been spruced up and properly lit. In the basement is a chapel and office space. On the second floor are staff offices, a library and computer centre, and a meeting room.

The top floor is a co-ed dormitory which has nine students. Hillel House had been closed since last May when construction began, and programming was held in a variety of venues, including the Centre Hillel near the Université de Montréal. Students in residence lived at the Ghetto Shul, on nearby Lorne Street, which has rooms upstairs.

The Hillel House residence offers a five-day-a-week, lunch-and-dinner kosher meal plan (at Yossi's), as well a a kitchenette for dairy breakfasts and a laundry room.

Aiming to create a dialogue

Continued from page 3

He said he hopes lectures on radical Islam will inform students and staff, and encourage them "to work together and build bridges rather than work against each other."

Kuperman said that instead of dwelling on events that point fingers at certain groups, Hillel is more interested in promoting gatherings that bring different cultures together, rather than set them apart.

Kuperman said he has been working with U of T's anti-racism and cultural diversity office on a series of interfaith events with other student groups, such as the Muslim Students' Association and the Hindu Students' Council.

"We want to focus on creating a dialogue in hopes that people will see we have a lot more in common," Kuperman said.

Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

Mazel tov to Norman & Stella Beck of Ottawa who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary Feb 3. Love from their children and grandchildren.

Best wishes to Betty & Hy Arlin on their 60th wedding anniversary. Love from Murray & Joyce, Fran & Lorence, Sari & Jaimie, Brian, Paul, Bethaney.

Mazel tov Nathan Wolgelerenter on your eighth birthday! Love Mom, Dad and Noah, Grandma & Grandpa, Bubbie & Zaidie.

Merav Barr & Marshall Matias announce the birth of their daughter Mikaela Stevie on Dec. 26. Grandparents are Yoram & Sarah Barr, Rhonda Matias, Bob Matias.

Harvey & Annice Frisch, Peter & Susan Kirsch, and Malka & Hersh Rosenberg are thrilled to announce the engagement of their children Randy & Jenny.

Mazel tov to Shelby Joseph Mawson on your bar mitzvah Feb. 11, with love and pride from your grandmother Frances Mandell Arad.

Happy third birthday Sarah, daughter of Rachael & Jordan Sweigman. Proud grandparents Abbe & Eddy Nelson, Lorene & Bill Sweigman, and great-bubbie Helen Nelson.

Sharon & Graeme Vinderine and big sister Alexa welcome Ryan Zachary to the family. Proud grandparents are Eva & Sol Prizand, Naomi & Roy Vinderine.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos (25 words or less) and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Send all your photos to:
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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, Feb. 13, is the deadline for the Feb. 23 issue and Monday, Feb. 20, is the deadline for the March 2 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Feb. 9

TEACHERS SEMINAR

UJA Federation Holocaust Centre presents its annual teachers seminar on Teaching the Holocaust – "Pop Culture and the Holocaust." 4:30-8:30 p.m. Teachers $25, student teachers $20. Registration, 416-635-2883, ext. 153 or hschwartz@ujafed.org.

SENSORY INPUT & LEARNING

Expressive Communication Help Organization (ECHO) presents **Rhona Feldt-Stein**, pediatric occupational therapist, speaking on "Sensory Input and Its Effect on Learning," a discussion for parents of children with late-developing speech, gross and/or fine motor delay and/or sensory issues. 7-9 p.m. at the Richmond Hill Public Library. For information, e-mail apraxiaontario@yahoo.com.

EATING DISORDERS

An evening in honour of National Eating Disorder Awareness Week. 7 p.m. at the Bathurst Clark Library, 900 Clark Ave. W.

'SHLOCK ROCK'

Canadian Friends of the Koby Mandell Foundation launch a community-wide bar/bat mitzvah program with a concert by Shlock Rock hosted by **Adrienne Gold**. 7:30 p.m. at the Vaughan City Playhouse Theatre. Youth $5, adults $10. Tickets, 905-882-7469. For info, contact 905-760-0073 or joanne@kobymandell.org.

Saturday, Feb. 11

PARSHAH DISCUSSION

Lionel Sharpe gives a lecture on Beshallach. 9:30 a.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433.

MUSICAL SHABBAT SHIRAH

Join Beth Tikvah Synagogue for services featuring Varsity Jews, University of Toronto's Jewish a cappella group. 9 a.m.

LONDON CONCERT

Celebrate Jewish music with the Gerald Fagan Singers, 7:30 p.m. at Or Shalom Synagogue, 534 Huron St., London. For information and tickets, call 519-438-3081.

SINGLES NIGHT OUT

Adath Israel Young Business and Professionals Network host "Saturday Night at the Bistro Grande" for 20- and 30-somethings. 9 p.m. To reserve, call 416-782-3302.

Sunday, Feb. 12

THE KABBALAH OF TIME

The Pride of Israel's course on Kabbalah continues through March 26. Examine time and the Jewish calendar through the mystical lens of Kabbalah. Discover a practical understanding of the Jewish calendar and insights into patterns of time. 10 a.m. Register at 416-226-0111, ext 0.

JEWISH LAW IN ISRAEL

Aryeh Reich, vice-dean of Bar Ilan Law School, speaks on "Can Jewish Law Be Revived and Used in a Modern State of Israel?" at breakfast at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. 9:30 a.m. Members free, guests $5. 416-789-3213.

SINGLES GROUP 50+

Join Walk and Talk Etc. on a tour of the Elgin and Winter Garden theatres. Meet at 189 Yonge St. at 9:30 a.m. $5 for members. Pre-register walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

ARYEH BARAF BREAKFAST

Aryeh Baraf Chesed Network for Jewish Singles hosts a breakfast and discussion with **Rabbi Michael Skobac** on "When Bad Things Happen to Good People." 10:30 a.m. at Adath Israel Congregation. $5. 416-221-0459.

TU B'SHVAT SEDER

Beth Tzedec Congregation invites Generation Hutzpah to a Tu

Continued on page 27

What's New at Beth Tikvah?

Come Learn with us this March
when we proudly present another

TUESDAY LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES

Enjoy lunch, served café-style & expand your mind
with these enlightening programs . . . . . .

March 7th — ***"The Influence of the Cantorial Voice on Yiddish Song"*** **Mitchell Leonard Smolkin**, actor, singer, cultural innovator and musical director of the Ashkenaz Festival, will perform the musical favorites of Cantorial greats Moishe Oisher, Aaron Lebedev, Jan Peerce and Louis Danto. He will illuminate their contributions to the Yiddish canons of music. Mitch will be accompanied on piano by Nina Shapilsky.

March 14th — **Dr. Derek Penslar**, Chair of Jewish Studies at University of Toronto and a frequent speaker at Beth Tikvah will speak on Jewish humor, satire and wit. Just in time for Purim!

March 21st — **Dr. Andrea Most**, a professor of English Literature at the University of Toronto will speak about Jews on Broadway. She will review the film *Oklahoma* and its Jewish connections. Who knew?!

March 28th — **John Thompson**, author of *Other People's Wars: Overseas Terrorism in Canada* and Director of the Mackenzie Institute, will focus on organized violence, terrorism and political instability.

Lunch at 12:15 p.m. & Learn at 1:00 p.m.

Call the Lunch and Learn Hotline
416-221-3433 x 352
by 11 a.m. on the Friday before each program

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Photo: Claire Mandell and the late Max Trachter.

tvo

Only on TVO can you watch a new feature-length Allan King film, uncut and uninterrupted. Help support exceptional documentaries. Join DocTVO today. Call 1 800 463 6866 or visit Membership at www.tvontario.org.

TVOntario

What's New

Continued from page 26

b'Shvat seder and wine tasting. 6:15 p.m. Free. 416-781-3514, ext. 47.

I'M STILL HERE

Darchei Noam Congregation presents the play *I'm Still Here*, performed by Act II Studio. It is based on research on daughters of mothers who have Alzheimer's. 7 p.m. Free. 15 Hove St. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca.

FILM AND DESSERT

The Toronto Zionist Partnership invites young adults in their 20s and early 30s to the Canadian premier of the Israeli film *Something Sweet*. Dessert buffet follows film. 8 p.m. Tickets $15 in advance, $20 at the door. Call 416-638-8824, ext. 1, or 416-781-5156, ext. 223.

UNFAIR MEDIA COVERAGE

Beth Emeth and Beth David synagogues present a lecture with **Dov Smith** of Honest Reporting Canada on "How to Identify and Counter Unfair Media Coverage of Israel." 8 p.m. at 100 Elder St.

Tuesday, Feb. 14

TU B'SHVAT SEDER

Beth David Sisterhood hosts you a Tu b'Shvat seder facilitated by **Ellen Kessler**, director of environmental studies at Toronto Heschel School. 7:30 p.m. Non-members $5. 416-633-5500.

Wednesday, Feb. 15

ISRAEL'S CONSTITUTION

Naomi Chazan, chair of the Association for Freedom of Religion in Israel, speaks on "Israel's Proposed Constitution: Implications for Religious Pluralism." 7:30 p.m. at Temple Sinai. 416-630-5089.

MEDITATION & PAINTING

Chabad of Markham offers a "Jewish Meditation and Painting Workshop for Women." 7:30 p.m. 88 Green Lane. $12. To reserve, call 905-886-0420.

CANTORIAL CONCERT

Beth Tikvah Synagogue's 2006 Prestige Concert Series begins at 8 p.m. with cantors **Tibor Kovari, Yaakov Motzen** and **Gideon Zelermeyer,** accompanied by pianist **Stephen Glass**. For tickets, call 416-221-3433, ext.354.

MURDER MOST FOUL

National Council of Jewish Women present **Max Haines** discussing true crime stories. 8 p.m. at 4700 Bathurst St. $12 in advance, $15 at the door. 416-633-5100.

MAKE CHALLAH COVERS

Make silk matzah/challah covers with **Shely Praver**. Join a four-week workshop beginning tonight at 8 p.m. at the Village Shul. For info, call 416-785-1107, ext 204.

Other news

MENDING THE WORLD

The Holocaust and Anti-Racism Education program at York University brings together educators from Canada, Germany and Poland to discuss the theme "Mending a Broken World: Lessons of the Holocaust." **Franz von Hammerstein** on "From Resistance to Reconciliation: A Personal Odyssey," followed by the film *Silent Courage*, Saturday, Feb. 11, 8 p.m. **Stephen Smith** on "Learning and Teaching the Lessons of the Holocaust" at 2 p.m. and a panel discussion on "Fighting Against Hate and for Justice in a Post-Holocaust Multicultural Society" at 3:45 p.m., on Sunday, Feb. 12, All in Vanier College lecture hall. Free. For information, visit www.yorku.ca/tftf.

SERVICE TIMES CHANGE

The Pride of Israel weekday morning services are at 7:30 a.m., evening services at 6:30 p.m. Shabbat evening, Minchah will be one hour before Shabbat ends. Shabbat mornings at 8:45 a.m., Sunday morning 9 a.m. For details, 416-226-0111, ext. 10.

CONSERVATIVE HALACHAH

Rabbi David Golinkin, president of the Schechter Institute, Jerusalem, is the scholar-in-residence at Beth Tzedec Congregation, Feb. 17 and 18. The weekend's theme is the "Whys and Hows of Conservative Halachah in Israel." At Shabbat dinner, Rabbi Golinkin speaks on"Why Observe Jewish Law? A Non-Fundamentalist Approach." Adults $35, children (5-13) $23. Reserve by Tuesday, Feb. 14. Golinkin speaks during Saturday services on "How Do We Differ? Conservative Responsa in the State of Israel" and during seudah shlishit on "How Do We Decide? A Specific Case with Source Sheets." 416-781-3511.

SINGLES WEEKEND

Beth Lida Synagogue hosts a Shabbaton and weekend for singles ages 25-39 and 40-60 with **Heidi Gottlieb**. Feb. 17-20. $360. For registration and pricing of individual components, call 905-882-0566. Prepayment required for Shabbat.

TORAH IN TORONTO

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism hosts its annual Torah in Toronto Saturday, Feb. 18, at Shaar Shalom Synagogue. Keynote address is "Judaism and Modernity," by **Rabbi David Golinkin** of the Schechter Institute, followed by sessions with the local rabbis. 7:15 p.m.. Music and refreshments. $18. $15 before Feb. 10. USY and KOACH members free. 416-667-1717 or canadian@uscj.org.

BEAT THE BLUES DANCE

Solel Congregation's "Beat the Blues Dance" featuring the Rich and the Poor Boys Band takes place Saturday, Feb. 18, 8 p.m.-1 a.m. $12 in advance, $15 at the door. Wine available. RSVP to **Sandy Levy**, 905-597-0423, or **Linda Silver**, 905-813-0144.

HEBREW READING II

Beth Emeth Synagogue runs the Hebrew Reading Course, level II, starting Wednesday, Feb. 22, at 8 pm, for 6 weeks. Free. To register, call 416-633-3838.

SKI DAY FOR CHARITY

The Canadian Shaare Zedek Hospital Foundation holds its ninth annual ski day on Thursday, Feb. 23, to raise funds for the department of pediatric medicine. Register at 416-781-3584 or www.hospitalwitha heart.ca.

STUDY W/OSHRA KOREN

Oshra Koren, head of MaTaN Ra'anana, on "Eliyahu and Elisha: Prophets, Prophecy and Promise." Thursday, Feb. 23, 9:15 a.m.-noon. For info and registration, call Mekorot, 416-877-2050.

HADASSAH-WIZO BRUNCH

Toronto Hadassah-WIZO's brunch and cooking demonstration with **Bonnie Stern** on Sunday, Feb. 26, at Adath Israel Synagogue. 9:30 a.m. $36. Reserve 416-630-8373.

BOWLERS WANTED

Seniors Mixed Bowling Group meets every Tuesday at 1 p.m. at Playtime Bowl. For information, call **Milt Cohen**, 416-495-1999.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

One Family, Two Homes: A three-session series for families experiencing separation and divorce. Children participate in separate age groups. Begins Tuesday, Feb. 14, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Living With Teens, Parenting Your Adolescent without Losing Your Cool: A six-session group. Begins Wednesday, Feb. 15, 7:30-9 p.m., Promenade Mall, Suite 313.

FOR SENIORS

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday Dance, Feb. 19. Casino Rama, Wednesday, Feb. 15. Mah-jong group starting. Interested players call 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. Feb. 9, dinner. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

The Book and Munch Club meets Wednesdays, 12:15-1:15 p.m. in the Volunteer Members' Lounge. Bring your lunch. For details, call ext. 2275.

Old Time Jazz Band: **George Grossman** and his trio will be performing on Thursday, Feb. 16, 3:30-4:30 p.m. in the Assembly Room.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Is Lying Always Unethical?": a lecture Wednesday, Feb 14, 10 a.m.

Valentine Lunch and Party: Wednesday, Feb. 15, 12-3 p.m. Buy tickets now.

Computer Special Events: Wednesday, Feb. 22, 9-11 a.m., "Online Telephoning"; March 8, "Online Greeting Cards."

Movie and hot dogs: *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*, Wednesday, Feb 22, at noon.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Latin dancing for singles or couples, $100 per person for 10-week session. Starts Monday, Feb. 13, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Register in advance at ext. 235.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Brown Bag Book Club discusses *Natasha and Other Stories* by **David Bezmozgis** with **Marilyn Herbert**. Thursday, Feb. 9, 12 p.m. Bring a lunch. $9.

Sundays On Bloor Brunch: "Food for Thought: An Insider's Perspective on Israeli Life Today," Feb, 12, 11 a.m. Meet IDF soldiers who have participated on Taglit birthright israel trips. Free.

Great Jewish Composers of Broadway, Sunday, Feb. 12, 11 a.m. "George Gershwin and Harold Arlen," a lecture on the influence of Jewish writers, lyricists and composers on the Broadway musical. Members $5, guests $8. Bagels and coffee included.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 31

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Dunkelman, Danny	Jan. 24/06	40 Baif Blvd
Feigelsohn, Paula	Jan. 25/06	3560 Bathurst St
Guttmann, Allan	Jan. 25/06	3705 Bathurst St
Ehrenworth, Rose	Jan. 26/06	Private
Friedman, Fannie	Jan. 26/06	Private
Goldshteyn, Leya	Jan. 26/06	Private
Guttman, Violet (Vilma)	Jan. 26/06	3560 Bathurst St
Myerson, Samuel	Jan. 28/06	10 Hogarth Av
Rosen, Abraham	Jan. 28/06	Private
Bader, David	Jan. 28/06	35 Dersingham Ct
Rubinstein, Salomon	Jan. 28/06	10 Senlac Av
Maluski, Jachet	Jan. 28/06	5935 Bathurst St
Goldman, Morris	Jan. 29/06	10 Torresdale Av
Benitah, Marcos	Jan. 30/06	6010 Bathurst St

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Terry Browman	Jan 21/06	39 Carnegie Cr
Harry Goodman	Jan 21/06	77 Searle Av
Dr. Rochelle Gross	Jan 21/06	17 Alvin Av
Jack Birnbaum	Jan 22/06	7 Jakes Av
Fran Mann	Jan 23/06	3560 Bathurst St
Ruth Slater	Jan 23/06	4620 Kimbermount
Earl Parker	Jan 25/06	10 Tichester Rd
Solly Gross	Jan 26/06	563 Lawrence Av W
Dorothy Mandel	Jan 26/06	209 Grandview Av
Albert Reingold	Jan 27/06	20 Fernwood Rd
Ronald Fleischman	Jan 27/06	2075 Bayview Av
Sam Ruth	Jan 27/06	625 Avenue Rd
Estelle Teperman	Jan 29/06	23 Suncrest Dr

ELLIOT MARVIN SWITZMAN ז"ל

We extend our heartfelt gratitude for the kindness and expressions of sympathy shown to us by our family and many friends for the loss of a beloved son, brother and uncle.

Freda (Norma) Switzman, Joe & Renee Diament & Children

Phillip Rechtsman ז"ל

We wish to thank our dear family and friends for your many expressions of sympathy during our recent bereavement.

Your thoughtfulness and kindness will always be appreciated.

The Rechtsman Family
Rene, children, grandchildren and great granddaughter

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Rachel Berlin ז"ל

An Israeli born Canadian citizen, passed away after a short battle with cancer, January, 2006 in Israel, where she moved after retirement.

Rachel was an extrememly talented Hebrew teacher at Bialik Day School followed by U.S.D.S. Hebrew Day School. She was dedicated to excellence in education, earning praise from her colleagues and adored students. She was easily able to engage children in the learning process. Her classroom was always open for all teachers to learn from her teaching approach or to ask for advice or help. Among the people who knew her, she was always ready to help everyone with whom she crossed paths. Rachel was a personality radiating her inner vitality and wisdom. Rachel, we miss you.

Your friends.

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Obituary

Ruth pioneered 'continuum of care' at Baycrest

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

When Baycrest pioneer Sam Ruth sought out volunteers or asked a colleague to lend a hand on a project, they almost invariably agreed to help.

It wasn't the power of persuasion that engaged them, but rather their understanding that Ruth's request was rooted in looking out for others.

"You couldn't refuse him because you knew that whatever he asked was not for himself, it was for somebody else," says Edwin Goldstein, a past president of the Baycrest board and a longtime colleague of Ruth's.

That legacy of selflessness is being remembered by family, friends and workmates following Ruth's death on Jan. 27 at the age of 84.

Ruth served as Baycrest's executive director from 1956 to 1980 and was the founding president of the Baycrest Centre Foundation, retiring only a few years before he died.

Originally from Chicago, Ruth earned an MBA with a focus on health care from the University of Chicago. After working in Boston and Cleveland, he arrived at Baycrest in the mid-1950s.

"In those days, you warehoused people in homes for the aged and when they got sick, you took them to the hospital," reflects Norman Schipper, a lawyer and honorary director at Baycrest who knew Ruth for 60 years.

"That led Sam to his thesis of continuum of care, whereby when someone gets admitted to a home for the aged, they can stay and get continuous care."

Indeed, when Ruth first arrived at Baycrest, the facility was essentially a small home for the aged. He fundamentally altered that approach, spearheading the construction of an on-site hospital and numerous geriatric programs that enabled residents to receive comprehensive care throughout their time at Baycrest.

"He tried to take care of older people right through until the time of their last days, looking after them with dignity," says Goldstein. "That was innovative at that time."

Ruth's innovations caught the attention of other ethnic communities, such as Chinese and Italian, as well as government agencies and academics, who came to him for expertise.

He helped other communities establish their own care facilities for seniors, was chair of the advisory committee of Metro Toronto Homes for the Aged, was an assistant professor in the faculty of medicine at the University of Toronto and also acted as a government health-ministry consultant.

"Sam looked at geriatrics very differently than most people," says Schipper. "He felt older people had full lives to live and there was a quality of life they could maintain."

This was not just an idealistic credo, but a practice Ruth personified.

"At the age of 80, Sam rode his bike in the Barrie-to-Baycrest fundraiser," says Stephen Herbert, president and CEO of Baycrest. "He was determined to ride his age in kilometers and trained over many months to prepare himself for the event."

On a hot summer day, sitting on an antique bike with crumpled tires, Ruth ventured on this challenging journey.

"He did over 50 kilometres that day," marvels Stan Feldman, Ruth's riding partner. "That was incredible."

At work and in his personal life, Ruth loved communicating with and being around other people, a trait that won him many important friends.

"You couldn't help but have a personal relationship with Sam," says Schipper.

"It didn't matter if you were on the board or were the chairman, he was a fellow that treated you like a friend, not as an employee."

Ruth is survived by wife Nancy, sons and daughter-in-law Alan, John, Daniel and Fern and grandchildren Jessica, Alexandra, Matthew, Kyle, Sean and Jaclyn.

'Canada in step with every single country in western world'

Continued from page 1

"What we do now depends on what the quartet asks us to do," he said. "I hope they will ask us to stay."

The World Bank chairs the committee of donors for the West Bank and Gaza, which disburses about $1 billion (US) a year to the Palestinian Authority.

Despite the aid, the PA is said to be bankrupt.

The 25-member EU, which is the largest single donor to the Palestinian Authority, last year contributed 500 million Euros ($606 million US). The Europeans recently suspended some of that aid to protest the PA's financial mismanagement and corruption.

The PA receives more than $200 million annually from the United States. Following the win by Hamas, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice was quoted as saying, "We're obviously not going to give aid to a terrorist organization."

CIDA said it is reviewing its annual assistance package to the PA of $25 million (Cdn) and an additional $37 million pledged last year by former Prime Minister Paul Martin.

The agency issued the following written statement to *The CJN:* "In light of the Palestinian election result, Canadian assistance programs in the West Bank and Gaza are currently being reviewed. We cannot provide any further information at this time."

Foreign Affairs spokesperson Marie-Christine Lilkoff confirmed that the assistance programs are being reviewed.

"Canada remains committed to the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and the creation of a sovereign, independent, viable, territorially contiguous Palestinians state living side by side in peace and security with Israel," she said. "As a matter of government policy, Canadian government officials are instructed to avoid contact with known members of Hamas. That policy remains in place."

Canada blacklisted Hamas as a terrorist group in 2002, so funding it would violate Ottawa's own Anti-Terrorism Act.

Since 2000, CIDA's annual allocation to the West Bank and Gaza, Palestinian refugees in the region and other "regional initiatives" has included $10 million a year toward the general budget of UNRWA – the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees – to provide basic health, education and social services.

In October 2004, Canada said it would continue to fund UNRWA even after its head admitted that some of its employees were Hamas members.

Last May, Martin promised $12.2 million to Mahmoud Abbas during the PA president's visit to Ottawa. In September, Martin offered his congratulations on the Israeli pullout from Gaza and pledged an additional $24.5 million to the PA.

Both those pledges are now being reassessed.

It's not known whether CIDA was responding to the position articulated by Prime Minister Stephen Harper, who was sworn in on Monday. Following the Hamas win, Harper said that for a nation "to be truly democratic, that nation must renounce any use of terrorism."

And in a conference call with Jewish leaders prior to the election, Harper said the Conservatives "led the charge" to have Hamas listed as a terrorist organization and that the Tories "have taken a very hard line on Hamas."

He called the "advocacy of terror and the establishment of a stable democracy incompatible."

Given Harper's comments, and a "sea change" in the Middle East political landscape, Canada had little choice but to reassess its aid, said Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee.

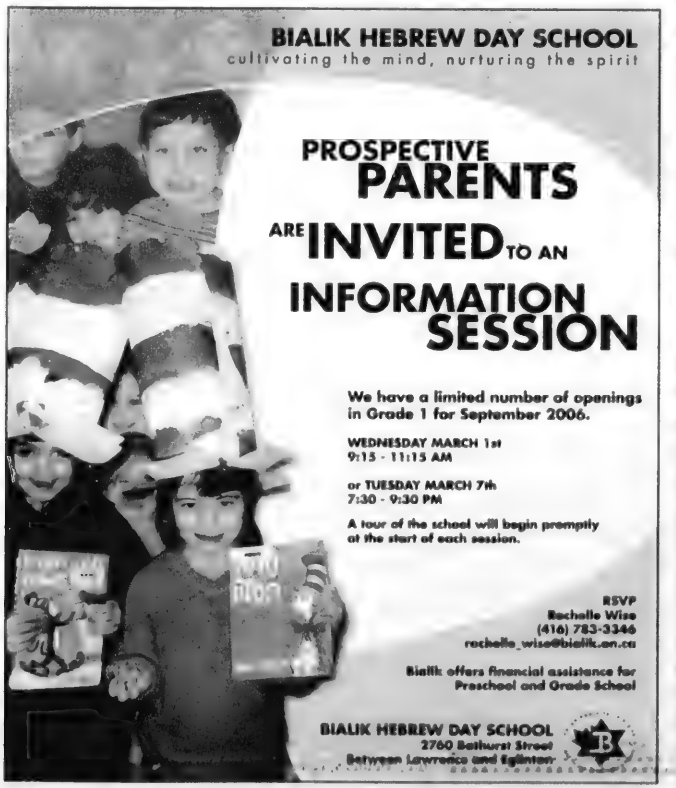
"Canada is entirely in step with every single country in the western world that is confronted with the same dilemma, namely, a desire to provide assistance to the Palestinian people, but who can't countenance the political representation that has emerged," Fogel said.

"At this point, it is impossible to see how they can reconcile those two imperatives, the one being recognizing that Palestinian people are in many respects suffering and in need of assistance, and the other, not wanting to send mixed signals about what conditions are necessary for an engagement of political leadership," he added.

Even 12 years ago, countries said they could not engage the Palestine Liberation Organization, Fogel said. "Now they're faced with the same set of circumstances, but with a leadership that seems to be less preoccupied with how they're received in the West."

The Associated Press quoted a senior Hamas official as saying that the Islamic group is already looking for new sources of funding after the international community reassessed its aid, warning that Hamas will not be "blackmailed."

Part of Canada's package in 2005 was a $6.3 million housing rehabilitation project in partnership with the PA's Ministry of Public Works and Housing and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.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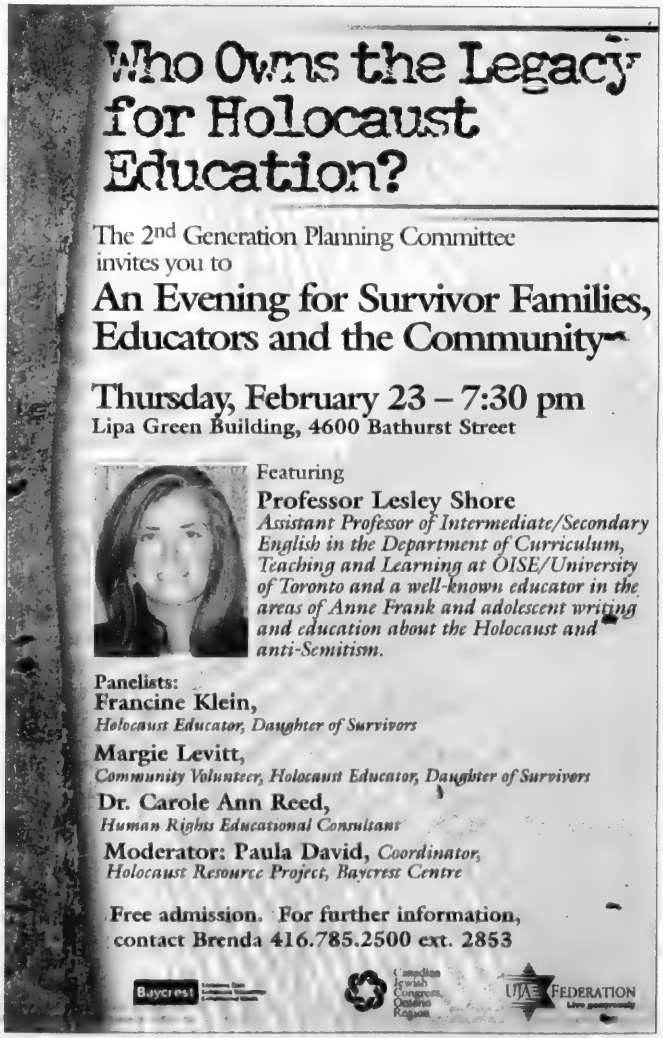
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UTT firebomber will be paroled in May

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

United Talmud Torahs (UTT) firebomber Sleiman El Merhebi will have to avoid people involved in "activist movements" after he is released this May, according to a Jan. 25 decision by the National Parole Board.

The parole board has imposed a special condition prohibiting El Merhebi from meeting or communicating with "persons known by legal proceedings as having been involved in activist movements." He must also stay away from anyone with a criminal record.

El Merhebi must by law be paroled in May, because he will have served two-thirds of his 24-month prison term.

In January 2005, he was given the equivalent of 40 months behind bars for the UTT arson, which was judged to have been a hate crime. The eight months he was held in custody from the time of his arrest in May 2004 counted as 16 months, leaving 24 months to be served in a federal penitentiary.

The conditions of his parole apply until January 2007, the end of his full sentence, which he received after pleading guilty to reduced charges.

The Montreal school's library was firebombed overnight in April 2004, causing heavy damage.

The parole board cautions that El Merhebi, now 20, remains an "influenceable young man with a high level of unpredictability."

In his favour, however, the board says he has no prior convictions, has behaved well while in prison, and has positive support awaiting him when he is released.

"Your behaviour before the offences and since your incarceration shows your capacity to respect the rules of life in society. The principal factor contributing to your criminality was the influence of negative persons," the decision states.

El Merhebi's request for day parole or early conditional release was turned down last July.

In its explanation of that decision, the parole board said El Merhebi had been under the influence of a man described by police as a "known activist" who was never apprehended in the firebombing case due to "technical reasons."

El Merhebi testified that he set the fire at UTT because he was upset by Israel's assassination the previous month of Hamas spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin. An anonymous note was taped to the door of the school threatening more serious violence against the Jewish community if Israel's "crimes" continued.

El Merhebi was born in Lebanon and came to Montreal at age seven. He was described at his sentencing as a non-observant Muslim.

Up to the point of the July review of his case, the parole board said, El Merhebi had refused to provide any information to police about the individual in question, except to acknowledge that he had been encouraged by him.

His request for parole was rejected at that time because the parole board reckoned there were "reasonable grounds to believe" he would "commit an infraction accompanied by violence before the expiration of his sentence," noting that he continues to react emotionally to events in the Middle East.

El Merhebi was described as immature, impulsive, short-tempered and susceptible to "the influence of people more fanatical than you."

El Merhebi is being held in a medium-security federal penitentiary. Richard Vachon, a parole board communications officer, said he could not disclose which one it is.

The fate of El Merhebi's mother, also accused in the crime, remains to be decided. Rouba Fahd El Merhebi pleaded not guilty in December 2004 to being an accessory after the fact. She has been free on bail since her arrest in May 2004.

She allegedly tried to buy an air ticket to Brazil for her son after the crime was committed. The main evidence, her call to a travel agent, was gathered through a police wiretap.

Her next court date is scheduled for May 15. The delay in her case has been partly explained by the sheer volume of wiretapping that was recorded at the El Merhebi household.

The day news of El Merhebi's parole broke, Jewish People's & Peretz School evacuated some 500 elementary students after receiving a threatening phone call at around 1 p.m. Police found nothing dangerous and said they would step up patrols in the area.

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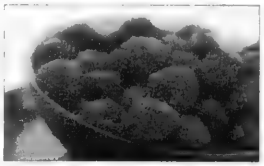
Kashruth requires produce to be checked for bugs

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Ensuring that our fruits and vegetables are kosher has been a constant chore in the past few years, says Rabbi Tsvi Heber, rabbinic co-ordinator for the Kashruth Council of Canada.



Bug infestation, which renders produce non-kosher, has increased tremendously since the ban on the pesticide DDT, he says, and if the produce is not inspected thoroughly and cleaned properly, it could be treif.

Rabbi Heber, who lectures to local groups about the vegetable cleaning process, says many people are skeptical about calling fruits and vegetables non-kosher because they cannot see any bugs, "but they're there. They often hide inside and we cannot see them.

"The produce is [nutritious], though, and we don't want people to throw it away. Our goal is to teach [consumers to inspect and clean their fruits and vegetables], not to prohibit them from eating them."

The topic of bug infestation isn't new to Judaism, he says. "The Torah states [in Vayikra 11:41-44] that we are prohibited from eating any type of insect. It wasn't always such a problem, though, because for many years farmers were using insecticide, which succeeded in wiping out most insects from fruits and vegetables.

"The tides turned, however, when the U.S. Environment Protection Agency banned DDT in 1972. By the 1990s [more] insecticides were banned so infestation increased.

"The government has a tolerance level by which infested produce is still safe to eat, but in terms of kashruth there is a zero tolerance. It took us a while to adapt to the new reality, but in the past few years we have become active with regards to this issue, and we have developed a policy."

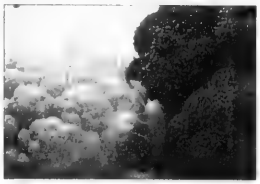
Bugs are here to stay, says Rabbi Mordechai Levin, executive director of the Kashruth Council, "but we don't eat them."

Caterers, particularly, are under a lot of pressure to ensure their produce is bug-free, says Rabbi Levin, because they deal in such large quantities.

In that vein, he says, although there is no produce that is absolutely prohibited from eating, there are items that cannot be used in a catering establishment because it would be prohibitive to check them in a timely manner

These items include artichoke leaves and hearts, blackberries, brussels sprouts, curly leaf spinach, fresh broccoli, mesclun mix, curly parsley, raspberries and watercress.

In the case of broccoli, bugs like aphids, thrips or spider mites can be lodged in the floret head or at the base of the underpart area connecting the floret to the stem. With blackberries, insects are nestled in the crevices.



"[We want to stress] that people can use these things at home because they will have the time to check them properly," Rabbi Levin says.

Other produce, including bok choy, romaine lettuce, flat leaf and baby spinach, napa cabbage and open leaf lettuce can be used by caterers, but are subject to a clearly defined cleaning process that includes checking with a magnifying glass, and in some instances a specially designed light box.

"It's a lot of work but we'll get used to it. Anything new is hard. We want people to feel comfortable that things are being done properly," he says.

David Berk, partner of Zuchter Berk Creative Caterers with Rabbi Yitzchok Drookman and Walter Vaz, says that the "bug" problem is North American-wide, and kosher caterers across the continent are dealing with the same issues.

"It's not that the [prohibited] vegetables are not kosher – it's just too hard for the mashgiach to check each piece."

Berk says the cleaning process is not a burden. "It's what we do. It's part of our philosophy as a kosher caterer – it's our responsibility to follow kashruth to the 'k.'"

Vaz says he understands why kashruth agencies have to be strict. "The marketplace has grown so tremendously [that] the highest standards have to be in place.

"The community has grown, and people expect us to follow Halachah [to the letter]. They want us to take the high road. We can't be half kosher."

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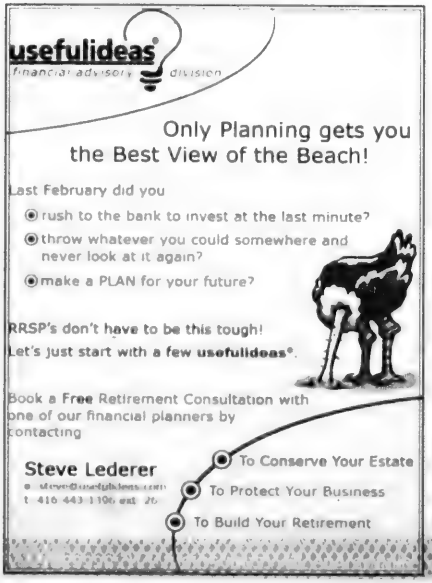
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Seniors Scene

CANADIAN VETERAN IN THE NETHERLANDS

World War II veteran Bob Feldstein of Montreal, a member of the Jewish War Veterans of Canada, chats with Prince Floris during a recent visit to the Netherlands. Feldstein, who was attached to the 21st British Army, was invited to speak at high schools there about the liberation of the country. The prince's mother, Princess Margriet, sister of Queen Beatrix, was born in Ottawa during the war.

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ש'שאר ע'נינו

גידי קורן וחברים

מינקן-יפורס שירעק

אחרי שני נסיונות להשיג כרטיסים בלי לעמוד בתור שעתיים, הצלחתי סוף סוף לראות את יצירתו הקולנועית של סטיבן ספילברג ולא התאכזבתי. הסרט מספר את סיפורה של יהודית חיסול ותצרת כחול לבן שנעזרה להעביר לעולם הבא טרוריסטים שלקחו חלק ברצח האתלטים הישראלים באולימפיאדת מינכן, פשע שפתח עידן חדש בדברי ימי הטרור. הסרט מבוסס על ספרו של נורז נגוש ונאמן למקור. השאלה היא אם המקור נאמן למציאות ויודעי דבר טוענים שהמרחק בין הספר למציאות לא ניתן לגישור. איך שלא יהיה הסרט מרתק ואין בו אפילו סצינה אחת משעממת. ולמרות שההקרנה נמשכת שלוש שעות, הכיסאות לא חורקים והצופים יוצאים בהרגשה שקיבלו תמורה מלאה עבור כרטיס הכניסה.

אך כאשר מדובר בחולית חיסול ישראלית שהוקמה על ידי ממשלה דמוקרטית, והתאחדות יפי הנפש בעולם ובני ברית בישראל לא מקבלים באהדה את מה שמתרחש על המסך. אחרי הכל מה שמתר לגויים אסור ליהודים. ולכן למרות שהביקורת על הסרט חיובית ברובן, והתגובות על מעשה הנקם והחיסולים היצירתיים שעל המסך לא תמיד אוהדת.

בסוף הסרט מתפתח ויכוח בין אבנר, מפקד יחידת החיסול, למפעילו איש המוסד. לא במקרה מתנהל הויכוח על קו הרקיע של מנהטן כאשר מגדלי התאומים ז"ל בולטים ברקע ומשמשים תזכורת לצופים שטרור איננו בלעדי לישראל ולמזרח התיכון.

איך שלא יהיה אבנר טוען בפני מפקדו במוסד שנקמה מביאה לטרור נוסף, הטרור מביא נקמה וחוזר חלילה. בדיאלוג הזה מביא ספילברג את דעתו האישית ולכך יש לו זכות מלאה. בתקווה שסטיבן יקרא את הכתבה הזאת, ואניין שחיסול רבי מחבלים אכן לא יעצור פעולת טרור, אך תגובה ישראלית מצליחה להפחית ולדלל את פעולת האיבה.

מעניין רק לדעת אם יחידת חיסול מאורגנטינה שנלחמת נגד טרור תצרת קולומביה, היתה מצליחה לחביא מליוני צופים לבתי הקולנוע כמו חמשת המופלאים תצרת כחול לבן.

הישראלים

על פי יניב חלילי בידיעות אמריקה "על פי האמריקאים, אנחנו נתפסים כקמצנים, ערמומיים, רמאים, אגרסיביים, קולניים, יהירים, חוצפנים."

אלון הרנוי אומר באותה כתבה: "מילת הגנאי החמורה ביותר שאתה יכול לומר לישראלי היא פראייר"...

כמו בכל הכללה, דברים אלה יכולים לפגוע במי שהסטריאוטיפ הזה לא מתאר את תכונותיו. אבל יד על הלב- הרבה ישראלים מזדהים עם התיאור הזה, ורבים מנסים להרחיק את עצמם מכל מי שהתנהגותו מתאימה לתאמר לעיל.

ואולי זו הסיבה לכך שאין כאן קהילה ישראלית של ממש, כי לישראלים יש אלרגיה לישראלים! אבל שישאר בינינו.

יוסי שריד

כשעזב יוסי שריד את הפוליטיקה לפני חודשים מספר תצטערו תומכיו ושמחו שונאיו. אבל כולנו הרווחנו: שריד התחיל לכתוב טור אישי ב"הארץ" שנקרא "פה אחד", שהוא הענוג אמיתי. יהודי חכם, מצחיק, יודע דבר. יד על הלב- אני מסיים כל ערב באתר של "הארץ", שם מחכה לי יוסי . תנסו ותשמו את דעתכם על העיתנות העברית.

על סבא וסבתא

כך כתובים ילדי כיתה ג'ית על סבא וסבתא:

"סבא וסבתא לא צריכים לעשות שום דבר, רק להיות שם כשאנחנו באים. כשהם לוקחים אותנו לקניות יש לחם חרוכה מטבעות למכונת משחקים."

"הם יכולים להחביא את השיניים שלהם."

"כל אחד צריך לנסות שיהיו לו סבתא וסבא, בעיקר אם אין לו טלביזיה בבית, כי הם המצוגרים היחידים ששמחים לבלות איתנו."

ילד בן שש נשאל איפה סבתא שלו נורז. "אח, -יהא אמר-היא נרח בשדה התעופה, וכשאנחנו צריכים אותה אנחנו פשוט נוסעים להביא אותה משם, ואחר כך, כשנגמר לנו מסוגה-אנחנו לוקחים אותה חזרה לשדה."

Seniors Scene

At 100, Norma Sussman still loves to go out

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

While in her 90s, Norma Sussman was once casually asked if she would be interested in joining her nephew on a road trip – to Orlando.

Without pausing, she agreed, packed her bags, and off they went.

Recently, Sussman turned the milestone age of 100, and a similar, impromptu journey wouldn't be completely out of the question.

"She loves car rides," notes Stephen Creed, who like most people affectionately refers to Sussman as "Aunt Norma," though she is not biologically his aunt. "During the week, she goes out a few times with different nieces or nephews or friends who will take her for drives. At 100, she's still doing that!"

In honour of her grand birthday, Sussman was given an aliyah at Beth Tzedec Congregation, the synagogue where she is a fixture every Shabbat.

"We gave her an aliyah to the Torah and I spoke on that occasion about her," notes the synagogue's Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl. "She's a remarkable woman."

Sussman found the aliyah experience equally remarkable

"To think I was on the bimah at that time in my life. I just can't express how that made me feel," says the sprightly Sussman, who still lives independently in an apartment.

Her birthday celebrations also included a luncheon attended by 80 guests.

Though she's broken both hips and had some other physical challenges, Sussman's mental faculties are firmly intact.

People often find it hard to believe she's 100.

In fact, just before Sussman turned 100, she recalls, a group of women saw her and a 92-year-old friend out for lunch, and one remarked that it was "lovely to see two ladies, about 80 years old, having lunch."

Norma Sussman

"So my friend looked at her and said, 'This lady, whose hand you're holding, will be 92 in February and this other lady will be 100 in a week.' You should have seen their faces!"

To keep active, Sussman heads out for regular lunches and dinners and knits for family, friends and charity.

"I really enjoy knitting," she say. "My pleasure is at Chanukah when I take all that I've knitted and give it to Jewish Family & Child Services."

Her knitted items have fetched a fair price on certain occasions.

"She knitted an afghan for a charity raffle and it sold for $200," says Maxanne Ezer, whose mother was Sussman's sister-in-law. "She's probably done knitting all of her life."

Sussman was born in Toronto in 1905, and her family roots in North America extend back to the 1850s.

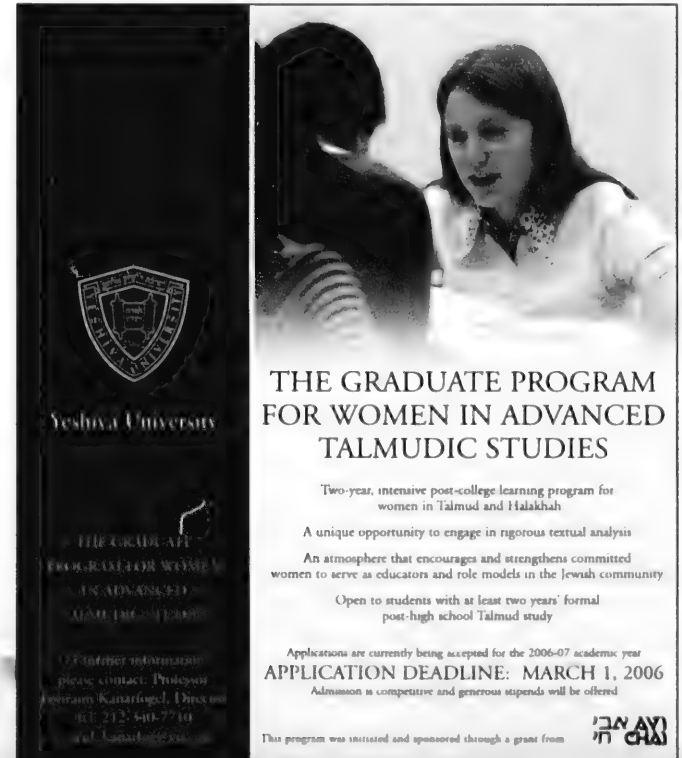
In her younger days, she lived briefly in Montreal and Kirkland Lake, Ont., but returned to Toronto.

She married Philip Sussman, but he was tragically killed in a car accident.

"It could have made me very bitter," Sussman reflects on the shock of his sudden death. "But I made up my mind when I was young that it was better to greet people with a smile, than tell them all about your troubles."

Sussman and her husband never had children, so various nieces, nephews and succeeding generations from both sides of the family have come to occupy a very special place in her heart, as they have for her.

"My husband's family has been absolutely marvelous," she says. "Last night, two nieces and nephews visited me. That's what has helped me go along through life, with my family at my side."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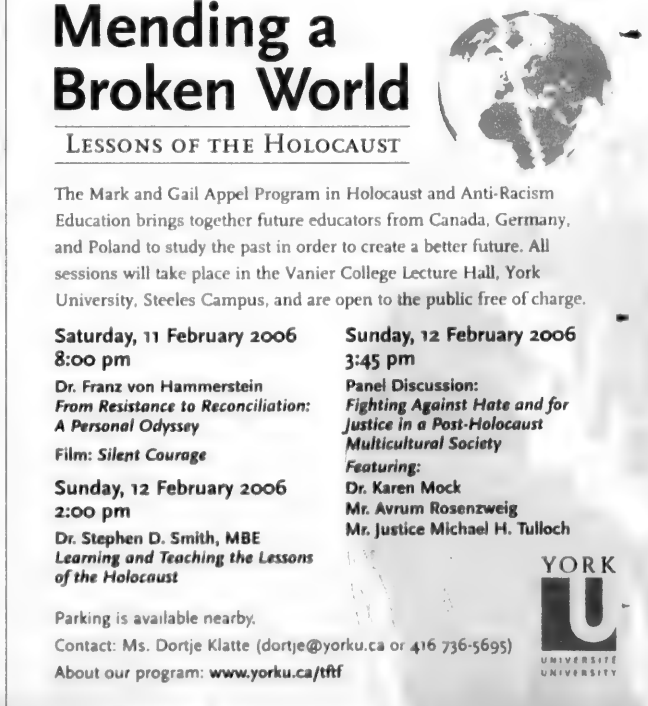
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Whole grain products are in for 2006

About Nutrition

LISA WEINBERG

Nutrition is an exciting field that is continuously evolving, but popular nutrition trends are not always positive. This year seems to be different.

We have finally seen the demise of the low-carb, no-carb craze, and we have entered 2006 with popular nutrition trends headed in a very healthy and positive direction. Here is what you can look forward to seeing this year.

Now that people are, thankfully, believing that we don't have to eliminate carbohydrates, but rather to be careful in choosing what kind of carbs we eat, we are seeing a well-received wave of whole grain products flooding the grocery stores.

This is a very good thing. Instead of worrying about how many carbs we're eating, or if there is sugar in our barbecue sauce or salad dressing, we should be focusing on getting more healthful whole grain fibre in our diet to prevent chronic disease and fill us up far more than its white counterpart, which often leaves us hungry, forcing us to eat more.

Because whole grains take longer to digest than white flour, we will eat less now and feel full for longer. Then we'll eat less later and also benefit from the fibre.

As food-makers jump on this bandwagon, we are seeing many products getting a healthy facelift. Several previously white flour foods are now made from whole grains. Look for crackers, cereals, breads, cookies, snack foods (like pretzels), pizza crusts, pasta, bread crumbs and baked goods. When reading labels, keep in mind that it is recommended that Canadian adults consume 25 grams of fibre per day.

In addition, many kid-friendly whole grain foods are hitting the shelves, including popular cereals, granola bars, crackers and cookies, as well as breads, wraps, pitas and rolls. There are even new breads that taste and look like white, but actually contain the same amounts of fibre as some whole wheat breads. Look for these foods as a way to get more fibre into your little ones.

Another new trend that is really great is the disclosure of trans fat content. (Trans fat is the result of hydrogenation of oil. If a product contains hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil, that is a trans fat.) This year, companies are required to list how much trans fat is in all products, and we can see what foods contain this bad fat known to lower good cholesterol and increase bad cholesterol.

We should all attempt to eat little or no trans fat. Be careful, though, not to be seduced by flashy claims saying trans fat-free. Companies can make this claim even if there is still a small amount of trans fat per serving (approximately 1 gram) and the company controls what they list as a serving size. So flip the package over and read the nutrition label. Is there some trans fat, and are you likely to eat more than one serving? Be diligent about eliminating trans fat from kids' diets too.

As a result of the new labelling rules, many companies are taking the trans fat out of their products and replacing it with a healthier fat source. This is good news, but beware, because some are taking out the trans fat so that they can make the claim, but replacing is with saturated fat like beef fat or lard. So read carefully.

One more very positive trend on the rise in 2006 is the availability of more choices in natural and organic foods. These foods allow us to eat less-processed, healthier foods with fewer chemicals, additives and preservatives, and now greater variety. The introduction of more of these foods in the mainstream and the interest people are showing in them are making them more affordable and accessible and helping make our food supply ever more nutritious.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

READING MONTH: Grade 1 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School pose with their teachers, Robyn Rosen Codas and Lianne Goldsmith, as part of a special event in which they dressed up as characters from their favourite book. Students in grades 1 to 5 at Bialik are participating in the MS Read-A-Thon this month.

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Israeli gov't okays release of PA tax revenues

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — The Israeli government approved the release of some NIS 250 million (about $50 million US) in customs and tax revenues to the Palestinian Authority on Sunday, but said from now on the money would not be transferred automatically and would be dependent on the situation in the Palestinian Authority.

The decision to transfer the funds came just 10 days after Hamas' victory in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections, and just two days past the date when the money transfer was due. Israel transfers the money – collected on behalf of the PA – on the third of each month.

Government officials said the decision to transfer the money was taken after it became clear that a transitional government was currently in place in the PA that did not include Hamas. Israel had been urged by the international community – foremost the United States and Egypt – to transfer the money, since PA President Mahmoud Abbas was still in charge and Hamas had not yet joined the government.

Israel also received assurances from Palestinian Finance Minister Jihad Wazir that the money would go to pay salaries and would not fall into the hands of Hamas.

Government officials said the decision was a tactical one taken because Israel did not want to bring about the collapse of the PA at this time and did not want to invite international pressure because of a failure to transfer the funds. The situation will be reassessed next month, acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said at the meeting.

The security services recommended transferring the funds, so the PA would not be plunged further into anarchy and chaos. The money is necessary for the PA to pay the January salaries of some 135,000 employees.

Before the meeting on transferring the funds, the weekly cabinet session heard various security briefings, with Maj.-Gen. Amos Yadlin saying there had been a dramatic rise in terrorist attacks and there were now some 50 attempted terrorist attacks per week.

Yadlin said last week 12 suicide bombers were thwarted at various stages of trying to carry out attacks. He said that terrorist organizations such as Islamic Jihad were trying to carry out the attacks to weaken the PA and challenge Abbas.

Likud Chair Binyamin Netanyahu, meanwhile, blasted the decision, saying, "We are trying to create international pressure against Hamas, so every shekel we give to a Hamas-led government is unexplainable."

In related developments, five terrorists were killed and 11 Palestinians were wounded in two air-force strikes in Gaza Sunday, the Israel Defence Forces said. Several strikes were carried out by the air force over the course of the day in response to Friday's Qassam rocket attack on Kibbutz Karmiya, in which four Israelis were wounded.

A senior Islamic Jihad commander and his aide were killed and three Palestinians wounded after missiles fired from an air-force helicopter struck two cars travelling in the Zeitoun neighbourhood in Gaza on Sunday night.

In an earlier strike, which took place before dawn, the air force struck a building in northern Gaza said to have served as the Aksa Martyrs Brigades' headquarters, killing three members of the terrorist organization and wounding eight other Palestinians.

Gil Hoffman and Margot Dudkevitch contributed to this report.

Russia, China backed referral

Continued from page 1

the source of plutonium, formally ratify the agreement allowing the IAEA greater inspecting authority and give the nuclear watchdog more power in its investigation of Iran's nuclear program.

The draft also asks ElBaradei to provide the Security Council with his report to the March 6 IAEA board meeting, along with any resolution that meeting might approve.

Chief British IAEA delegate Peter Jenkins urged Iran to heed the resolution before March, warning: "Should Iran fail to comply… it will fall to the Security Council to bring additional pressure to bear."

His American counterpart, Gregory L. Schulte, indirectly acknowledged that the Security Council's hands are tied until March, saying: "We're not talking about sanctions at this stage."

But Jack Straw, the British foreign secretary, said if Iran failed to use the March window of opportunity, action by the UN Security Council would be almost inevitable.

Of the board's 35 member nations, 27 voted for referral, reflecting more than two years of intense lobbying by the United States and its allies to enlist broad backing for such a move. Washington critics Cuba, Venezuela and Syria voted against, while the remaining five abstained.

Still, the near consensus came at a price for Washington. Long an advocate of firm Security Council action against Iran, including possible political and economic sanctions, the Americans had to settle, at least for now, for what is essentially a symbolic gesture.

In fact, agreement on the final wording of the text was achieved only after Washington compromised on a dispute with Egypt over linking fears about Tehran's atomic program to a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

After years of opposition, Russia and China backed the referral last week, bringing support from other nations who had been waiting for their lead. But in return, Moscow and Beijing demanded that the Americans – along with France and Britain, the two other Security Council members with vetos – agree to let the Iran issue rest until March when the IAEA board meets again to review the agency's investigation of Iran's nuclear program and its compliance with board demands that it renounce uranium enrichment.

Israel's Foreign Ministry said Israel welcomes the IAEA decision and "hopes that the international community will send a clear and sharp message to Teheran that it must completely stop its nuclear program." The official statement made no reference to the clause calling for a nuclear-free zone.

Israel's long-standing position on its alleged nuclear capabilities has been that it would not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons into the Middle East, and that while it supports in principle the idea of a nuclear-free zone, this is unrealistic until there is peace in the region and Israel is not threatened with destruction by countries such as Iran.

The officials also pointed out that Israel feels it has a firm commitment from U.S. President George W. Bush on this issue. In his letter to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on April 14, 2004, following Sharon's unveiling of the disengagement plan, Bush wrote: "The United States reiterates its steadfast commitment to Israel's security, including secure, defensible borders, and to preserve and strengthen Israel's capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any threat or possible combination of threats."

This was interpreted by Sharon as a U.S. promise to back Israel when there are calls for it to dismantle its alleged nuclear potential.

Iran remained defiant following the IAEA decision last weekend, threatening to do precisely what the referral was meant to prevent. "As of Sunday, the voluntary implementation of the additional protocol and other co-operation beyond the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty has to be suspended under the law," President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said in a letter addressed to Vice-President Gholamreza Aghazadeh.

-With files from AP

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$15 million gift to day school 'sets new bar'

By CHANAN TIGAY
JTA

NEW YORK — A recent gift of $15 million to a community day school in Rockville, Md., a suburb of Washington D.C., has attracted the attention of Jewish professionals not just because of its size, but because of its goals.

Previous gifts to Jewish day schools were often directed toward the construction of new buildings, campuses or even new schools, but this latest gift to the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School, among America's largest community day schools, is notable because it's intended to cover operational costs, or what professionals call "capacity building."

That is, the gift is not an endowment or part of a capital campaign. Rather, it's meant to immediately affect students' lives. It's also among the largest-ever gifts to an individual Jewish day school.

"It sets a new bar for investment in day schools and for reasons to invest," said Rabbi Joshua Elkin, executive director of the Boston-based Project for Excellence in Jewish Education.

"What [the donors are] saying is that if we want our school to really realize its fullest potential… the schools need to have the resources to be able to grow the excellence of their program as well as keep their institutions accessible."

The gift –which comprises $10 million to enhance the school's programs and a $5-million matching endowment for scholarships – is being given by Robert and Clarice Smith and Robert and Arlene Kogod through the Charles E. Smith Family Foundation. Robert Smith and Arlene Kogod are Charles E. Smith's children.

The $10-million portion will be given in $1-million dollar increments over 10 years and will allow the school to better integrate art, history and science into its Judaic and general studies curricula, the head of school, Jonathan Cannon, told JTA. It also will aid in developing experiential, informal educational programs, and in offering professional development programs to teachers, he said.

The additional scholarship money will allow the school to offer its education "to the widest possible economic spectrum, and that really meets the priorities of a Jewish day school," he said.

The school is pluralistic and not affiliated with any movement. It has 1,500 students in kindergarten to Grade 12.

The money, said Steven Kraus of the New York-based Jewish Education Service of North America, will allow the school to address some of the major challenges facing day schools.

They include making Jewish education affordable to a wide socio-economic swathe and offering top-of-the-line professional development to teachers, he said.

The donation is one of at least three major gifts to day schools over the last several years. In 2001, the Sidney Kimmel Foundation gave a $20-million gift to the Raymond and Ruth Perelman Jewish Day School, a school near Philadelphia that's affiliated with the Conservative movement.

In 2004, a group of anonymous families donated $45 million to Jewish day school education in Boston. The money was to be spent over five years, with $30 million divided equally among three schools and the rest designated for a tuition scholarship fund and grants for innovative educational projects.

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Israel Briefs

More outposts to go: minister

A day after last week's unprecedented violence at Amona over the demolition of illegal buildings, Internal Security Minister Gideon Ezra pledged the government will continue dismantling such West Bank outposts, with three in the Yitzhar region next in line. "Of course there will be a next time," Ezra told the *Jerusalem Post*, although he didn't provide details on the impending evacuations.

Hamas rebuffs Bush

A Hamas leader rejected U.S. President George W. Bush's conditions for a relationship. "These demands are unjust to the Palestinian people," Ismail Haniyeh, head of the Hamas slate that won last month's legislative elections, told *Reuters*. In his State of the Union address last week, Bush said Hamas "must recognize Israel, disarm, reject terrorism, and work for lasting peace."

Egypt presses Hamas

Egypt called on Hamas to renounce violence and recognize Israel. Egypt's intelligence chief, Omar Suleiman, said if Hamas does not make these pronouncements, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas isn't obligated to ask Hamas to form a government. Suleiman made the comments last week on the same day he met Israel's foreign minister, Tzipi Livni, in Cairo.

Sharon gets feeding tube

Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital said doctors inserted a feeding tube into the stomach of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon as he lay in a coma, a move that signalled his incapacitation could be protracted. The hospital said Sharon, who recently suffered a massive stroke, remained in stable but critical condition.

Planting trees for ex-Gazans

The Jewish National Fund is planting 500 trees at the temporary Israeli home of evacuees from Gaza. The planting will take place at Nitzan, in southern Israel, during the week of Tu b'Shvat, which begins this year on the evening of Feb. 12. The Nitzan event will highlight the traditional planting of trees across Israel during the week of Tu b'Shvat.

Qassam strikes kibbutz

Four people, including a baby, were hurt after a Qassam rocket fired from Gaza struck a mobile home in Kibbutz Karmiya south of Ashkelon. The home belonged to a family that had been evacuated from Gaza last summer.

- from the CJN's news agencies

IIHF pulls tournament from Metulla

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) has withdrawn a World Championship, Division III, tournament that was to be held next month in Israel.

The IIHF moved the competition to Romania after citing security concerns about the tournament venue, Metulla, which sits on Israel's northern border with Lebanon

The announcement has "devastated" tournament organizers and participants, said Alan Maislin, chair of the Israel Ice Hockey Federation. "I feel like I've been stabbed in the heart."

Maislin said he got the news late last week and there doesn't appear to be anything Israeli officials can do to reverse it. "We're talking to the Israeli government and they'll do their diplomatic stuff. It's gone beyond hockey. It's a political issue," he said.

Maislin said concerns about holding the competition in Metulla were raised by parents of New Zealand players

In December, the terrorist group Hezbollah launched a rocket attack on the northern Israeli town of Kiryat Shmona, near Metulla. There were no casualties. Last week, a Lebanese shepherd carrying a shotgun was killed near the border

New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade has cautioned travellers against visiting Israel, suggesting they "defer non-essential travel." The ministry calls travel to the northern border an "extreme risk" and advises travellers to "avoid the area by the border fence with Lebanon."

Astronauts attend Columbia memorial in Israel

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

TEL AVIV — NASA astronaut Eileen Collins says that despite its size, Israel can be seen clearly from space.

"You can see Israel from space, because it's usually not very cloudy, so you get some beautiful, clear views of the water and the desert. It's very bright, and very beautiful," said Collins, who commanded the shuttle Discovery when the shuttle program returned to space last summer for the first time since the ill-fated Columbia mission in 2003.

Collins added that although she had seen Israel from space many times, she hadn't actually visited until last week.

It was also a first visit to Israel for Collins' colleague Andrew Thomas, the mission specialist on her flight.

"I'm also one of those people who can say I have seen all of Israel, but it's the first time I've been here," Thomas said.

The pair arrived in Tel Aviv Jan. 29, along with fellow crew member Stephen Robinson and family members of the late Columbia crew astronauts Doug Brown, Jonathan Clark, and Lani McCool.

They were in Israel along with Rona Ramon, widow of Columbia astronaut Ilan Ramon, the first Israeli in space, to commemorate the third anniversary of the Columbia space shuttle tragedy.

Ramon co-operated with Israel's Ministry of Science and Technology to organize the week-long trip, which included participation in the Space & Science in Israel 2006 Conference at the Air Force Center in Herzliya, as well as a visit with acting Prime Minster Ehud Olmert, a tour of two Israeli Air Force bases, a private memorial service for Ilan Ramon at his burial place in Nahalal, and a tour of high schools in Jerusalem, Mizpeh Ramon, Nahalal, and Tel Aviv, where the astronauts showed video from last summer's Discovery mission and answered questions about life in space.

The crew's last stop was at Eroni Zi high school in Jaffa. The auditorium was abuzz with anticipation before their arrival, with students nervously practising their questions in English.

"I've been looking forward to this ever since I heard about it two weeks ago!" cried out one fourth-grader.

"Is space stressful?" one student asked after the video presentation.

"When you're actually in space, orbiting the earth, it's really peaceful," Thomas responded.

"It's a very tranquil kind of experience because the earth is slowly turning, way below you, it's quiet, and you have a spectacular view, of course. You orbit the earth 16 times a day, so you get 16 sunrises and 16 sunsets every day, and that's very nice, too," he said.

"It's launching into space is not so peaceful. It's a very violent, powerful event and it's very stressful. We deal with this with a lot of training. We train and train and train and we do it so much that it becomes a familiar experience."

"Is it hard to adjust back to earth after being in space?" asked another student.

"It feels very weird," said Thomas, whose flight last summer was his fourth space mission, with one to the Mir Space Station having lasted four months.

"The strangest feeling when you return to earth is taking the first step. You suddenly feel how heavy your legs are. You can also feel the weight of your organs inside you, which is not very pleasant.

"Also, because a lot of the muscles that you normally use on the ground haven't been used, they weaken. So, you have to do a lot of weight training and exercise when you get back," he added. "But after a few weeks, you're back to normal."

Another student asked what astronauts do for fun in space.

"I spend my free time looking out the window, and bouncing off the ceiling and floor," Collins said.

"There's books and music and movies on DVD. There's also an electric keyboard and a guitar," added Thomas, who explained that on long flights, astronauts are able to take more items with them.

> ***'It's wonderful to be together. It's very comforting.'***

"There's also e-mail and we now have a telephone, so you can actually phone home."

Rona Ramon noted that the Israeli government has established scholarships in honour of her husband, through which the Ramon family plans to award outstanding students in different disciplines for distinction and community involvement.

"In my opinion, awarding scholarships is the most sensible way to commemorate Ilan Ramon's heritage, so that messages like loyalty, tolerance and love of family, country and humanity are given a good chance to be materialized," she said.

The visit was highlighted by Israeli President Moshe Katzav's official dedication of seven hills in the Negev, located near the Ramon Crater, to Columbia astronauts Rick Husband, Willie McCool, Laurel Clark, Kalpana Chawla, David Brown, Michael Anderson, and Ramon. They all died when the shuttle broke up while re-entering earth's atmosphere on Feb. 1, 2003.

"In August 2003, a mountain peak in the Sangre de Cristo Range in Southern Colorado was dedicated and named 'Columbia Peak' in memory of the crew. Then, on Feb. 2, 2004, seven hills on Mars were named after each of the fallen crew members," noted Ramon, who could also have added the seven memorial sites on Devon Island in the Canadian Arctic.

"These seven hills in the Negev complete a bond of friendship, hope, and exploration that spans the globe from the United States to Israel, and into the broad expanse of space, which Ilan and the Columbia crew so dearly loved."

For Lani McCool, who lost her husband Willie, Columbia's pilot, the highlight of her visit to Israel was the people. "All of us are very connected to each other," she said of the Columbia family members. "It's wonderful to be together. It's very comforting."

McCool has attended memorials in Israel for the last two years. "Coming back this time, I really felt like I was coming home," she said. "That's the best thing about Israel. It feels like family."

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SUBJECT TO CLASSIFICATION IN OUR BAC

Spielberg headlines Jewish Oscar hopefuls

By TOM TUGEND
JTA

Two films that have encountered fierce controversy in the Jewish community and Israel received Oscar nominations last week.

Munich, director Steven Spielberg's take on the Israeli hunt for the killers of its athletes at the 1972 Olympics, did better than expected with five nominations. These include best picture, best director, adapted screenplay by Tony Kushner and Eric Roth, film editing and original musical score.

Some members of the Jewish community have criticized the film for factual inaccuracies and moral relativism, while others have found its examination of the individuals carrying out Israeli policy both moving and compelling.

Palestinian film *Paradise Now* is among the top five foreign language entries.

Picked among the top five foreign language film entries is the Palestinian film *Paradise Now* by director-writer Hany Abu-Assad, which follows two suicide bombers from Nablus on a mission to blow up a Tel Aviv bus.

Although the sympathies of director Abu-Assad lie clearly on the Palestinian side, he avoids a simplistic tirade. With excellent acting and a tight, tense plot, the film tries to give an insight into the motivations of the terrorists, their sense of humiliation under Israeli occupation, and their fanaticism as well as their doubts and misgivings.

Immediately after the nomination, the Israel Project, an advocacy group based in Jerusalem and Washington, released an article by the father of an Israeli suicide bombing victim that criticizes both the film and the nomination.

"Nominating a movie such as *Paradise Now* only implicates the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in the evil chain of terror that attempts to justify" suicide bombings, Yossi Zur writes.

Nominated in the same category is Germany's *Sophie Scholl: The Final Days*, about an anti-Nazi resistance cell in Munich during World War II.

Munich director joins best actor hopefuls Gyllenhaal and Phoenix

Joaquin Phoenix, whose mother was born into an Orthodox New York family, received the nod in the best actor category for his portrayal of country music legend Johnny Cash in *Walk the Line*.

Jake Gyllenhaal, who also has a Jewish mother – screenwriter Naomi Foner Gyllenhaal – was nominated for best supporting actor in the gay cowboy saga *Brokeback Mountain*.

Rachel Weisz is in contention for best actress in a supporting role for her performance in *The Constant Gardener*. The London-born actress' Jewish father and mother fled Hungary and Austria respectively in the 1930s in the face of the rising Nazi menace.

Woody Allen was named for *Match Point* in the original screenplay category, as was Noah Baumbach for *The Squid and the Whale*.

Capote scored an adapted screenplay nomination for Dan Futterman.

Regardless of who walks off with the golden statuettes at the March 5 ceremonies, two Jewish personalities will have key roles, in front and behind the curtain.

Jon Stewart of *The Daily Show* fame will serve as Oscar host, while veteran producer Gil Cates will captain the 78th Oscar telecast for the 13th time.

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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

JASON SHERMAN ADAPTS MAXIM GORKY'S *ENEMIES*

Prolific Toronto playwright **Jason Sherman** has set his hand to adapting the Maxim Gorky play *Enemies*, which is set in early 20th-century Russia and offers "a prescient view of the coming years of Soviet struggle." Sherman has been in close collaboration with graduating students of the Ryerson Theatre School, where the production was set to open on Feb. 7.

The director is **Liza Balkan**. An acting teacher, coach choreographer, writer and singer, Balkan has built up an impressive curriculum vitae with multiple credits since her work some years ago on **Theresa Tova**'s memorable Dora award-winning production, *Still the Night*.

Enemies is at the Ryerson Theatre, 43 Gerrard St. E. until Feb. 16. $16 - $12. 416-979-5118

* * *

Tale of Two Paintings: A **van Gogh** painting at the Detroit Institute of Arts and a **Gauguin** painting at the Toledo Museum of Art are at the centre of a legal tug-of-war over ownership.

Art Garfunkel

The paintings were once owned by **Martha Nathan**, a German-Jewish Holocaust survivor who died in 1958. Although Nathan sought restitution of much other property confiscated from her by the Nazis, she reportedly never included the van Gogh or Gauguin on the list, having reportedly sold them in 1938 to a Swiss art dealer while she was living in unoccupied Paris.

Eighteen months ago, Nathan's indirect heirs requested the return of the paintings from the museums. After comprehensive research, the museums – both of which have a record of co-operation in the restitution of art stolen or sold under duress during the Nazi era – declared that the paintings were sold voluntarily and that they are the rightful owners.

Last week the two institutions launched a legal manoeuvre to confirm their ownership of the paintings. "The museums believe that, as stewards of the art collections they hold in public trust, they have a responsibility to protect their collections from wrongful claims," said a spokesperson.

The van Gogh painting, *The Diggers*, dates from 1889; the Gauguin, *Street Scene in Tahiti*, from 1891. Estimates of their market values were not available at press time.

* * *

Musical Notes

• **Lenka Lichtenberg** and **Brian Katz** perform an intimate program of songs and original compositions in Yiddish, English, Ladino, Hebrew, French and Russian. Mezzetta Café Restaurant, 681 St. Clair W. (at Christie). Cover $5. Wednesday, Feb. 8, 9 to 11 p.m. Reservations, 416-658-5687

• **Toronto Mandolin Orchestra** of the Shevchenko Musical Ensemble performs with featured soloists **Iraida Erokhina**, **Helen Spiers**, **Mykola Stadnyk**, **Tetyana Shkymba**, **Kevin Budd Pan**, **Mitch Smolkin** and **Herman Rombouts**. $25-$12. Leah Posluns Theatre, Bathurst JCC, Sunday, Feb. 12, 2 p.m. 416-533-2725

•Singer **Art Garfunkel** brings his "beautiful countertenor" (*New York Times*) to Massey Hall, Wednesday, Feb. 15, 8 p.m. Tickets $49.50 to $89.50. 416-872-4255 or www.masseyhall.com

Arts in Brief

• *Memory for Max, Claire, Ida and Company*, a feature documentary by **Allan King** about the daily lives of eight residents of Toronto's Apotex-Baycrest Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged, is slated for broadcast on TVOntario, Wednesday, Feb. 15, 9 p.m., with a repeat broadcast on Sunday, Feb. 19, 10 p.m. To order a DVD of the film, which premiered at the 2005 Toronto International Film Festival, visit the website allankingfilms.com.

• Curators and researchers at the Royal Ontario Museum highlight recent discoveries and current research at an all-day symposium this month. The series of 15-minute lectures includes talks on the arts, archeology and pure and applied sciences, and culminates in a lecture on small extinct jawless marine vertebrates. Free with admission. Friday, Feb. 17, beginning 9:45 a.m.

• Musica Beth Tikvah presents a Cantorial Concert hosted by **Cantor Tibor Kovari** and featuring cantors **Yaakov Motzen** and **Gideon Zelermyer**, accompanied by pianist **Stephen Glass**. $35 - $20; patrons $50. Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 3080 Bayview Ave. Wednesday Feb. 15, 8 p.m. 416-221-3433, ext. 354.

* * *

At the Galleries

• "Frank Gehry: Art + Architecture" is an exhibition of drawings, models and site photographs of the Gehry-designed Art Gallery of Ontario, plus four of Gehry's projects from the past decade. Opens at the AGO, Feb. 18. A parallel exhibition – "Frank's Drawings: Eight Museums by Gehry" – opens at the University of Toronto Art Centre, Feb. 18; on view until June 17.

•Artist **Antonia Stowe** has covered a floor in Huddersfield Art Gallery in Yorkshire, England with six million buttons, representing Holocaust victims. Using buttons collected through national appeals to schools, businesses and individuals, the art installation opened in late January to mark Holocaust Memorial Day.

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Tom Lehrer reluctant subject of Greenblatt's show

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Award-winning playwright, performer, director and composer Richard Greenblatt, best known for *2 Pianos, 4 Hands*, which he co-wrote with Ted Dykstra, is on stage at CanStage Berkeley/Downstairs until Feb. 25 with just one piano and only two hands – performing *Letters from Lehrer*.

Tom Lehrer was an American political satirist and songwriter for the BBC television show *That Was The Week That Was* in the early 1960s. He had a large following, especially in the United States, Canada, England and Australia.

Lehrer was also a math teacher at Harvard and other Ivy League schools. As word had it, he was a reluctant star and never took a liking to performing, but rather considered himself more of a writer. After giving audiences all he wanted to give from the stage, he withdrew from his public.

"I grew up kind of idolizing him. I was first exposed to him when I was about eight. My parents were big fans – I come from a very political background. *Letters from Lehrer* is a personal journey," says Greenblatt.

"Sometimes people coming to the show are expecting some kind of tribute to Tom Lehrer or some kind of bio play. Although there is biographical info about him, the play is really about me. It is perhaps my reaction to my research into his career and his beliefs."

Greenblatt found Lehrer's address and wrote him in 2002 to let him know that he was interested in doing a show about him, and much to Greenblatt's surprise, he wrote back. Although not overwhelmed with the idea of a show, he did not dismiss Greenblatt's request either. It wasn't until two years later that the busy Greenblatt found time to begin his Lehrer project.

At first, he assumed he would become Lehrer and relive one of his last performances – the play would be about the process of discovering why he gave up performing – but while Greenblatt was working on it, things changed.

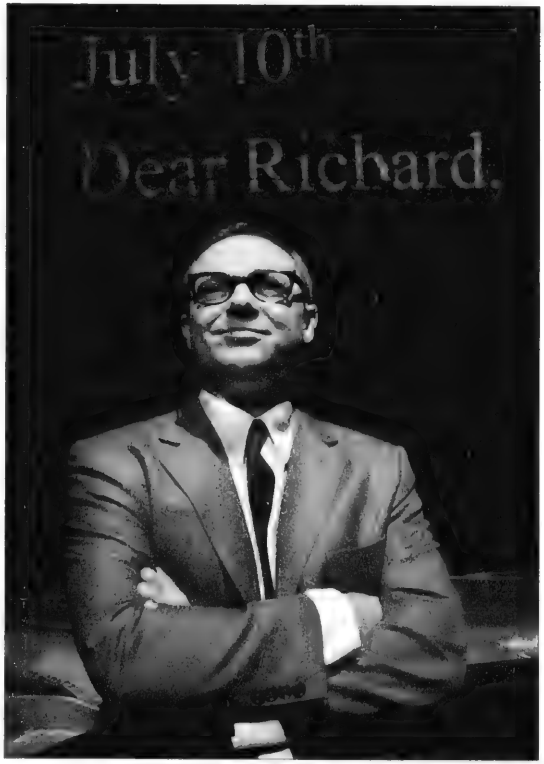
"Arguably, every play has to have a central conflict. I realized that the conflict in the play was mine. There was no conflict with him – he was never naturally suited to the life either of a performer or even an artist, perhaps. Then I realized that the letters that I had written him and he had written me would be the basis of the show, about his rejection of me, because he didn't want to meet me or be involved in the project. I didn't realize it at the time, but it was actually good for my purposes. Initially, I was actually hurt by it. Then I realized he was 77 at this point and can do whatever the hell he wants," Greenblatt says.

"As I say in the play, it is a combination of rejection and challenge that I was really grappling with, my own personal crises of faith. Often in life, we look to heroes and icons to give us inspiration. Ultimately, it is not something you can find from the outside – it is on the inside and based on faith in a political struggle, as opposed to a faith in God.

"I do look upon it as a personal spiritual quest, in order to keep faith. Even in the face of contemporary evidence that the world is run by lunatics, it is still worth it to keep fighting for the things you believe in politically," says Greenblatt, who throughout the 90-minute production uses glasses to differentiate between the character of the bespectacled Lehrer and himself.

Athough Lehrer and Greenblatt both play the piano and describe themselves as atheist Jews (Greenblatt says he incorporates his Jewishness into a lot of his plays), the similarities end there.

"Lehrer has a very cynical edge and I don't. I'm naively optimistic. I'm much more an involved person – I eat the world, is how I put it. I approach life, and from what I can gather, from interviews, as well as my communications with him, he's very removed and likes to keep to himself. As well, he's pessimistic about any kind of effectiveness that political musical satire can have in terms of changing things. I still hope that the world can change and that everything we do adds up to some kind of critical mass… eventually," he says.



Richard Greenblatt as Tom Lehrer.

Next for Greenblatt, he will be teaming up once again with actress Diane Flacks. The two starred in *Sibs* a few years back. In the spring, they will be at the Tarragon Theatre in *Care*, about a Jewish couple in the sandwich generation, who are raising a child and caring for a parent who is dying.

"Both Diane and I are Jewish and it very much comes into our work. It isn't what the play is about, but is the basis of where these characters come from," he says.

For tickets to *Letters from Lehrer*, call CanStage at 416-368-3110 or Ticketmaster at 416-872-1111, or visit www.canstage.com.

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Governor General's Award finalist discusses her debut novel

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Golda Fried never would have guessed that her first novel, one that was published by an independent, Toronto-based press, would have garnered her the recognition she is receiving today.

Golda Fried

The 33-year-old Toronto native said she was absolutely shocked by the news that *Nelcott Is My Darling* (Coach House Books) was a finalist for the 2005 Governor General's Literary Award for Fiction.

"My mother called me with the news and we were all shocked," she said.

Although she lost the award to David Gilmour for the *Perfect Night to Go to China*, she was thankful for the nomination nonetheless.

"It does make a difference. It gives me the energy to keep writing in the future. It helps me get more exposure and helps get [the book] out there."

Nelcott Is My Darling, about a 19-year-old, first-year McGill University student named Alice, tells the story of what life is like for a self-conscious, sheltered girl living on her own for her first time.

While the novel is one that university students can relate to, older generations can revisit the experience as well.

"I was worried it was a story more for younger people. The characters are 19 to 25 years old. But friends of my mother read it and liked it," Fried said.

Before Fried began writing prose after taking a creative writing class at McGill and getting her master's in creative writing from Concordia University, she was more interested in poetry.

"I wrote my first poem when I was 17. It was a birthday poem to my boyfriend and I'm sure it was awful," she said, laughing.

Despite her love of poetry, Fried's first book was a collection of short stories titled *Darkness, Then a Blown Kiss*, and the second, her fiction novel.

"But I'd like to go back and publish poetry. I love poetry," she said.

When reading *Nelcott*, it becomes clear that she is influenced by the mechanics of poetry, with similes such as "Alice felt like a teacup full of fear," and "She had waited for it like a telephone wire waiting for birds to come."

"It's not flowery," Fried said of her writing style. "I think it's easy to understand. I try to have poetry points in my writing and use imagery. I try to have a good story line and make it experimental."

Because of the similarities between Alice and Fried – they both grew up in Toronto, went to McGill, love rock 'n' roll music and were involved with the campus film society – it might be tempting to assume the novel is autobiographical.

But despite the fact she drew heavily on her own experiences, as most writers do, Fried insisted that the novel, set in the early 1990s, is fictional.

"Some people say it takes them back to that time at college they'd like to forget," she said, giggling in the same way Alice might have.

"Some people say they've read the book in one gulp, which I appreciate."

She said regardless of the readers' interpretations of the novel, she hopes it'll help others realize that if they are feeling awkward and inadequate like Alice, they are not alone.

"I was really scared and had super-low self-esteem at the time, thinking I was the only one going through it," said Fried, who now resides in North Carolina teaching freshman composition.

"But I don't think I'm that person anymore."

While she has ambitions to keep writing, Fried said that writing her book was a huge undertaking. It took her four years to write *Nelcott*.

But if and when she does write another book, she suspects that it will be about the same themes as her first novel.

"I tend to like stories about relationships. Ones that are difficult, not the easy ones."

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A chilling eyewitness account of mass murder

***Ponary Diary 1941-1943: A Bystander's Account of Mass Murder* by Kazimierz Sakowicz, Yale University Press.**

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The wartime diary of Kazimierz Sakowicz is "a unique document, without parallel in the chronicles of the Holocaust," according to Yitzhak Arad, the former chairman of the Yad Vashem memorial in Jerusalem.

To this day, it is the only written account of an atrocity recorded by a non-Jew.

A Polish journalist, Sakowicz lived in Ponary, a former holiday resort 10 kilometres southwest of Wilno, which has also been known as Vilna and Vilnius.

From 1941 to '44, when Wilno was under Nazi occupation, some 60,000 Jews were murdered in Ponary. Sakowicz began keeping his diary on July 11, 1941, when the killings had already gotten underway.

Now these entries have been published by Yale University Press under the title of *Ponary Diary 1941-1943: A Bystander's Account of Mass Murder*. It is a chilling account of man's inhumanity to man.

Wilno, a centre of Jewish culture and scholarship often referred to as the Jerusalem of Lithuania, was part of Russia from the 18th century onward. Poland held Wilno from 1920 to '39, after which it was handed over to the Soviet Union under the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact. Transferred to Lithuanian control shortly afterward, Wilno was formally annexed by the Soviets in 1940.

Germany seized Wilno on June 24, 1941, when about 57,000 Jews lived there. Within days, they were subjected to a series of anti-Semitic measures. By July, the Nazis were ready to annihilate the Jewish community, having assigned an *Einsatzgruppe* killing sub-unit and a Lithuanian police force – the Ypatingi Buriai – to perform the gruesome task.

The murders were carried out in what had been a Soviet airbase and fuel storage facility in the suburb of Ponary. Large pits, 12 to 32 metres in diameter and five to eight metres deep, had been excavated for the fuel tanks.

The Nazis used the pits for exterminating the Jews of Wilno and environs. Ponary thus became one of several sites in eastern Europe where large-scale massacres of Jews took place.

Sakowicz, a journalist and print-shop owner, was born in Wilno in 1894. He and his wife, Maria, moved into a cottage in Ponary in 1939. On July 11, 1941, the first day of mass executions, they heard the sounds of gunfire. From his attic, he watched the executions.

Sakowicz's diary ends abruptly on Nov. 6, 1943, but he supposedly kept writing until July 4, 1944. The diary, written on loose sheets, was placed in empty lemonade bottles, sealed and buried in the ground, writes Rachel Margolis in the foreword.

Margolis, once a director of the historical division of the Jewish State Museum of Lithuania, discovered Sakowicz's diary while examining documents in Lithuania's Central State Archives. Sakowicz's neighbours had found the diary and given it to the Jewish State Museum, but eventually the diary wound up in the Central State Archives.

"The entries appeared to have been written in great haste, with a trembling hand," she writes. "Working under special lighting and using a magnifying glass, I was eventually able to sort out and decipher the heart-rending entries."

These pages, however, were only a fraction of the diary. In the 1990s, she gained access to the rest of Sakowicz's diary, which was originally published in Polish in 1999.

The first entry in the diary, which Arad describes as "among the most important of Holocaust testimonies," is rather bland: "Quite nice weather, warm, white clouds, windy, some shots from the forest… I discover that many Jews have been 'transported' to the forest. And suddenly they shoot them."

The language is antiseptic, drained of all emotion, in keeping with Sakowicz's utterly detached style.

He continues: "By the second day, July 12, a Saturday, we already knew what was going on, because at about 3 p.m. a large group of Jews was taken to the forest, about 300 people, mainly intelligentsia with suitcases, beautifully dressed… An hour later the volleys began. Ten people were shot at a time."

On July 23, he writes. "All together, in the space of 17 days, they have shot an average of 250-300 daily…"

A Jewish neighbourhood in Wilno before World War II

The victims' valuables were snapped up by Lithuanians, Sakowicz notes in at least two separate entries.

In an entry on Oct. 25 described as "terrible Saturday," Sakowicz writes: "One of the Jewish women said to a soldier, 'I gave you all my money and you promised to let me and my child go, and now you lead me to death!' The soldier smiled."

Kazimierz Sakowicz

He adds: "A second young, Jewish woman, 19 to 20 years old, in a gray overcoat and black fur collar, intelligent, with a boy about three to four in a navy blue coat, falls to the ground (full of mud), kisses the feet of the non-commissioned officer and begs for her life, grasps his muddied shoes and pleads. To free his leg, he kicks her in the jaw with the tip of his shoe… On her torn cheek blood gushes out, mixing with the mud."

Toward the close of 1941, Sakowicz writes, "In Sorok-Tatar, a Jewish woman with a child was caught hiding. The woman was shot and the child done in with a rifle butt."

The shootings never seem to stop. On July 30, 1942, he records this entry: "One hundred and fifty old Jews, who had previously been eliminated from the ghetto as unfit for work, were brought by trucks through the gate on the strategic highway… They buried many of them badly wounded. All together about 150 old Jews were executed."

In April of the following year, he makes this observation: "The Jews are nervous, but they go. But when they came through the gate with the barbed wire and caught a glimpse from afar of the pits they understood what awaited them. The younger ones, even women, rushed to escape. A volley is fired.

"The first group in front of the first pit is ordered to undress. Weeping, groaning, pleading, falling to the feet of the Lithuanians and the Germans, who kick them and shoot the most importunate."

Sakowicz continued writing until he was shot and mortally wounded while riding his bicycle on July 5, 1944, his wife, Maria, said. It is not clear who killed him. But most likely, he was accidentally shot in the crossfire between Red Army troops or partisans and German forces.

The fate of the missing diary pages remains unclear. Sakowicz may have hidden them separately from the rest, and they have yet to be found.

We do know that the last 3,000 Jews left in Wilno were murdered in Ponary in the first three days of July 1944.

The SS chieftain, Heinrich Himmler, told SS officers in Poznan in 1943 that Nazi crimes constituted "a glorious page in our history, but it never has been or will be written down."

Himmler, of course, was dead wrong. Sakowicz witnessed the murders of tens of thousands of Jews, and in *Ponary Diary*, he records these heinous crimes for posterity.

Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. Stories should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 10. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office.

E-mail: **info@cjnews.com.** Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Please note: submissions will *not* be returned. Only writers whose work is chosen for publication will be contacted.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual **Purim Art Contest**.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of *CJN* employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN*'s 2006 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for $25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, 2006. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 3, 2006.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 16, 2006. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Barreau du Québec or Chambre des notaires du Québec.

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20 HOUSES FOR SALE/RENT
24 HOUSES WANTED TO BUY
25 HOUSES WANTED TO RENT
30 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE
35 CONDOMINIUM FOR RENT
40 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE/RENT
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55 ACCOMMODATION WANTED
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305 ARTICLES WANTED
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Arts & Travel

Wasserstein chronicled contemporary women

By ABIGAIL SCHWARTZ
JTA

NEW YORK — Playwright Wendy Wasserstein, whose works include *The Heidi Chronicles*, for which she won a Pulitzer Prize and Tony Award in 1989, and *The Sisters Rosensweig*, died last week of lymphoma. She was 55.

While not always overtly Jewish, her characters still bore the mark of the playwright's traditional Jewish upbringing in New York.

Obituary

Wasserstein wrote "in ways that are profoundly Jewish," said Joyce Antler, professor of American Jewish history and women's studies at Brandeis University.

Her "ideas of show business came from the synagogue. For her, that sense of theatre as a space for expressing these views was influenced by her Jewishness," Antler said.

In *The Sisters Rosensweig*, which features three middle-aged Jewish siblings who come together in London for a birthday party, "she was able to have anger at aspects of Jewish family life and yet be appreciative of both the discomfort and warm pleasures of family life," said Susan Weidman Schneider, editor-in-chief of *Lilith Magazine*.

Even in plays with less overtly Jewish themes, Wasserstein's work reflects the perspective of "a woman who bears demographic accents of a Jewish woman," Antler added.

The playwright, who attended a yeshiva in Brooklyn as a child, "was extraordinary in her ability to be deeply honest in a kind of sidelong and ironic way in writing about her experience as a Jewish woman," Weidman Schneider said.

The Heidi Chronicles covers the life of Heidi, a feminist art historian, over the span of a few decades, from a dance school in 1965 to her decision to adopt a child and become a single mother in 1989 – a mirror to Wasserstein's own decision to have a baby by herself in 1999.

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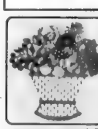

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Turin Games another home for 'wandering' hockey star

By CHANAN TIGAY
JTA

NEW YORK — Mathieu Schneider's father calls him "the wandering Jew."

And while, historically speaking, most Jews haven't done their wandering on skates, it's not difficult to see how the term applies to Schneider: over the course of his 17-year National Hockey League career, he's played in six different cities.

Currently a star defenceman for the Detroit Red Wings, he's bounced from Montreal to Long Island to Toronto to Manhattan to Los Angeles and, most recently, to Detroit.

"I've been fortunate throughout my career to play in cities with tremendous Jewish communities," Schneider, 36, said. "I feel as though I've ben a role model in each city that I've played in. There are very few Jewish hockey players, and it's been a nice role for me and I've really enjoyed it."

Along with Washington's Jeff Halpern and Los Angeles' Michael Cammalleri, Schneider is thought to be one of just three Jews in the NHL.

In February, Schneider will suit up for another trip: this one to Turin, Italy, where the "wandering Jew" will strap on his skates as a member of the U.S. Olympic hockey team. It's the second time Schneider will represent the United States on Olympic ice – and this time, Schneider said, he's hoping to just enjoy the experience.

"The first time around there were so many uncertainties," said Schneider, a native of New York, of the 1998 Games. "It was the first time the NHL went to the Olympics. The travel was really tough."

Schneider has played in more than 1,000 NHL games since 1987. He said his religion hasn't been a problem for him on the ice.

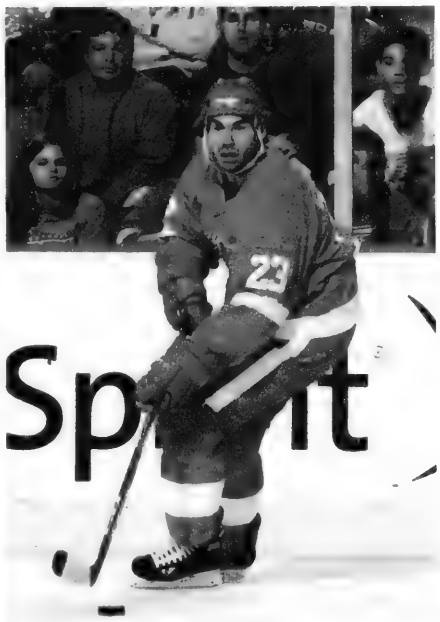
Early in his career, he recalled, there was an incident in which an opposing player unleashed an ethnic slur.

"That was the first time I heard any of that stuff. I made a mental note that the next time I had a chance, I would run the guy into the sideboards. And I did," he was quoted as saying on the Jewishvirtuallibrary.org website.

But outside of that – and one other similar experience at the start of his career – "there's never been any kind of taunting on the ice."

In the intervening years, he said, the NHL has instituted sensitivity training for its players, and Schneider thinks it's working.

"I think society in general has become a lot more aware of it, and the sports world just kind of caught up."



Mathieu Schneider
[Photo courtesy of Detroit Red Wings]

Schneider, who maintains a home in California and is a member of the Jewish Community Center in Redondo Beach, said over the years, he has made an effort to sit out on Yom Kippur and fast. It's generally not too hard, he said, because the High Holy Days tend to fall during training camp and not during regular season play.

Schneider's mother converted to Judaism to marry his father. Today, he said, "she's probably the most knowledgeable of the whole family" about Judaism.

Schneider and his wife, who has been in the process of converting for the last couple of years, have three children and one more on the way. They are, he said, being raised as Jews.

"As you get older, and especially when you have a family, religion becomes more important. I was raised as a proud Jew and I believe a lot of the lessons Judaism teaches relate really well to family.

"In the times we live in, I think it's very important to give children that sense of guidance," he added. "Jews have always stuck together."

Athletes to watch at the Winter Olympics

JTA

NEW YORK — More Jewish athletes compete in the Summer Olympics than in the Winter Games, but there are still a number to watch in the 2006 Winter Olympics. The Games will be held in Turin, Italy, from Feb. 10 to 26. Among the Jewish athletes are medal contenders Sasha Cohen, Ben Agosto and the ice-dancing team of Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovski. Here are some Jewish athletes expected to compete:

Ben Agosto, U.S. (ice dancing),
Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovski, Israel (ice dancing),
Sasha Cohen, U.S. (figure skating),
Melissa Gregory, U.S. (ice dancing),
Michael Renzin, Israel (skiing),
Mathieu Schneider, U.S. (hockey),
Jamie Silverstein, U.S. (ice dancing),
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Halachic insights into time off

Money Matters

Rabbi Jay Kelman C.A.

In the western world, we take it as a given that employees will be paid for many days when they do not actually work. Vacation time, sick days, maternity leave and personal time are all part of standard working conditions.

But these employee benefits are of relatively recent vintage and find no basis in Jewish law, other than *minhag hamakom* (local custom) – the principle that in establishing work conditions, local practice, not to mention civil law, is binding on all, even if it contravenes theoretical Jewish law. In talmudic times, most workers were hired for the day. The notion of an indefinite hire that is so common today did not exist, thus the concept of employee benefits had no relevance.

Remuneration, Judaism understood, was to be given only for work that was actually performed. To do otherwise would be to unfairly penalize employers. While it may be no fault of the employees that they are sick, it's not the responsibility of the employer either. In the unfortunate situation where a sick employee is in dire economic straits, it is society as a whole – in the form of government benefits – not just the unlucky employer, that would have to supply the charitable funds needed to sustain a person through his illness.

Only in cases where information is improperly withheld could an employee claim pay for work not actually performed. Thus, for example, if you hire a tour guide prior to a planned trip to Israel, but neglect to mention that work pressures often lead to last-minute cancellations, the guide can rightfully expect payment, albeit of a reduced amount.

Recognizing that most workers would willingly stay home if they could still receive a substantial amount of their wages, the reduced amount that is owed is determined by calculating what amount a worker would accept to stay home. Modern authorities assume that for most workers, it's 50 per cent of their wages, which interestingly enough is the percentage the Canadian government pays as unemployment insurance. Of course, if a trip is cancelled for unforeseen circumstances, such as an illness in the family, the tour guide is out of luck.

Being sick has halachic (legal) ramifications in at least two other areas.

In order that employees not have a feeling of servitude, Jewish law grants the worker the right to quit at any time, with no notice. This right, however, is suspended in cases where quitting would cause an immediate and unrecoverable loss – for example a farm worker quitting just as the crops are to be harvested, or a band-leader resigning the night before a wedding. In such situations, reasonable notice – that is, time to find a replacement worker – must be given. Quitting without the appropriate notice may make one liable for financial penalties over and above lost wages.

However, this restriction and possible fine is waived in the case of illness, and not just of the employee, but also the illness of his wife or children. While the employee cannot expect to be paid for sick time, neither can he be held responsible for losses due to illness.

There are also some workers who are entitled to full pay for time off due to illness. As Jewish law forbids taking money for performing a mitzvah, the payment of salaries to those whose work is itself a mitzvah, such as teachers and health care professionals, is based on *sechar batala*, loosely translated as opportunity cost. In essence, they are paid for not taking a job in another, more neutral field, and they agree to work for "free" in carrying out their mitzvah duties. As they are not being paid for their actual work, salary would not be deducted if they legitimately miss "work."

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Roast chicken 1 hour, basting with the citrus juice mixture at least 4 times during cooking, Garnish with orange sections.

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STILL AN EMPTY CHAIR: Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert conducts the regular Sunday cabinet meeting. The empty chair at his side is that of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon who still lies in a coma at the Hadassah Hospital in Ein Kerem, Jerusalem. [Israel Sun photo]

Jewish emissaries – part 2

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Recently, I wrote an article about individuals who act as Jewish emissaries while living in or visiting small towns or cities with few to no other Jews. I requested reader feedback on their experiences. Here are some paraphrased excerpts that highlight worthwhile interaction between some of these very committed Jews and non-Jews who are sincerely interested in our ways.

URBAN WRITER

Response 1: I produced a CD of Yiddish music that I wanted to take beyond the Jewish community. I was staying in a B&B in a very small, French-speaking New Brunswick town, and rumour had it that there was a *Juif* (French for Jew) in town. A woman knocked at my door. She had never seen a *Juif* and wanted to see what I looked like. I welcomed her, calling on my limited knowledge of French and all my hospitality. She confided she had only heard bad things about Jews and was glad I was warm

I also went to Japan as a Canadian representative of a singing troupe. I was on a bus, and people in our group were encouraged to sing to pass the time. I sang the Yiddish song *Tumbalalaika*. After a woman asked if I would sing the song for her friends, we were whisked off to a huge home in Tokyo. Her friends turned out to be Zimbabwe's ambassador to Japan. There I was in Tokyo, singing a Yiddish song to the Zimbabwean ambassador to Japan. It was an unforgettable evening of camaraderie, education and *heimishe frendlichkeit*. – Honey

Response 2 – I grew up in Kitchener-Waterloo in the 1950s and 1960s. I remember feeling an awesome responsibility representing the Jewish people in a postwar community with many newly arrived Germans. I was often the only Jewish person that my fellow students knew. When questions were raised about Jewish beliefs, I felt a responsibility to represent my people. Yet, I was aware that I was quite ill-equipped to do so.

Around this time, Kitchener welcomed a young, erudite and socially conscious rabbi to lead our congregation. Your father, Rabbi Shragah Phyvle Rosensweig, through his community outreach efforts, took significant responsibility from my young shoulders. –Merle (Levinsky) Kravitz

Response 3 – In September, a neighbour of mine in Keswick, who had badgered me for months about what colour my Christmas lights would be, then asked me why I was home for so many days in a row around Rosh Hashanah. I told her these were my holy days, then explained the tradition of the honey and apples, and even invited her for dinner. She was very appreciative that I took time out of my "holy" time to explain my traditions. –Lil Nobel.

Response 4: I do business with a family-run company in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. The owners are very religious Catholics. Two of them once visited us, and we were driving to Montreal together when they asked me if I was also Catholic. I told them that I am an Orthodox Jew. The remainder of our two days together was spent comparing religions and generally educating each other. My family visited them several times in San Pedro Sula, where they were sensitive to our kashrut requirements. We, in turn, have hosted them for dinner on Erev Shabbat and on Rosh Hashanah. – Jack Martell, Toronto

Response 5: I work at a community college and was once chatting with a teacher that I don't know well. She found out I was Jewish and began asking the strangest questions, albeit in a very kind way. I realized that despite her formal education, she knew nothing about Judaism. When we met again, she proudly presented me with a vanilla latte and told me she had verified that the coffee was completely kosher by phoning Starbucks. Her kindness and respect was such a wonderful gift. – Heather Pollock, Peterborough, Ont.

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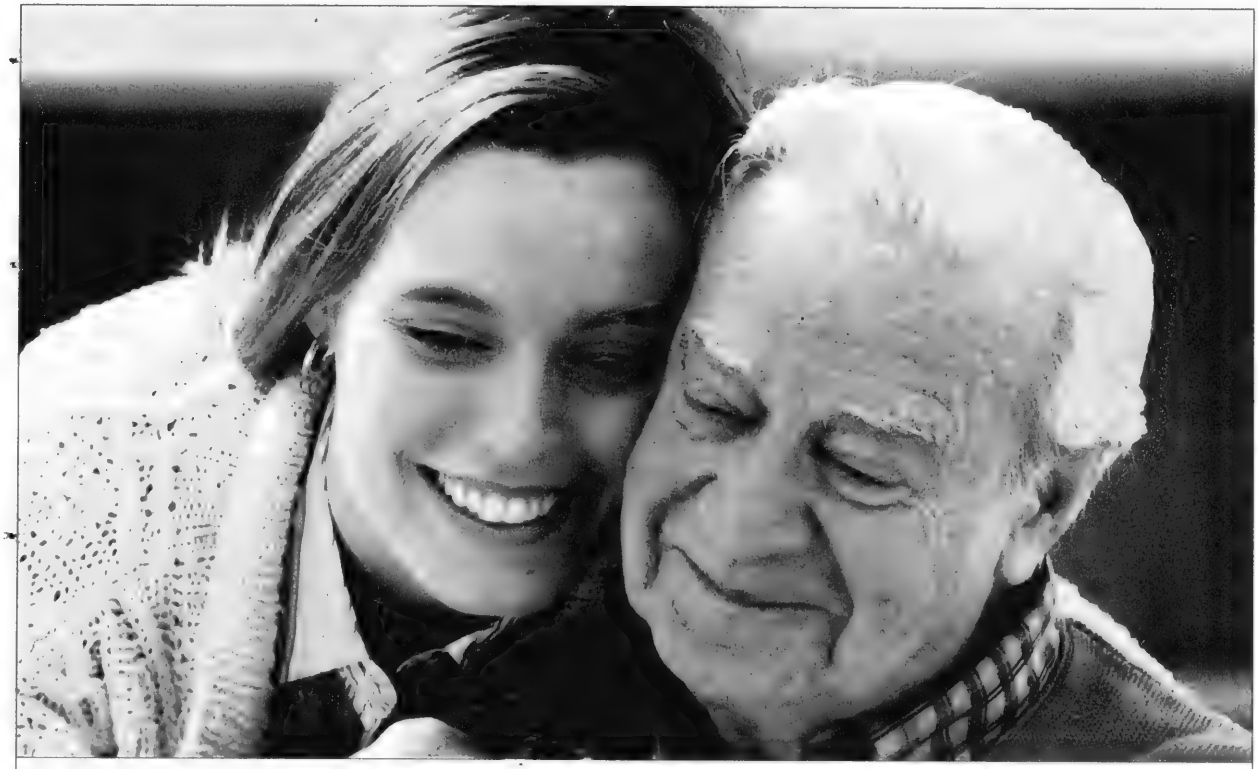

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This Week

National

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Arab journalist says most Palestinians support two-state solution. **Page 5**

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Canada Post Publication Agreement #40008484
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ISRAEL'S NEWEST IMMIGRANT: This young boy was part of a group of 150 Falash Mora who arrived in Israel last week. The United Jewish Communities has created a special fund of $100 million (US) to help bring the remaining Falash Mora to Israel. *[UJC photo]*

Calgary Jewish paper reprints cartoons

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The publisher of the *Jewish Free Press* (*JFP*) in Calgary is defending his decision to reprint three controversial Danish cartoons of the Muslim prophet Muhammad.

Richard Bronstein, publisher of the *Jewish Free Press*, said he decided to publish the cartoons in the paper's Feb. 9 edition as a way of clearing up misconceptions about what they look like and to get readers thinking about whether the cartoons justify the violence that has erupted around the world.

Three controversial Danish drawings published

Bronstein said criticism of the Danish newspaper that originally printed 12 cartoons depicting Muhammad has been "hijacked" by Islamic extremists to promote "an act of political terrorism against European values – against the values of liberal democracies."

In a telephone interview from Calgary, Bronstein said the Danish Muhammad cartoons were part of a larger group of cartoons printed in the *JFP* that included three anti-Semitic cartoons (two from the Palestinian territories), three historic images of Muhammad that can be found in libraries, museums and art galleries, as well as three new depictions of Muhammad created by Internet bloggers in the wake of the recent controversy.

"I did it to show the hypocrisy that many Muslims are protesting [while] in the meantime, Muslim nations are the world's largest producers of anti-Semitic materials," Bronstein said.

Reaction from the Muslim community in Canada has been critical, Bronstein acknowledged, but also peaceful.

Syed Soharwardy, a spokesperson for the Islamic Supreme Council of Canada, said he met with a lawyer to discuss a possible legal recourse against the *JFP* and the *Western Standard*, a biweekly magazine that announced it also planned to run some of the cartoons in its current issue, which was due out on Monday.

Soharwardy told the *Calgary Sun* he is not attempting to restrict free speech, but he said the Canadian media would never publish cartoons that openly mocked native peoples, Jews or Christians.

The Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) has asked the JFP to apologize in print for running the cartoons, warning that "otherwise, Canadian Jewish-Muslim relations could be seriously damaged."

Continued on page 4

U.K.'s Anglicans vote to divest from Israel

CJN Wire Services

The former archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, says he is "ashamed to be an Anglican" following the Feb. 6 vote by the Church of England's governing body to disinvest from companies whose products are used by Israel in the territories.

The divestment vote, which was backed by the current Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, was "a most regrettable and one-sided statement," and one that "ignores the trauma of ordinary Jewish people" in Israel who are subjected to terrorist attacks, Rev. Carey told the *Jerusalem Post* in a story published the following day.

Please see editorial

Despite backing the vote, Archbishop Williams wrote to British Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks late last week to express "deep regret" for the "deep distress" it caused.

The surprise vote, which came at the behest of the global church's Middle East branch, was approved overwhelmingly by the general synod, the church's chief governing body.

It appears to target the $4-million (US) holdings the church has in Caterpillar Inc., a manufacturer of heavy earthmoving equipment.

The vote to divest signalled the church's long-held concerns that Caterpillar's bulldozers are used by Israel to demolish Palestinian homes. The same earthmoving equipment is used by Palestinians in their own rebuilding work.

The resolution is to "heed the call from our sister church, the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, for morally responsible investment in the Palestinian occupied territories and, in particular, to disinvest from companies profiting from the illegal occupation, such

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The News in Brief

CANADA

Sportscaster Dies

EDMONTON — Sportscaster and Order of Canada recipient Cecil "Tiger" Goldstick died Feb. 3 at 91 after a long period of poor health. The longtime reporter with CFRN radio and TV was recalled fondly at a funeral last week attended by Jewish leaders and Mayor Stephen Mandel.

Chief Urges Protest

WINNIPEG — A native leader who accuses the *National Post* of inciting hatred against aboriginals says those who agree with him should protest at Winnipeg's Asper Jewish Community Campus, so the Asper family, which owns the paper's parent CanWest Global, "can hear the anger of First Nations." Terrance Nelson, chief of the Roseau River First Nation, located 80 kilometres south of Winnipeg, called for the protest in a press release titled "Natives should react more like Muslims," the *Winnipeg Free Press* reported. Nelson's call comes after the *Post* published a piece by David Asper in November that said federal money for natives is being wasted.

WORLD

Cleric Sentenced

LONDON — A Muslim cleric who fomented hate and incited murder was sentenced last week in London to seven years in jail. Abu Hamza al-Masri, who has described Jews as "sons of monkeys," was convicted on 11 counts, including soliciting the murder of "non-believers" such as Jews, and of having video and audio recordings intended to foment hate. British Jewish official Lord Greville Janner said al-Masri is likely to serve only two years before being released. He's expected to appeal.

Looted Art Resolution

AMSTERDAM — Heirs of a Dutch Jewish art dealer whose paintings were looted by the Nazis will get most of them back. The Dutch culture ministry said last week that 202 of 267 paintings claimed by survivors of Jacques Goudstikker would be handed over, but the rest will stay with their current owners because it can't be proven they belonged to the art dealer when he fled the 1940 German invasion of the Netherlands. His heirs hailed the decision as a breakthrough in a decades-old battle. Many of the paintings in the suit now hang in 17 Dutch museums.

Prof Denies Holocaust

CHICAGO — The president of Northwestern University blasted one of his professors for denying the Holocaust. Henry Bienen said Arthur Butz's comments are a "contemptible insult to all decent and feeling people." Butz, an engineering professor, e-mailed comments denying the Shoah to an Iranian news agency, backing remarks by Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, that denied the Holocaust. For years, at least since the publication of his 1976 book *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, Northwestern has forbidden Butz from discussing his Holocaust views in classes.

Zundel Trial Resumes

MANNHEIM — The trial of Holocaust denier Ernst Zundel, accused of denying the Shoah, resumed last week in Mannheim. His trial was halted last fall when the judge dismissed two members of his defence team for their far-right views. He is accused of repeatedly denying the Holocaust, a crime in Germany, in documents and on the web. Zundel, 66, who was deported from Canada last year, faces up to five years in jail.

Student Faces Hate

PARIS — An anti-Semitic incident took place in a Catholic high school in Paris, according to the National Office of Vigilance Against Anti-Semitism. The watchdog group said a Jewish student was reprimanded late last month for talking in class and as punishment was sent to wait outside the building in the cold, referred to in French slang as "the fridge." Witnesses said that after the student went outside, the teacher said to the class, "If there's not room in the fridge, there's always room in the oven." When the student returned to class, the teacher said, "If you're cold, go into the oven." The student's parents are pressing charges with help from the monitoring group.

Skinhead Hate on Rise

NEW YORK — Racist skinhead activity in the United States is on the rise, says a new report by the Anti-Defamation League. The activity, including an increase in violent skinhead attacks, has been fuelled in part by the Internet, the ADL said, along with a growing hate music industry.

Pioneering U.S. Feminist Dies at 85

WASHINGTON — Betty Friedan, whose 1963 bestseller *The Feminine Mystique* helped launch the 1960s feminist revolution in the United States, died Feb. 4 of congestive heart failure in Washington. She was 85.

Betty Friedan

In *The Feminine Mystique*, she used her experiences as a wife and mother to critique the roles of women in industrial societies, and particularly the full-time homemaker role, which she considered stifling. In 1966, she co-founded the National Organization for Women, an influential lobby group.

Born Bettye Naomi Goldstein in Peoria, Ill., Friedan was active in Marxist and Jewish radical circles in her youth.

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Vol. XXXVI, No. 8 (1,735)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation: 38,949 copies
Total paid circulation: 38,099 copies

CCNA verified circulation Sept. 7, 2005

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada $35.95, 1 yr. incl. GST
$63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST
U.S.A. $100 U.S funds, 1 yr
All other countries $110 U.S funds, 1 yr

Postmaster: Please return 29Bs and changes of address to Toronto office

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

*Under current ownership

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.

Canada

The Canadian Jewish news

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Head Office: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Ste. 205, North York, Ont., M3B 3K4 Tel: 416-391-1836
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Jews, Muslims urged to fight against intolerance

Danish cartoons cited as perfect opportunity to band together

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

The global uproar over Danish editorial cartoons that depict Muhammad provides the perfect opportunity for Jews and Muslims to band together and speak out against intolerance, a meeting between the two faith groups heard earlier this month.

"Freedom of the press should not give the media carte blanche to ridicule a whole group," interfaith activist, author and speaker Raheel Raza told the meeting of the Canadian Association of Jews and Muslims (CAJM), held at Temple Sinai.

"Who promotes hate?" she asked. "Almost anyone who can get away with it."

Raza, author of the recently released *Their Jihad, Not My Jihad*, was joined by Arlene Perly Rae, who presented a Jewish view. The audience, though small, was evenly divided between Jews and Muslims.

Among the ideas raised was for the association to protest the cartoons in letters to the editor, over the signatures of CAJM co-chairs Barbara Landau and Shahid Akhtar.

On Feb. 6, the *Toronto Star* published such a letter.

"The cartoons provoke outrage because they demean and vilify Muslims and Islam and do not protect their freedom from such disrespectful treatment," Landau and Akhtar wrote.

"Cartoons depicting Jews as less human or worthy of respect set the tone for the slippery slope toward the Holocaust and ongoing anti-Semitism," the letter stated. "No one would consider it 'freedom of expression' if in the guise of a debate or exercising their 'right to caricature,' someone began questioning the Holocaust.

"Cartoons can create tremendous harm."

Jews, Muslims and others who have experienced "such disrespect need to stand together, to say, 'We need protection from such abuses of power by the press,'" the letter said.

In her talk, Raza called the cartoons, first published in a Danish newspaper and denounced as blasphemous by Muslims worldwide, "very blatant hate propaganda" which are contributing to an "epidemic" of Islamophobia around the world.

In Europe, being anti-Muslim "is considered normal."

Muslims and Jews "should watch the media very carefully. It doesn't matter which faith is doing it.

Continued on page 6

Seen at the recent meeting of the Canadian Association of Muslims and Jews are, from left, Arlene Perly Rae, Raheel Raza and group co-chairs Barbara Landau and Shahid Akhtar. **[Ron Csillag photo]**

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Greater Toronto Area

Herzliya Conference (4)

In a session at the Herzliya Conference titled "Demography, Borders and Palestinian Statehood," a team of demographers based in Los Angeles, released startlingly new information regarding the Palestinian population.

In a study called *Arab Population in the West Bank and Gaza: The Million Person Gap*, published by the Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, (winter 2006), demographers Bennett Zimmerman, Roberta Seid and Michael L. Wise unequivocally conclude that the number of Palestinians projected by the Palestinian Authority in 2004 to be living in the West Bank and Gaza was decidedly incorrect.

"This study sets the record straight," Zimmerman's group wrote. "Through in-depth analysis and comparison of the existing records, the study measures the 2004 population in the West Bank and Gaza at 2.5 million instead of the 3.8 million reported by Palestinian Authority officials."

The 3.8-million figure gathered, projected and published by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) was entirely discredited. "Using a 'just the facts' approach, the study revealed major discrepancies in the PCBS forecast. It demonstrated that the 1997 PCBS population base for de facto residents was *inflated by the inclusion of residents living abroad and Jerusalem Arabs already counted in Israel's population survey* [my emphasis]." Zimmerman's team relied on official Israeli and Palestinian records, such as birth and death records, school enrolment, and actual border-control figures on Arabs entering and leaving the country.

As if the readjusted Palestinian demographic figures were not startling enough, Zimmerman and his team released a second study – the flip side of the demographics coin, as it were – that provided alternative projections for future population figures.

In the study, titled *Population Forecast for Israel and West Bank 2025*, the research team projected that the Arab population in Israel and the West Bank was actually increasing at a much slower rate than previously claimed.

Using updated figures based on current Palestinian birthrates and migration patterns, they projected a lower birth rate for the year 2025 than the rate of 4.7 per cent previously forecast by the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (ICBS).

In a series of detailed scenarios that offer assumptions and choices through three different ranges of figures, the Zimmerman team projects a mid-range population scenario of 7.51 million Jews in Israel and the West Bank, 2.20 million Israeli Arabs and 2.24 million Palestinian Arabs in 2025. In this scenario, Jews would comprise 63 per cent of the population in Israel and the West Bank in 2025.

Using the same mid-range case of assumptions, the team projects that Jews would comprise 77 per cent of the population of Israel without the West Bank. In the best-case scenario, the Jewish proportion rises to 83 per cent.

"The assumptions in this new forecast *reflect current realities* [my emphasis] while considering a full range of potential outcomes that have been neglected by Israeli and other demographers," Zimmerman's team writes. The population forecast study "gives policy-makers and academics a startlingly fresh and more accurate look at demographic realities and possibilities for the future."

Among those possibilities, of course, the demographers are referring to possible political options for the government of Israel.

To the extent that peace-process options are tied to concerns regarding Israel's democratic nature, they are by definition, also tied to the future demographics within Israel's future borders.

The Zimmerman team's revised demographic projections are therefore important new considerations as part of the underlying assumptions for Israeli policy-makers.

The original study *Arab Population in the West Bank and Gaza: The Million Person Gap* can be found at www.pademographics.com.

More information about *Forecast for Israel and West Bank 2025* can be obtained at ben@pademographics.com.

* * *

In a session titled "The Jewish World in 2025," Harvard law professor and author Alan Dershowitz spoke of what he perceived to be two developments with dangerous implications for the Jews of the United States presently taking hold in American society.

The first he said was that "anti-Zionism was rampant on American campuses." Dershowitz told the assembly that future generations of Jewish and non-Jewish leaders are being brainwashed against the State of Israel.

He then warned against the potential impact of a new "assertiveness" and "belligerence" on the part of the religious right.

"The trend toward fundamentalism [in America] is increasing," he said. "Many Americans believe that religion is under attack. And who, in their minds, is leading the attack? Secular Jews!"

The worrisome irony, he pointed out, was that "both the hard left and the hard right agree that Jews have too much influence on American life." According to Dershowitz, the hard left criticizes Jews for their Zionism and the hard right criticizes Jews for their secularism.

— MBD

Muslim reaction has been critical

Continued from page 1

Calling the cartoons "hate literature," the CIC said in a news release, "This is a devastating setback to Canada's credibility as a moderate, reconciling voice amid the global tragedy these cartoons have already caused."

The CIC statement is attributed to Mohamed Elmasry, a Waterloo academic who came under heavy criticism himself for suggesting on a cable television show two years ago that any Israeli over 18 could be a legitimate target for Palestinian violence.

The Calgary Jewish Community Council, meanwhile, issued a statement disassociating itself from the *JFP*, which is privately held and which derives its revenues from advertising.

Bronstein said the *JFP* reproduced three of the Danish cartoons, including one that depicts Muhammad wearing a bomb with a lit fuse as a turban. Another has Muhammad telling suicide bombers that heaven had run out of virgins, and a third showed two veiled women behind a sword-wielding Muhammad.

All the cartoons together were reprinted smaller than a typical *Globe and Mail* editorial cartoon, he said.

Bronstein said he understands that Muslims are upset by the Danish cartoons, but other religions' sensibilities should also be respected. He said the "violence was carefully orchestrated by radical Islamic clerics from Denmark."

Muhammad has been depicted many times in books, paintings and even as a superhero character in the irreverent TV show *South Park* without violent reaction, he noted.

Bronstein said he hoped to create a dialogue with the Muslim community about respecting all religions.

He said he planned to offer editorial space to a Calgary Muslim leader to air his views about the controversy.

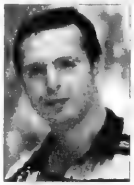
"I'm not interested in inflaming Muslims in Calgary. I'm interested in talking with Muslims in Calgary," he said.

Most Palestinians back two-state solution: journalist

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Most Palestinians support a two-state solution, despite Hamas' smashing victory in recent Palestinian elections, says an Arab journalist based in Jerusalem.

"Palestinians voted to punish Fatah, not to endorse Hamas' charter to destroy Israel," Khaled Abu Toameh, a freelance reporter who covers Palestinian affairs for the *Jerusalem Post*, told *The CJN* last week in Toronto.


Khaled Abu Toameh

Currently on a North American speaking tour sponsored by Hasbara Fellowships and Stand With Us, Toameh spoke at Ryerson University under the auspices of Hillel, and he spoke at a conference on Islamic radicalism, held at the University of Toronto, under the sponsorship of Betar-Tagar and Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

Toameh, a 42-year-old Israeli Arab who calls himself "an Arab Muslim with Israeli citizenship," said the Jan. 25 election turned solely on internal issues such as corruption, rather than on the Arab-Israeli dispute.

Palestinians opted for Hamas, a socially conservative and politically radical organization, because they were fed up with the endemic corruption in Fatah and the Palestinian Authority, he said.

"This election was about change and reform. Palestinians didn't vote for Hamas because of its position on Israel. Palestinian voters had no alternative. There was really no third way."

Palestinians gave Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, a clear mandate to replace Fatah as the ruling party of the PA. Hamas won 76 seats in the Legislative Council, Fatah captured 43, while fringe parties picked up the rest. Hamas is expected to form a government, but Fatah's Mahmoud Abbas is likely to remain president.

Toameh claimed PA officials have embezzled some $6 billion (US) in international aid since the PA's formation in 1994. "The PA stole the money of the people while [the late PA president Yasser] Arafat ran the show," he said.

Most Palestinians recognize Israel's existence out of a sense of reality, Toameh said. "At the end of the day, there is a pragmatic willingness to coexist with Israel."

He said Palestinians just want to earn a living and enjoy freedom of movement unencumbered by Israeli checkpoints.

Many backed the Oslo peace process, but lost faith in it when they realized it did not improve their conditions, he said, adding they would agree to a settlement if Israel withdrew to pre-1967 lines, relinquished east Jerusalem and resolved the contentious Palestinian refugee issue.

"That's 90 per cent of the problem," said Toameh. "The majority of Palestinians would settle for compensation. They're waiting for a good offer. They can't go back to Israel, because their villages no longer exist."

Toameh said Palestinians could have had a sovereign state by now if Arafat had set up proper institutions, hewed to the rule of law and adopted a far more positive attitude to peace.

"After the 1991 Gulf War, he was dumped by the Arabs and was fading away. Israel offered the weak Arafat a deal. But Arafat presented Oslo as something he had to do. He was apologetic about it."

Despite his theoretical belief in a two-state solution, Toameh, who calls himself a realist, doesn't think it's workable. "A Palestinian state is against the interests of the Palestinians. It would become another poor, underdeveloped country."

He said the territory encompassing Israel, the West Bank and Gaza is so small that it can't realistically be divided.

"A bi-national state won't work either. You can't have two warring peoples and cultures living in a single state. Maybe a confederation with Jordan is possible, but the Jordanians don't want it."

He added: "There is no solution. We're left in a vicious circle. You can only manage the conflict. That's all we can do. Everlasting peace won't happen, but a long-term ceasefire is possible."

Although there is no credible peace process right now, he said Israelis and Palestinians should try to solve day-to-day issues. "It's better than shooting."

In his view, Hamas will never recognize Israel, "not because they hate Jews but because they believe the land belongs to them."

He said Hamas will abide by the informal one-year truce with Israel because Palestinians are weary of violence. But he added it's very likely Fatah will resist handing over power, thus setting the stage for an armed conflict approximating a civil war.

Barring that, Fatah and Hamas will have to share power. "There may well be a PA with two heads."

Toameh lives in French Hill, a largely Jewish neighbourhood in east Jerusalem built after 1967. He was born in the West Bank town of Tulkarm, but his father was an Israeli citizen.

Toameh is a consultant for news organizations such as NBC News and Danish and Swedish TV, and is also a film producer specializing in Palestinian topics. He wrote for *Al Fajr*, a PLO-owned paper in Jerusalem, in the 1980s, and has written for the *Globe and Mail*. He joined the *Post* several years ago.

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Shabbat Afternoon Shiur
February 25, 2006 - 4:30 pm
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What Did Chazal Know About Science?
Sunday Evening Lecture
February 26, 2006 - 8:30 pm
with refreshments following the lecture
Talmudic literature abounds with information on life and scientific knowledge in ancient times. When combined with archaeo-technology and modern scientific knowledge, these sources yield fascinating insights into the know-how of Chazal. How much did they know, and what was the source of their scientific knowledge?

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Greater Toronto Area

Hillel fails to change name of anti-Israel event at U of T

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The University of Toronto's student affairs office has turned down Hillel's request for the school to force the Arab Students' Collective to change the name of its Israeli Apartheid Week to omit the word "apartheid."

Jim Delaney, assistant director of student affairs at U of T, who is responsible for matters related to controversial events and freedom of speech, said his position has not changed since last year, when members of the Jewish community urged the university to cancel the event.

"There are no grounds for censoring the use of the word 'apartheid,'" Delaney said.

"The university will not attempt to censor, control or interfere with any group on the basis of its philosophy, beliefs, interests or opinions expressed unless and until these lead to activities which are illegal or which infringe the rights of others," he added.

Delaney said Israeli Apartheid Week was organized by a student group, not the university, but "behaviour or speech that constitutes hatred or incitement to hatred against any group will be dealt with quickly and appropriately."

He added that staff and students need to understand that being a part of the university community means they may be confronted with ideas they find difficult to accept.

"I would also point out that there are many students with many different views and questions related to the Middle East. The views expressed by groups such as the Arab Students' Collective and Betar-Tagar [co-sponsors of Know Radical-Islam Week, held last week at U of T] are not representative of all students. Indeed, there are a great many students working towards dialogue on these issues," Delaney said.

Israeli Apartheid Week, which began on Feb. 13 and runs to Feb. 17, included lectures titled "South Africa and Israel: The Apartheid Connection," "The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine and the Right of Return," "The Myth of Israeli Democracy: The Case of Unrecognized Palestinian Villages," and "The Gaza 'Disengagement:' Apartheid Entrenched."

The Arab Students' Collective has also planned a demonstration at Dundas Square at Yonge and Dundas streets to protest Canada's support for Israel.

In an ad posted on the New Socialist Group website, it said Israeli Apartheid Week and the demonstration are meant to "develop the understanding of Israel as an apartheid state and to build a boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement against Israeli apartheid."

The posting encourages readers to call on Ottawa to boycott Israeli products and services.

"Israeli wines are being carried and sold in government-controlled liquor stores across Canada, and Israeli corporations like Amdocs and El Al are allowed free rein to operate in Canada.

"This can only be done with the political support of the Canadian government. This is why we are calling for a movement that will target such institutions."

Please see page 17 for more On Campus news.

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'We need to make hate a common enemy'

Continued from page 3

"We should stand together. We need to make hate a common enemy."

Speaking to the Muslims in the audience, Perly Rae said both anti-Semitism and Islamophobia are forms of racism and xenophobia that are rooted in stereotypes. Allowed to fester, both will be "threats to liberty."

For Jews in Canada, there are "several 'no-go' areas," Perly Rae explained. Most upsetting is Holocaust denial.

"It's deliberate and profoundly wounding. Denying the Holocaust is like killing the victims all over again. The pain is indescribable. It's like telling blacks that slavery never happened. Every suicide bombing brings back the trauma of it."

Another area that's "non-negotiable for Jews" is Israel's right to exist.

"It has nothing to do with borders or fences or annexations," she said. "We should not allow the Middle East to serve as a pretext for anti-Semitism or Islamophobia."

She also urged an end to singling out Israel. "If you're going to criticize Israel, do so to all others."

Perly Rae and Raza proposed similar action plans. Both advocated grassroots efforts aimed at young people. Perly Rae called for a return to teaching civics and citizenship, and for joint programs between Muslims and Jews to "restore civility" on university campuses.

Both faiths must resolve to "fight lies, denounce terrorism and hatred," and work toward reconciliation, she said.

"There has to be lots and lots of dialogue. And cooler heads should prevail."

Raza said Muslims and Jews "need to work together and pray together. Sometimes, people of faith need to come together. The most tragic issue is silence."

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Divestment disgrace

The Church of England last week voted to divest from companies whose products are used by the Israeli government in the West Bank. The motion adopted by the ecclesiastical body read, in part: "The General Synod heeds the call from our sister church, the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East, for morally responsible investment in the Palestinian occupied territories and, in particular, to disinvest from companies profiting from the illegal occupation, such as Caterpillar Inc, until they change their policies."

Not all Anglicans in Britain supported the vote. Some were even embarrased. The former archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, said that he was "ashamed to be an Anglican." And no wonder. The decision was an affront to elementary fairness. In the guise of high-sounding, theologically wrapped ethics, it was yet another polemical attack on the Jewish state that was oblivious to context and contemptuous of truth.

The church invoked the by-now routine, though still emotionally charged, false accusation of "illegal occupation" without any reference to Israel's many attempts to find an accommodation with the Palestinians, without any mention of the terrorist war that was launched against the Jewish state in the very midst of its futile efforts at negotiating an end to the conflict with the Palestinians. To use Lord Carey's words, the resolution was a "one-sided statement" that "ignores the trauma of ordinary Jewish people" in Israel subjected to terrorist attacks.

That the resolution enjoyed the full backing of the current Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, merely added to the injury and increasing uneasiness felt by British Jews.

Jon Benjamin, the chief executive officer of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, called the vote "simplistic" and "unbalanced." "Israel will be criticized regardless of what happens," he added. "[For the Church of England] nothing Israel ever will do will be right, while nothing the Palestinians will do will ever be wrong," Benjamin said.

Dr. Irene Lancaster, of the Centre for Jewish Studies at Manchester University, spoke even more ominously, calling the vote "a very black day for Anglican-Jewish relations."

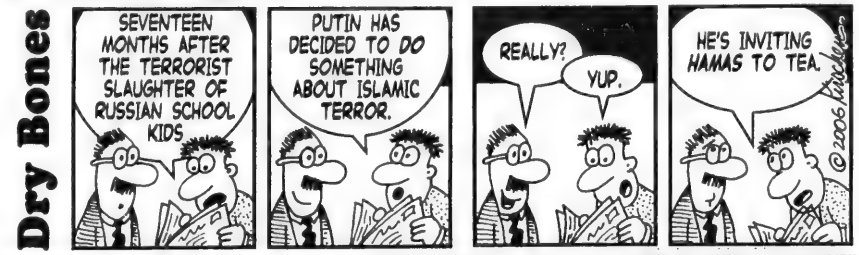
"The writing is on the wall for the Jews of Great Britain, 350 years after they settled here," she added. "The Jewish community will have to reconsider their attitude to interfaith work with the Anglican community."

The Anglicans' broadside against Israel will merely serve to strengthen hatred against Israel in the hearts of the Jewish state's vilifiers. In its own dangerous way, it will also lend more crooked credence to the constant and perverse frothing against Israel by the extremist regime in Iran and its Islamist allies in Hezbollah, Islamic Jihad and Hamas.

In its least harmful manifestation, the synod's vote was merely failed theology. But at its most harmful, it was a demagogic disgrace that utterly fails its own call for "morally responsible" behaviour.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Pope John Paul II met with Elio Toaff, chief rabbi of Rome, in a building in the heart of Rome's Jewish ghetto. It was the first time in 2,000 years that a chief rabbi of Rome had accepted an invitation to meet with a pope. There have been Jews in Rome since Judah Maccabee sent a diplomatic delegation there in 160 BCE. Pope Paul IV established the Roman ghetto in 1555 CE.


Dry Bones
SEVENTEEN MONTHS AFTER THE TERRORIST SLAUGHTER OF RUSSIAN SCHOOL KIDS
PUTIN HAS DECIDED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT ISLAMIC TERROR.
REALLY?
YUP.
HE'S INVITING HAMAS TO TEA.
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Coverage of Amona incomplete

Maybe a picture is worth a thousand words! That is the only explanation I have for a picture and a very short "factual" description being the only reference in *The CJN* to the tragedy that occurred at Amona ("Violence at Amona," Feb. 9). It seems to me that this very significant event of Israeli citizens being assaulted by their own police and soldiers on horseback, and being beaten mercilessly, merits questioning and soul searching. What happened, who was injured, and how and why did the situation escalate into such violence? Were these events politically motivated, as was suggested by both the right- and left-wing newspapers in Israel? We need these questions answered. It is up to *The CJN* to provide Canadian Jews with full coverage of such an important event. The headline should have read: Amona, NEVER AGAIN!

Linda Gotlieb
Toronto

* * *

Coverage of Amona misleading

From the video clips taken at Amona, all can clearly see police brutally smashing the heads of unarmed children sitting in protest. To state, "Some people accused the police of acting with too heavy a hand" is simply misleading the public ("Violence at Amona," *CJN*, Feb. 9). Police brutality at Amona is now a well-known fact, and it would behoove responsible media to demand justice for this unwarranted cruelty toward children. The speculation is only about who ordered this brutality.

Yaacov Schechter
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Hamas' election victory

In the aftermath of the recent Hamas victory in the Palestinian election, it is too easy to simply label the outcome as the result of anti-Semitism. To do so would be to ignore many other factors that must be considered in determining a proper response to the election results. Those who voted for Hamas might have been motivated by a desire to end corruption in the Palestinian Authority or by Hamas' history of providing social assistance. But did even these factors justify a vote for Hamas? The answer must be: No. Even in the pursuit of legitimate self-interest, it was immoral to ignore the terrorist agenda and murderous policy of Hamas.

In Numbers 31:2, the nation of Moab was spared of the fate that met the nation of Midian for, while both attacked the Jewish People, only the latter was deemed to be motivated by hatred of Jews. The former was motivated by personal welfare. Nonetheless, Moab's attack upon the Jews also eventually met retribution, as personal interest still does not justify violence against the innocent. Perhaps the average Palestinian is not a violent anti-Semite and was motivated to support Hamas because he believed Hamas would truly help improve his life. But even in the pursuit of one's welfare, to ignore harm to others is also a form of evil that must be fought. But, as the Torah instructs, it can only be fought if properly identified and not subject to a blanket, one-dimensional perspective of anti-Semitism.

Rabbi Benjamin Hecht
Toronto

* * *

Programs need bricks and mortar

There have been a number of concerns expressed in the past weeks about UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and its ability to raise money for bricks and mortar – supposedly at the expense of providing programs ("Support for 'Jewish Singles World,'" letter, *CJN*, Jan. 5).

The Miles Nadal JCC was indeed "improved" by UJA's Tomorrow Campaign. Where we once had a decrepit building with declining enrolment, we now have the state-of-the-art Phil Granovsky Fitness Centre with 3,100 active members, the elegant Al Green Theatre, which is used for community and cultural events like the Toronto Jewish Film Society series, and bright, spacious classrooms that house the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School, the Downtown Jewish Community School and our own nursery school.

Bricks and mortar are the first step in providing opportunities for programs and outreach. The Miles Nadal JCC is at the crossroads of Spadina and Bloor, the historic Jewish heart of Toronto. UJA Federation enabled us to keep that heart beating, and now we have a building that is a source of pride for the Jewish community, and federation continues to fund our programs and activities. And the Jews – of all ages – are coming!

Ellen T. Cole
Executive Director
Miles Nadal JCC

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Perspectives

Indict Ahmadinejad in International Criminal Court

By RONY BLUM, GREGORY STANTON, ELIHU RICHTER AND ISRAEL CHARNY
Jerusalem Post

German Chancellor Angela Merkel was the first world leader to recognize the connection between Iran's uranium enrichment, its testing of long-distance missiles and the genocidal statements of its president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. A day after declaring that Israel "should be wiped off the map" on Oct. 25, 2005, he incited students to scream "Death to Israel," at a government-sponsored conference called "World without Zionism."

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

Merkel declared: "A president that questions Israel's right to exist [and] denies the Holocaust cannot expect to receive any tolerance from Germany. We have learned our history."

Will Merkel's warnings of the parallels between Iran's actions today and Nazi Germany's first steps towards genocide in the 1930s prod the world into effective deterrent action?

The International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) has passed a resolution noting that Iran's actions, including Ahmadinejad's statements, are early warning signs of impending genocide. These signs include open expressions of an exclusionary ideology characterized by hate speech, an authoritarian government that represses dissent, the organization of fanatical militias such as the Revolutionary Guards, and a sustained record of support for terror attacks against Jews around the world.

Most recently, Ahmadinejad added to the list the denial of a past genocide – the Holocaust.

Indifference to incitement and inaction by the outside world, most notably the United Nations itself, are other warning signs – as we have seen in the Armenian genocide, the Holocaust, Bosnia, Kosovo, Rwanda, Darfur and elsewhere in the world.

The development of a covert nuclear weapons program and long-range missiles by a state whose leader declares genocidal intent states the case for urgent deterrent actions. As we address the Iranian threat, it is helpful to recall that genocide was the most deadly crime against humanity in the 20th century, resulting in some 250 million preventable deaths more than from all wars combined.

Historians have established that government incitement and use of hate language are recognized predictors, initiators, promoters and catalysts of genocide. The direct and public incitements to genocide by Iran's president are not only openly stated declarations of aggressive intent, but are in violation of Article 2 (4) of the UN charter; of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, adopted by Resolution 260 of the UN General Assembly in 1948; and of Articles 6 and 25 (3)(e) of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which took effect in 2002.

Ahmadinejad's attempted "clarification" that he merely advocates the "transfer" of Jews in Israel to German and Austrian provinces is itself advocacy of forced deportation, another crime against humanity, and is contradicted by his own actions and long-term Iranian policy, including terror attacks on Jews outside Israel, such as the bombing of a synagogue in Buenos Aries.

Iran could soon be an independent nuclear power, possessing advanced missile delivery systems. Even before last Oct 25, Iran had never renounced its aggressive and genocidal aims against the Jews of the State of Israel and elsewhere.

The unprecedented threat of nuclear genocide necessitates an urgent response because, aside from the clear warning signs we have indicated, an actual apocalyptic nuclear attack could occur without further warning in time to engage in preventive action. Israel is a small country that can be reached within minutes by Iranian ballistic missiles. It is densely populated and home to the largest number of Holocaust survivors in the world. Time is of the essence and delay could be catastrophic.

The ethical principle that needs to guide international action to prevent all genocidal threats is that human life is the most fundamental human right, because without life there are no other human rights. The international obligation to protect human life and well-being overrides the sovereignty claims of any government whose actions demonstrate genocidal intent.

Because the dangers of inaction could be catastrophic, we repeat the calls of Genocide Watch, the Hebrew University Genocide and Violence Prevention Program's petition, and the International Association of Genocide Scholars for the application of the "precautionary principle," a powerful tool for decision-making in public health, for prevention of this and all other genocidal threats. This principle states that when there is uncertainty concerning the risk from a situation with potentially catastrophic effects upon human health and safety, the risks of inaction far outweigh those of preventive action.

The precautionary principle – which British Foreign Minister Jack Straw has already applied to this case – shifts the burden of proof from those warning of a risk of a catastrophic event to those denying this risk. Preventive action, of course, means the obligatory imposition of effective sanctions to prevent Iranian development of nuclear weapons, and includes immediate and continuous International Atomic Energy Agency inspections of all Iranian nuclear facilities, as well as confiscation of all technology, equipment and nuclear material that could be used by Iran to manufacture nuclear weapons.

Because the obligation to protect life and safety overrides state sovereignty, Iran's genocidal declarations and actions undermine its claims that it will responsibly utilize its nuclear material for peaceful means.

All this, however, is insufficient. Historians have recognized that genocide results from the conscious choices of elites and occurs when there is indifference of outsiders to early warning signs, particularly hate language that serves to catalyze genocidal actions.

Accordingly, we propose that the United Nations Security Council follow the landmark precedent of its referral of Sudanese leaders to the International Criminal Court (ICC), and refer Ahmadinejad to the ICC for indictment for incitement to commit genocide.

Those convicted for incitement to commit genocide by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and sentenced to prison terms up to life imprisonment included Rwanda's former prime minister, a historian, a newspaper editor, a minister of information, and a journalist. We insist that the specific perpetrator must be stopped, and reject economic sanctions, which would target the Iranian people collectively. Iran has a glorious past and culture, which this president definitely does not represent.

It is time for the United Nations to go from commemorating past genocides such as the Holocaust and Rwanda, to stopping current genocides such as those now raging in Darfur Sudan, and deterring and preventing future ones. We call upon Juan Mendez, special advisor to the secretary general of the UN on genocide prevention, to establish a genocide prevention network based on models for the surveillance of early warning signs of reportable epidemic disease.

Such a network should monitor the production and dissemination of all internationally distributed media and Internet hate language relating to threatened "world minority" populations, which include Israel and the global Jewish community.

Holocaust, genocide and hate group experts should set up this network.

The Stockholm International Forum on the Prevention of Genocide of Jan. 28, 2004, declared "the responsibility to protect groups identified as potential victims of genocide." We call upon the UN, the European Union, their member states and NGOs to exercise this responsibility by fostering the development and application of a code of ethics and standards for law, diplomacy, finance and the media that would outlaw incitement to hate, harm or exclusion of "world minority" communities, including the State of Israel, Israelis or Jews across the globe.

We suggest that indicting Ahmadinejad for incitement to commit genocide would send a clear, non-violent message to Iran's authoritarian leaders to back down from pursuing a genocidal ideology. It would be a major step towards deterring others planning future Bosnias, Kosovos, Rwandas and Darfurs. Chancellor Merkel has reminded us of the consequences of the world's ineffectual response to Hitler in the 1930s.

The world now has to choose between indifference and deterrence, not only to "save Israel," but to save itself.

Rony Blum is co-founder of the Genocide and Violence Prevention Program in Jerusalem. Gregory Stanton is president of U.S.-based Genocide Watch. Elihu Richter is director of the Center for Injury Prevention in Jerusalem. Israel Charny is president of the International Association of Genocide Scholars in Jerusalem.

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad addressing a crowd in Tehran. [RNS/Reuters photo]

For everything, a time

I am starved for time. Pressing matters appear out of nowhere to shred my schedule, and my "to do" list gets pushed to the next day, when it will most likely be neglected again.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

Yes, I should learn something about time management. Indeed, there's no shortage of books on the subject. And there are "next generation" organizers (good organizers are never of this generation) that promise to make us more efficient and successful. These books and tools are great. But my own inefficient habits are not what truly confound me. Rather, I am perplexed by time itself.

How should I spend my time? At a certain point in life (middle age, to be exact), we begin to wonder more and more whether we are using our time wisely.

We have spent the previous 20 years driving ourselves harder and harder, using time as a highway to distant goals. Each time we reach a goal, we race headlong into another project, working again for future objectives. At times, when our work is challenging and satisfying, we can imagine racing down this highway forever.

I have doubts about this endless highway of ambition. Aren't we supposed to stop and smell the roses? Perhaps time is like a hot cup of tea, meant to be slowly savoured in Zen-like tranquility. Maybe the rat race is just a soul-stifling sideshow. It might be better to pull a Gauguin, and disappear into the South Pacific. So I am torn, with voices in mind my pushing and pulling, debating the relative merits of leisure and late-night work.

The voices in my mind (all former yeshiva students) quote Bible to me. The Sabbath is a day of rest, and sitting back and appreciating God's world is something holy. Yet, the Torah promotes an ambitious work ethic. The Book of Job says "man is created to work." Appreciation and ambition both make convincing arguments, and both are correct.

What time really demands is the ability to shift gears. One must be able to move between ambition and appreciation, depending on the situation. At times, you have to leave the fast-paced business world to spend time with family, and at times you have to pick up the pace and accomplish more. True time management is learning how to find time for both labour and leisure.

For those of us lost in time, it may be best to put aside our planners and consider some ancient advice. The Book of Ecclesiastes tells us "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven." There is a time for smelling roses and a time for running races. The key is to accept the fact you have to do both.

Left and right must rein in the extremists

Inboxes throughout the Jewish world are receiving a heartbreaking video titled "The Skull crushers of Amona." Filled with bloody scenes from the Feb. 1 evacuation of nine illegal homes in the West Bank, the video ends by sneering that Israel's police were "only following orders." Meanwhile, Israel's leading left-leaning newspaper, *Ha'aretz*, featured Gideon Levi's column under the headline: "They didn't use enough force."

Gil Troy in Montreal

Although the sequence of events that led to mounted police officers clubbing protesters, and injuring 200, remains unclear, it's clear that both sides behaved abominably.

The settlers and their supporters must take responsibility for a culture of lawlessness and treasonous rhetoric that threatened to explode during August's Gaza disengagement – and did not, thanks to both the settlers' and the security forces' exemplary restraint. Alas, it bore its poisonous fruit in Amona, though fortunately on a smaller scale.

Still, no matter how contemptible the protesters' violence was, Israel's security forces deserve more criticism. Israel's police and army, which do an admirable job daily, remain human institutions, meaning they are imperfect. But just as parents must exercise more self-control than their children, higher standards apply to the state and its agents than to protesters. Violence must be a last resort – after negotiations, after appealing to opinion leaders, after cutting off supplies. Better to wait it out than to smash people's heads – not because of the PR issues, but because of the moral ones.

The Amona episode particularly rankles, because it occurred as Israeli democracy was demonstrating remarkable maturity. The restraint both sides showed during the disengagement showed how individuals can disagree vehemently with the state, and how the state can stand firm, without violence erupting. More recently, the smooth governmental transition after Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's stroke illustrated Israel's democratic maturity. That all this occurred as the Palestinian Authority stumbled toward civil war – and as the Palestinians elected Hamas and many Muslims rioted against Europeans because of 12 cartoons that some Danes drew – highlighted once again Israel's moral stature amid Middle Eastern barbarism.

The pride the democratic West should take in Israeli democracy, however, should not obscure some snakes slithering in the democratic Eden. Israel should be embarrassed that too many former Gaza residents remain unsettled months after the disengagement. The Israeli left and Israeli government failed miserably on both pragmatic and moral grounds. Anyone hoping for further evacuations should have worked to ensure a seamless transition for all 8,500 Gaza evacuees. But just as too many on the Israeli left are too myopic to see the civil liberties issues when right-wingers' rights are trampled, too many Israeli leftists are so blinded by anti-settler hatred that they could not bear to embrace their fellow citizens, who paid a heavy price for the government's policy reversal.

At the same time, too many Israeli rightists are flirting with treason. It's time for rabbis to ban all inaccurate, hurtful, and disgusting pogrom and Nazi analogies when criticizing the modern sovereign Jewish state of Israel. Surely we can use other words to criticize a government without delighting the anti-Zionists who are busy Nazifying the Jewish state and the Holocaust deniers who wish to downgrade the Shoah from a unique catastrophe into a normal wartime event. It's time for settlers to stop praising themselves as the state's most idealistic, patriotic, exquisite citizens while tolerating a culture of hooliganism, disrespect and intermittent violence vis-a-vis that state, its leaders and its security forces.

When Muslims inflamed by the Muhammad cartoon controversy kidnap Europeans in Gaza, burn embassies in Beirut and demand beheadings in London, we love to lecture "them" about civility, democracy, mutuality and the need to accept others' differences, no matter how painful that might be. Perhaps it's time to start preaching that same sermon to Israel's extremists, on both sides, who put Israel's tremendous achievements at risk and have forgotten that the keys to civility include acknowledging complexity, humanizing opponents, and injecting a little humility, self-criticism, and self-control into our politics and our rhetoric.

The time has come to start crossing boundaries and stop trading insults. The time has come to seek social consensus and a debate with restraint and integrity, rather than seeking vindication and a discourse that demonizes fellow Jews.

London war museum offers lessons for Canada

A recent conference on survivors of Nazi persecution brought me to the British Imperial War Museum. Visiting the London museum for the first time, I found myself revisiting Canada's decision not to incorporate a Holocaust memorial into the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. The London museum is a strong argument for the symbiosis of exhibitions.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

If, like me, you are not ordinarily drawn to museums of arms and armaments, you might overlook the Imperial War Museum. If so, you would be missing out on some of the most thought-provoking exhibitions in a museum-rich city.

Located south of the Thames, a short walk from such tourist meccas as the London Eye and the Tate Modern, the gracious old building that houses the Imperial War Museum gives little sign from the outside of the contemporary sensibility and technology that characterizes the best of its exhibitions. Focusing on the effect of modern warfare on people and society, the museum goes well beyond the array of weaponry that greets visitors in its entry hall. The extensive galleries on both world wars explore in detail the background, battles, causes and effects of these conflicts. The exhibits trace their global ramifications, and the conditions of battle for soldiers and civilians, giving a clear sense of the debates among historians about how we understand the wars and their political and social contexts.

The museum's permanent Holocaust exhibition occupies several storeys. It traces the persecution of the Jews under Nazism and the horrors of genocide, placing them in the context of European anti-Semitism. In addition to artifacts from the Holocaust, like Yad Vashem and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., the Imperial War Museum's Holocaust exhibition also features videotaped survivor testimony and opportunities to learn more about particular events or issues.

Extensive enough to be a museum in its own right, the Holocaust exhibition is made even more meaningful by its place among the museum's other galleries. The World War II exhibit encompasses the rise of Nazism and genocide, and it points visitors to the Holocaust exhibition for greater depth. A small but powerful "Crimes against humanity" exhibition links witnessing the Holocaust and other genocides to social and political responsibility – to what we call tikkun olam, repairing the world.

During my visit, the Imperial War Museum housed a moving temporary exhibition on the experiences of children in Great Britain during World War II. Called "The Children's War," the exhibit explored the effects of war on British children who remained in cities during the Blitz, as well as British children who were evacuated and hence separated from their parents. Also included were the experiences of Jewish refugee children – the Kindertransport – sent without their parents from Austria, Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia to the relative safety of Great Britain.

"The Children's War" placed the children of the Kindertransport in the context of other displaced and traumatized children in England, and, at the same time, made clear their special circumstances: Plunged into an unknown language and culture, never to return to their homes, most Kindertransport children never reunited with their parents, who were murdered in the Nazi genocide. The Holocaust exhibition picked up the thread, exploring the Kindertransport in greater detail, and setting it in the context of other Jewish children under Nazism.

Perusing these exhibitions, I could not help but recall the controversy that erupted several years ago over the proposal to incorporate a Holocaust memorial into the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa. At the time, many Canadian war veterans believed the museum was not the appropriate venue for a Holocaust exhibition, fearing that its presence would somehow detract from their own accomplishments and experiences.

It has not worked out that way in London. The various exhibitions at the Imperial War Museum, while distinct from one another and complete in and of themselves, are also integrated conceptually. Each one enhances the next, adding complexity and depth to the museum as a whole. Visitors initially attracted to one part of the museum find themselves drawn to other galleries. The net effect of such integration is not only to honour but to better understand the experiences of victims, survivors, and soldiers.

The Kirshner File

France makes amends for Vichy period

When the president of France, Georges Pompidou, was informed in 1969 that Marcel Ophuls' new documentary about the Vichy era, *The Sorrow and the Pity*, would shortly be broadcast on French state television, he practically had a fit. The ground-breaking, myth-shattering film was a rebuke – a challenge – to French nationalists such as Pompidou who fervently believed that the wartime Vichy government, administered by Marshall Philippe Pétain, was neither representative of France nor its revolutionary ideals.

Sheldon Kirshner in Paris

Far from buying into that rose-coloured version of events so favoured by the French political elite of the day, the movie minutely examined the shameful policies of a craven regime that collaborated with Germany, stripped Jewish citizens of their civic rights and property and worked hand in glove with the Gestapo to deport 25 per cent of Jews living in France. Ophuls, an American born in France, exploded the cherished myth that French men and women had joined the resistance movement in droves and had generally acted honourably during the four-year German occupation.

Pompidou, being aghast that Ophuls had reopened a file that he and many others had tried hard to forget and bury, banned *The Sorrow and the Pity* from the airwaves. "Pompidou's rationale was that the 'unity' of France was more important than regurgitating the past," explained Jean-Marc Dreyfus, a historian who specializes in that period.

But in banning *The Sorrow and the Pity*, Pompidou inadvertently reignited a festering debate. Since that sorry episode nearly four decades ago, Ophuls' whistle-blowing film has been screened on French TV and France has finally and belatedly come to terms with the legacy of the Pétain years. "But it was a long process," said Dreyfus, a 37-year-old professor at the Institute for Political Science whose PhD dissertation was on Vichy's confiscation of Jewish-owned banks.

This historical process has borne fruit, according to Henry Rousso, a scholar at the Institute of Contemporary History and the author of books and monographs on Vichy. As he put it in an interview, "The Holocaust has been a major issue in this country for the last 15 years."

France has passed through three major milestones in grappling with its responsibility for Vichy's crimes, said Rousso, part of whose family was deported to Auschwitz. France has paid restitution to many Holocaust survivors and their heirs and has brought major and minor war criminals to justice. And in a significant gesture of contrition in July 1995 to mark the 53rd anniversary of a French police roundup of Jews in and around Paris, President Jacques Chirac declared: "Yes, the criminal folly of the [Nazi] occupiers was assisted by the French people. These dark hours tarnish our history forever."

France began to examine its conscience after regaining its sovereignty in 1944. French resistance fighters and aggrieved individuals exacted revenge on collaborators, killing upward of 10,000 in a wave of vengeance, said Rousso. (In a replay of these events, an assassin killed Rene Bousquet, a former senior police official instrumental in the 1942 roundup of Jews in Paris, in 1993.) Pétain was sentenced to death, though his sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Pierre Laval, the Vichy prime minister, was executed, as were about 2,000 others found guilty of treason. Among them were Jean Bassompierre, the inspector general of the Milice, which hunted down Jews and members of the resistance; Rene Beller, an agent of the German Secret State Police; and Robert Brassilach, the editor of the collaborationist periodical *Je Suis Partout*. "More people were executed in France than in Germany," noted Dreyfus.

All told, 300,000 French nationals were tried in the aftermath of the war. The accused included Louis Darquier de Pellepoix, the director of the Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives; Maurice Gabolde, the minister of justice from March 26, 1943, to Aug. 17, 1944; Jean Angeli, the regional prefect in Lyons; Pierre Boreo, a Milice official implicated in the 1944 murder of Georges Mandel, the former French minister of interior; and Yves Bouthiller, the finance minister from June 16, 1940, to April 18, 1942.

Toward the close of the '40s, as the Cold War intensified, the majority of the convicted criminals were released from prison and rehabilitated. In a word, the French wanted closure, Dreyfus said.

Several top-ranking Vichy officials managed to conceal their roles. One such person, Maurice Papon, signed deportation orders for 1,600 Jews from 1942 to '44 and enjoyed a civil service career in postwar France as chief of Paris police and budget minister in Valéry Giscard d'Estaing's government.

Apart from rescinding Vichy's corpus of anti-Jewish legislation, France returned much of the property Jews had lost during the war. "At least 90 per cent," said Dreyfus. "More than 50,000 claims were launched. It was, in general, a successful policy, a plan to reintegrate Jews into French society."

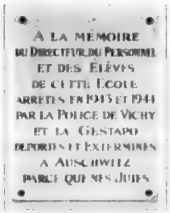
And in a conciliatory gesture, France opened its doors to Jewish Holocaust survivors from countries such as Poland and Romania.

[Sheldon Kirshner photos]

Jean-Marc Dreyfus, a historian who specializes in Vichy France

"By the mid-'50s, we did not speak a lot about the Holocaust," said Dreyfus. "It was repressed." Charles de Gaulle, the first president of the Fifth Republic, sought to reshape the past so that the glories of the French resistance movement would drown out the ignominy of Vichy France. "De Gaulle created a mythology," said Dreyfus. "World War II was described as an era of heroism. Collaboration was not spoken of."

Nevertheless, memories of the Holocaust bubbled under the surface in the '50s. Two of the winners of the nation's most prestigious literary award, the Prix Goncourt, Romain Gary and Andre Schwarz Bart, both wrote searing books about the Holocaust. Jean-Francois Steiner's graphic account of the Holocaust, *Treblinka: The Revolt of an Extermination Camp*, was published in the '60s. American historian Robert Paxton's explosive book, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order*, released in 1972, aroused interest in the Holocaust as well. Last year, the late Irene Nemirovsky's poignant memoir, *Suite Française*, a compelling portrait of France under the occupation, came out to great acclaim and made the bestsellers' list. An English edition will be published this year.



Holocaust plaque in Paris

The 1968 students' revolt, together with de Gaulle's resignation a few years later, stirred further debate over the Holocaust, as did the dedication of a memorial at the Drancy transit camp in 1976. Since then, a plethora of Holocaust monuments, from the Memorial to the Unknown Jewish Martyr to the Memorial to the Deported, both in Paris, have been built. Last month, a memorial in honour of murdered Jews was unveiled in Strasbourg. In the Marais, a traditionally Jewish neighbourhood in Paris, there are several plaques commemorating Holocaust victims.

To Dreyfus, one of the turning points in France's open acknowledgement of its complicity in the Holocaust occurred in 1978, when Serge Klarsfeld, a child survivor and Nazi hunter, mounted an exhibit in Paris on Vichy's treatment of Jews.

Bowing to U.S. pressure, the French government established the Matteoli Commission (1997) and the Dray Commission (2000), which have both rigorously re-examined the complicated, tangled issue of confiscated Jewish property. "The process of reimbursement is not finished," said Rousso. "There are survivors who have yet to be compensated." Recently, Charlotte Delahaye, 96, committed suicide in despair over not receiving proper compensation.

Researchers claim that the estimated value of looted Jewish property, including more than 100,000 works of art, is in the $4 billion (US) range. Dreyfus thinks that the figure has been inflated by 50 per cent. Survivors in the United States have launched a class action suit against SNCF, the state-owned French railway, for its role in transporting Jews to labour and extermination camps. Five years ago, a New York judge threw out a similar suit. Class action suits have also been filed against French banks – Crédit Lyonnais and Société Générale, to name but two – for not opening their wartime financial records.

One of the most important institutions in France dedicated to preserving Holocaust memory is the Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah, established in 1999. Headed by survivor and former cabinet minister Simone Veil, it was financed by a $342 million (US) grant from the unclaimed property of Jews who perished in the Holocaust.

In a series of high-profile trials since the late 1980s, France has prosecuted war criminals ranging from Paul Touvier, one of the leaders of the Milice, to Klaus Barbie, the head of the Gestapo in Lyons.

It is clear that France has made amends for the Vichy interregnum, but the Holocaust file has yet to be completely closed.

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Jewish Life

A lesson in interfaith dialogue

By RABBI HOWARD MORRISON

RABBINICAL REFLECTIONS

The central portion of the Torah, and indeed of Jewish history, is this week's section called Yitro. In it, we read about the revelation by God to the People of Israel. The Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, concretizes the relationship between God and His people.

Strikingly, the blueprint of our tradition is found in a portion named after a non-Jewish Midianite priest, Yitro.

Who was Yitro? How does our tradition view him? What insight can he offer us today? Yitro's advice to Moses – to appoint brave, God-fearing and honest haters of corruption as judges to help him adjudicate disputes – paves the way for the next stage of Israelite history, standing at Mount Sinai. Yitro enables Moses to establish a structured form of leadership.

Perhaps most significantly, Yitro enters the scene immediately after we read about Amalek, a tribe that attacked the Israelites by surprise and from the rear in the Sinai Desert after the Israelites' exodus from Egypt. From the story of Amalek, which tells of Israel's first encounter with a non-Jew on leaving Egypt, one might have developed a negative perception of Jews interacting with non-Jews.

But the Torah's direct transition to Yitro teaches how a non-Jewish lover of Israel understands the mission of the Jewish people. Yitro is cognizant of the one God who redeemed Israel from Egypt. Yitro's blessing of God forms the basis for Psalm 117, part of the *Hallel* prayer, when the nations are commanded to praise God with the Israelites.

Today, Yitro's message offers us the hope for constructive dialogue with the non-Jewish community.

In Toronto, the Jewish-Christian Dialogue group continues to be an important meeting ground. The new forthcoming Mike and Sue Feldman Centre for Toronto Community Dialogue at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue will strive to further promote meaningful dialogue among religious, ethnic and cultural groups in the Toronto area. Already existing interfaith clergy councils should continue to meet, learn, grow and expand. The annual priest-rabbi study day sponsored by the Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto and the Toronto Board of Rabbis provides a forum for clergy to learn about our similarities and differences.

Thank God for a Torah portion called Yitro. Only with dialogue and co-operation between Jews and our non-Jewish neighbours can we fully live up to our ideal of being a "light unto the nations."

Rabbi Morrison is senior rabbi at Toronto's Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue.

Chabad starts shul in downtown Vancouver

By PETER CAULFIELD
Special to The CJN

VANCOUVER — Chabad Lubavitch of British Columbia has started regular Shabbat services at its new synagogue in downtown Vancouver, the first such minyan in the city's core in recent memory.

Chabad's Rabbi Binyomin Bitton said inaugural Shabbat services, which took place at the end of December at the B'nai Brith Manor senior citizens residence on Howe Street, attracted between 15 and 20 participants, mostly from outside the building.

The goal is to one day have a building for the new synagogue. "God willing, we are anticipating outgrowing [B'nai Brith Manor]," Rabbi Bitton said.

The new shul, which the rabbi said will have a name "some time in the near future," is the second Chabad initiative launched recently in downtown Vancouver.

Last July, Chabad opened a downtown centre in the Yaletown home of Rabbi Bitton, his wife Malky and their two young children. It offers a number of programs, including once-a-month Friday evening Shabbaton programs hosted by the Bittons in their home.

The programs, which comprise an erev Shabbat service and dinner, have been attracting 30 people each month.

"Thirty is the most we can accommodate in our home, although many more people would like to attend," Rabbi Bitton said, adding that because of the demand, it's necessary to phone and reserve a seat at the table in advance.

Other programs include Rabbi Bitton's Monday-night Kabbalah class and his noon-hour "lunch and learn" class for businesspeople on Wednesdays.

His wife teaches a Wednesday-night class for women. "The classes are based on the weekly Torah portion and they're geared to women," Malky Bitton said.

Attendance is growing steadily: There are now half a dozen regular participants, she said.

Chabad's Chanukah celebrations, co-sponsored by the Vancouver Downtown Jewish Community, a cultural outreach group, took place at the Stanley Park Pavilion and attracted 150 people.

Teams of yeshiva students visit Jewish businesses on Friday mornings to spread Judaism

"Chanukah was packed," Rabbi Bitton said. "Far more people showed up than we expected."

As well, Chabad's High Holy Day services last fall attracted some 100 people, he said.

Chabad's downtown centre has also started a "*mivtzaim* campaign," in which teams of yeshivah students visit Jewish businesses on Friday mornings in order to spread Judaism. They do such things as put mezuzahs on the doors of Jewish businesses and encourage businessmen to put on tfillin in the morning.

Chabad's downtown centre also has a weekly publication, *The Wellspring*, that it distributes by mail and e-mail.

Rabbi Bitton, who hails from Lyon, France, met Vancouverite Malky Huberman while studying in New York. They married, and, after Rabbi Bitton completed his studies in 2004, the couple moved to Vancouver.

They have two children: a daughter, Sarale, two, and a son, Mendel, one.

Their home, which doubles as the Chabad centre, is on Homer Street in an area that was formerly an untidy warren of light industry, train yards and warehouses but has become an upscale urban neighbourhood of highrises, exposed-brick residential lofts and pricey restaurants.

Rabbi Bitton said Chabad's downtown programs and facilities fill a religious need.

"There was nothing downtown until we opened," he said. "There are at least two or three thousand Jews living downtown. Most have moved into the area in just the last couple of years. As well, many Jews work downtown. Plus there are always Jewish tourists and visitors passing through Vancouver all the time."

Malky Bitton, who grew up near the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver in the Oakridge section of Vancouver, said running the downtown centre is exciting and challenging.

"Spreading Judaism is what I always wanted to do," she said. "But we're starting from scratch, and it's a lot of hard work."

Chabad's downtown centre is its fourth in the Vancouver area. In addition to the main one at 41st Avenue and Oak Street in Vancouver, there are also centres in the suburbs of Richmond and Surrey. Chabad has a centre in Victoria as well.

For more information, contact Rabbi Bitton at rabbi@chabadcitycentre.com or at 778-371-9508.

Jewish Life

The power of one word

By RACHAEL TURKIENICZ

As we read the Torah portion containing the Ten Commandments, the legal foundation of a Jewish society starts to establish itself. It is a world that legislates ritual practice as well as social and family laws.

We are commanded not to replace God with idolatrous images. We are commanded not to depict God in physical representations. We are commanded not to murder and not to engage in adultery, nor to steal or lie during testimony. The list continues, and we have volumes and volumes of Jewish texts that analyze and present and philosophize on Jewish identity, history and expression as it begins to manifest itself in the Ten Commandments.

What we do not dwell upon as perhaps we should is the very first word communicated by God to Israel at Sinai. The very beginning of the Ten Commandments is the profound statement: "I am."

One of the first challenges of this text is to read through the list of commandments and conclude with a count of 10. Depending on how one punctuates the sentences, the minimum count would probably hover around 20 and could reach to somewhere in the 30s. It's understandable why so much of Jewish interpretational literature must pay close attention to how we read this text, since nothing is to be assumed. Yet, we so easily glide over the first commandment, which is not a prohibition of behaviour, but an acceptance of self-affirmation: "I am."

God's first direct word to Israel as a nation is the personal declaration that states what God is: God is existence itself. But from there, God continues to describe a relationship: "I am the Lord, your God" – I am personally connected to you. And proceeding onward, the commandment concludes: "who brought you out of Egypt," – I am the God who redeems you.

The midrash describes the force of this one word, the Hebrew "*anochi*," "I am," as so powerful and overwhelming that Israel is not able to withstand its force or its reality. According to the midrash in Song of Songs Rabbah, all of Israel dies at the moment that the full realization of "I am" hits them. At that moment, the angels begin to hug each person, kiss them and gently comfort them with words of assurance.

"Do not fear," say the angels. "Are you not God's children?"

At the same time, God is softly repeating, "I am" to us, gently coaxing our souls back to life.

With the power of the statement of Divine being, the Ten Commandments clearly lay the foundation for law and order, family infrastructure and spiritual expression.

At the same time, one must not take lightly that God's declaration of being can be so powerful that we cannot sustain it, and yet it is simultaneously so gentle and reassuring that we cannot resist.

Jewish wedding music

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

A beautiful floral arrangement is certainly important. And, of course, delicious food is a must. But what would a Jewish wedding be without music? From horah to klezmer, chassidic to Israeli, music adds extra joy and life to an already festive occasion. If you are lucky enough to be planning a wedding right now (or are nostalgic about your own) you can find some wonderful ideas and tunes on the web. Today, I'll tell you where to look.

The tour starts in London at the website of the BBC, which has put together a lovely web page titled World on Your Street. It looks at the importance music plays at Jewish weddings. Click the link at the top of the page for a lively rendition of the venerable wedding standard *Havah Nagilah*, by the Budapester Klezmer Band. Once you're done, go to the bottom of the page and click on the link for a feature on Danny Shine, leader of one of the United Kingdom's busiest Jewish wedding bands. Listen to a documentary about Jewish wedding music and then watch Shine at work. **[http://tinyurl.com/82e3g]**

One of the highlights of a Jewish wedding ceremony is the singing of the *Sheva Brachot*, the blessings during which the *chatan* and *kallah* are wished "gila, rina, ditza v'chedva, ahava v'achva, v'shalom v'reut," rejoicing, jubilation, pleasure and delight, love and brotherhood, peace and friendship. If you are going to be honoured with reciting one of the blessings under the chupah, here is a site where you can listen to two sets of instrumental melodies and find the brachot in Hebrew, in English, and in English transliteration. **[http://tinyurl.com/dcumu]** If you'd like to hear the brachot being sung, then take a listen to a performance by Josh Sharfman, aka the Virtual Cantor. **[www.virtualcantor.com/weddings.htm]**

The Chazzanut.com website has provided sheet music for the *Sheva Brachot* as sung by Chazzan Hans Bloemendal. According to the site, the fifth blessing, *Samei'ach Tesamach*, is set to a tune from Mozart's *Die Zauberflöte*! **[www.chazzanut.com/wedding/]** For more sheet music, you can download a zip file of the works of Rev. Marcus Hast (1840-1911) from the Great Synagogue, London, 1910. **[http://tinyurl.com/8x28p]**

The best sampling of wedding music that I've come across can be found on a site called WedAlert. These are not full renditions but the first minute or so of classics such as *Erev shel Shoshanim*, *Dodi Li*, *Siman Tov*, *Bei Mir Bist Du Schoen* and a large helping of *Fiddler on the Roof* (*To Life*, *If I Were a Rich Man*, *Sunrise Sunset*.) Sure they can be a bit schmaltzy and you've probably heard them all a million times but if you hadn't, they wouldn't be classics. **[www.wedalert.com/songs/ethnic/jewish.asp]**

If you're looking for something less familiar, visit the wedding section of the Zemer! website. You can listen to renditions of about a dozen Yiddish, Hebrew and Bukharian songs and read the lyrics and translations of about 20 others. **[http://tinyurl.com/7wfab]** The lovely Ladino folksong, *Scalerica D'oro*, tells this tale:

A ladder of gold and ivory
So our little bride can go up to take
Her marriage vows
We've come to see, we've come to see
May they have joy and prosper
And always be happy
The bride has no money
May they have good fortune
The bride has no riches
May they have good luck.

A couple of sites offer short excerpts from commercial CDs including *The Travelling Jewish Wedding* **[http://tinyurl.com/9scqw]** and several at JewishMusic.com. **[http://tinyurl.com/am5nf]**

The name of the next site doesn't exactly roll off the tongue: the Israeli Jewish Yiddish Hebrew Folk Cultural Music Midi Free Library. Luckily, the site's address is much shorter. **[www.jewz.net/]** The library has simple instrumental arrangements of about 150 classics, some of which may be perfect for your wedding (*Bashana Haba'ah*, *Havah Nagila*, *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav*); others, perhaps not (*Go Down Moses*, *Hatikvah*, *Theme from Seinfeld*.)

Whatever music you choose to enliven your simchah, mazal tov!

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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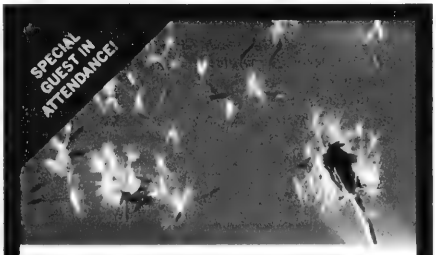

Diameter of the Bomb

Diameter of the Bomb is a powerful documentary about a suicide bomb that shook Jerusalem one summer morning in June 2002. Part-thriller, part-mystery it follows Israeli police, secret service and military as they try to prevent the attack and mercilessly track down the terrorist cell behind it. We watch as friends and relatives struggle to piece together fragments of their lives and loved ones.

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Hamas' extremism is there for all to see

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Hamas' victory in last month's Palestinian election was the focus of CBC Radio's *Sunday Edition* (Feb. 5). Two guests interviewed separately by host Michael Enright presented vastly different visions of future Palestinian-Israeli relations.

Indeed, they inhabit different universes.

Israeli writer and peace activist Amos Oz represented what has now become the majority view in Israel: that the only solution to the conflict is the two-state model, as envisioned in the internationally backed "road map" peace plan.

Palestinian professor Azzam Tamimi, director of the Institute of Islamic Political Thought in London, England, represented the antithesis of compromise. A strong supporter of Hamas, Tamimi has advocated for the elimination of Israel, although he claims, contrary to the Hamas covenant, not to support the murder of Jews.

Enright began by asking Oz about the impact of Hamas' election victory. Oz described it as "a disaster for Palestine, for Israel and for the entire Middle East."

Regarding reports that Hamas is prepared to offer a long-term truce if Israel returns to the pre-1967 borders, Oz said: "It's like saying to the Israelis, 'I'm going to destroy Israel not in one phase but in two phases.' I don't think even the doves in Israel are likely to buy this one."

In contrast, Tamimi's extremism – the type of fanaticism Enright and Oz spent much time discussing – was apparent.

Tamimi said that "the only real chance for peace is with Hamas." But when Enright asked for a clarification, Tamimi added: "I mean, the offer of a truce by Hamas to the Israelis.You see, the Palestinians can never recognize the theft of their land. Their land was stolen from them in order to create the State of Israel. Hamas can never recognize the legitimacy of [Israel's] existence."

Enright responded: "I don't think it's the recognition that's the question. I think it's what flows from that, and that is the avowed purpose of eradicating the State of Israel. Whether it's recognized or not, is it still the view of Hamas that Israel cannot any longer exist?"

Tamimi replied: "What we're saying [is that] Palestine is ours. One day we'll have it all back, but we agree that for the time being we are going to sign a ceasefire agreement."

Echoing Oz's comment on the promise of a ceasefire, Enright said: "It's the 'one day' part that bothers a lot of people. People are saying that a ceasefire is really only an agreement by Hamas that it will take two or three steps to destroy the State of Israel."

While Tamimi tried to sound as reasonable as possible for the Canadian audience, Enright managed to get him to discuss Hamas' extremist platform, including its anti-Semitic charter. Tamimi conceded the charter needed partial amendment, but not the section calling for Israel's obliteration.

Tamimi's extremist views have long been apparent, and he's expressed them in other media interviews.

Back on Nov. 11, 2001 – a mere two months after the horrific events of Sept. 11 – Tamimi told the Spanish daily *La Vanguardia*: "I admire the Taliban, they are courageous."

On the BBC TV show *Hard Talk* (Nov. 2, 2004), host Tim Sebastian challenged Tamimi about a statement he made the previous year: "For us Muslims, martyrdom is not the end of things but the beginning of the most wonderful of things."

"If it's so wonderful to go and blow yourself up in a public place in Israel," Sebastian asked, "why don't you do it?"

After some evasions, Tamimi finally said: "If I have the opportunity, I would do it… If I can go to Palestine and sacrifice myself, I would do it. Why not?"

Oddly, in some Western circles Tamimi is considered a moderate.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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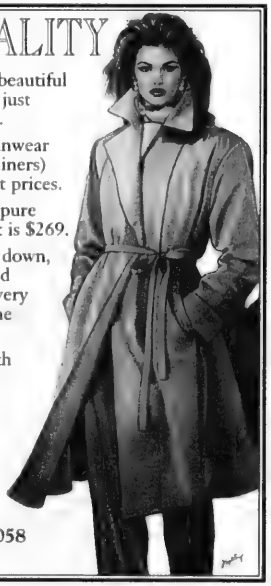

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CJC wants Mideast book pulled from school shelves

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

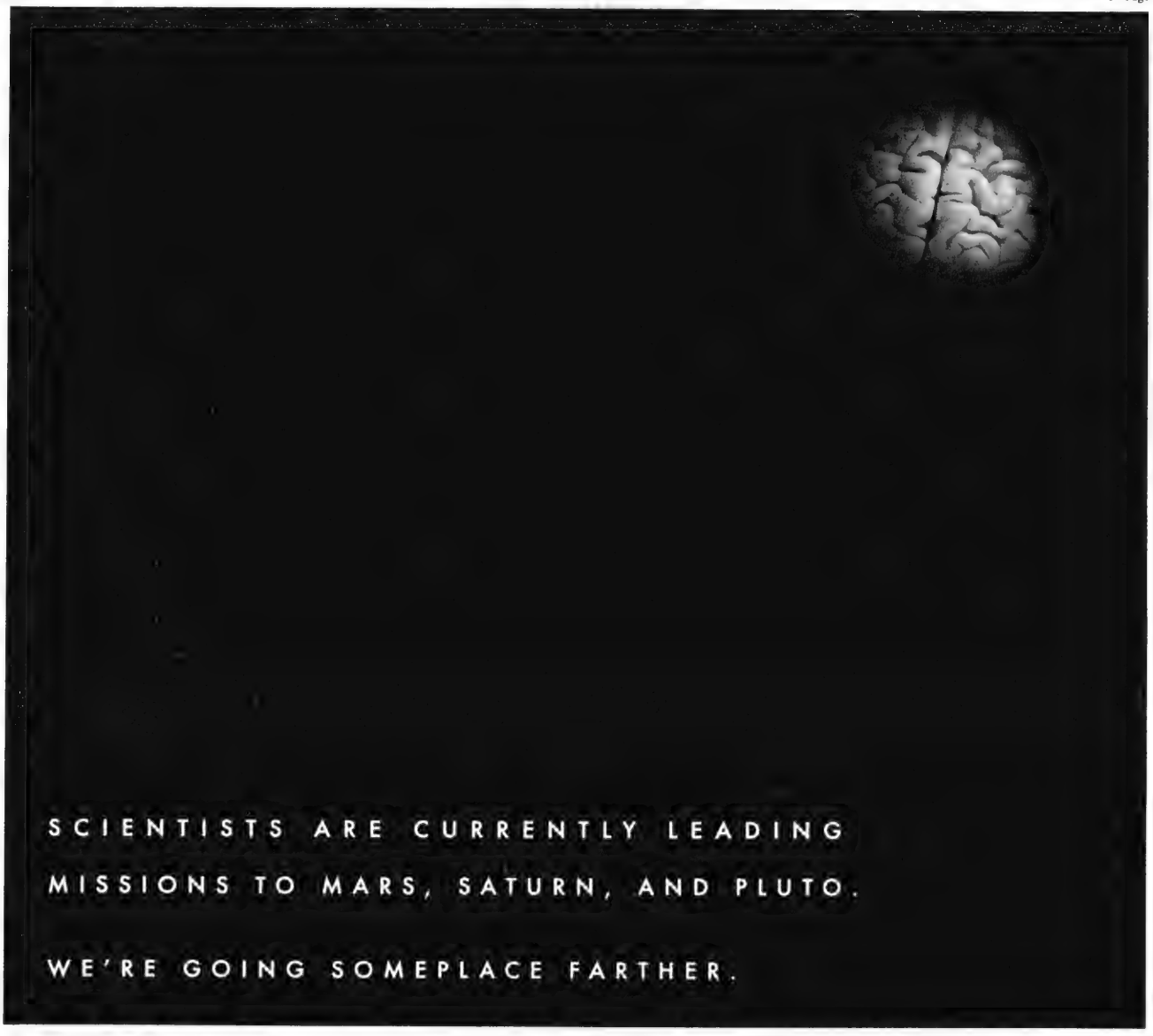
Canadian Jewish Congress is asking the Ontario Library Association (OLA) and 60 school boards across the province to remove a controversial children's book from the OLA's prestigious Silver Birch Awards reading program.

The book, *Three Wishes, Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*, "is not appropriate for children in grades 4 to 6," states Frank Bialystok, chair of Congress' community relations committee in Ontario.

In a letter to OLA executive director Larry Moore, Bialystok contends the book paints the Israelis as "brutal occupiers, intent on indiscriminate acts of humiliation and killing, who deserve to be killed in return; [and] the Palestinians are murderers who are so intent on killing Israelis that they are prepared to blow themselves to shreds in order to achieve their goal. Most dangerous, though, is the notion that suicide bombing represents a credible choice and may be worthy of emulation."

Moore said the OLA will "honour the selection committee, who feel quite comfortable about their decision."

He said committee members – more than 30 librarians from across the province – have reviewed their decision in light of complaints and "they stand by their feelings about the book." He said the OLA board is satisfied the selection committee followed proper procedures in making its choice.



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There is, however, another goal that drives all that Baycrest does: every quest we undertake is led with one eye on the science and the other on its translation into the care, restoration, and celebration of humanity. At the end of our great mission waits not fame, nor history, but the very mind of man. Each day, that destination looms larger in our eyes.

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Greater Toronto Area

Project will help develop communities for former settlers

By STACEY STEIN
Special to The CJN

Rachel Yechieli weeps when she recalls the "perfect life" she used to have in the former settlement of Katif in the Gaza Strip.

Cut off from her friends and family, the 18-year-old now lives in a tiny apartment in Sede Yakov in northern Israel, where she shares a bedroom with her seven brothers and sisters.

"We don't have space to breathe. I live without my community, without my friends," Yechieli said in an interview while in Toronto recently. "In one week everything changed and our whole life was destroyed."

It's a reality Dr. Temira Feinsilver, who used to live in the Gaza settlement of Netzarim, knows all too well. Relocated to a temporary camp in Yivul, she has seen a dramatic spike in the number of social problems afflicting those in her community.

"As a doctor I see many people with after-effects like depression and drugs," she said. "This comes from a community that was very healthy."

While the political costs of the disengagement from the Gaza Strip remain a hot-button issue, the social fallout and story of displaced former settlers trying to rebuild their lives has slipped from the public's view.

That's why UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, spurred in part by World Mizrachi chair and Toronto philanthropist Kurt Rothschild, has created the Netzarim Fund, which will aid in the development of two new communities in Israel, Netzarim and Katif. Both will be located within the Green Line, Israel's pre-1967 border, and will absorb the settlers from their temporary homes.

Yechieli and Feinsilver were in Toronto recently as part of a mission to raise awareness about the adverse conditions being faced by former Gaza Strip settlers in the wake of last summer's disengagement.

Speaking at an event hosted by Linda Frum and husband Howard Sokolowski, Yechieli said most members from her former community of Katif are living in a hotel in the southern city of Ashkelon. "We used to be so strong, so full of energy. We were so together, and now we're all broken," she said.

Some continue to pay mortgages on homes that no longer exist

Many Gaza settlers have yet to receive compensation from the government, and some, like Feinsilver, continue to pay mortgages on homes that no longer exist.

In an interview, Cobie Brosh, Israel's consul general in Toronto, said the Israeli government is working to ensure the settlers receive funds. "They all have received or will receive compensation," he said.

Brosh explained that a disengagement authority was established to handle the civilian side of the disengagement one year before the pullout from Gaza. The settlers were advised to approach the authority in order to take care of all their personal issues, including the "amount they deserved to get and arrangements for themselves and their families."

Brosh said "there were quite a number that didn't approach the authority and many of them didn't pack their houses because to the last moment they didn't believe this would take place. They should have taken the measures they were recommended to take but instead many didn't, or waited until the last minute."

And bureaucratic regulations make compensating the settlers time-consuming, Brosh acknowledged. "Regrettably, the process is taking time. But they will be compensated," he stressed. "No one will be left without getting what she or he deserves to get."

He also noted that the government has offered to cover costs for those settlers who are living in hotels or temporary homes.

Feinsilver, however, says she pays $450 (US) a month for the two-bedroom, one-bathroom mobile home she now shares with her husband and five children.

The construction of new communities such as Netzarim and Katif provide hope to former settlers like Feinsilver and Yechieli. "We believe that settling the Negev and continuing to live as we lived in Gaza, that's the answer and that's what we need to do," said Feinsilver. There are hopes the new communities will prosper the way the former Gaza settlements did.

Netzarim is being established in the Halutza sands region of Israel; which is located in the southwestern Negev, while Katif will be located in the Lachish region, near Be'er Sheva. Netzarim will be one of four townships built in the Halutza sands area, and there will also be other townships near Katif in the Lachish area.

While homes and infrastructure such as roads will be covered by funds provided by the Israeli government, the Netzarim Project will assist with everything that isn't covered by the government's budget, such as the construction of community centres and educational institutions.

Rothschild described the new townships and the former settlers who will live there as "constructive and forward-looking."

"In spite of all their hardships, they are looking into the future and want to rebuild for the sake of the State of Israel in the Negev and in other areas what was lost," he said.

Speaking about the high rate of unemployment among the former Gaza settlers, Rothschild said "about 70 to 80 per cent of people who were farmers, educators and workers and government employees in the Gush Katif area are unemployed." He added that an effort is being made to retrain some of them and help them find employment.

In an interview, Rothschild said that "when the disengagement took place, many settlers were put in hotels or temporary quarters or in caravans or trailers that were being prepared or being built," adding that some were moved into tents.

However, this is gradually being addressed, he said.

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On Campus

Moderate Muslim speaks out

By DAVE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Nonie Darwish remembers growing up and hearing Jews referred to as dogs. She also recalls being told, "Don't take candy from Jews. It could be poison."

In a lecture called "My Story: Growing up in a Jihadist Culture," Darwish gave first-hand insight into the state of hatred, terror and paranoia in the Arab world. It was the second of 10 talks that were part of the Know Radical Islam conference, which took place last week at the University of Toronto.

The event was planned by Betar-Tagar and the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center to counter the Arab Students' Collective's Israeli Apartheid Week, running this week at U of T.

Darwish explained that young Muslims are being taught the vilest forms of hatred. Textbooks in the Palestinian Authority openly encourage anti-Semitism, and more than 300 schools are named after terrorists, Darwish said.

"We must take our children away from the destiny of destruction," she said. "It's not the fault of the West. It's because of us [Muslims]. Muslim mothers are silent."

Darwish, a mother of three, was born in Cairo, and raised there and in Gaza Strip. She immigrated to the United States in 1978. She said the radical Islamic way is to "love death like our enemies love life," and they won't compromise.

The culmination of this cradle-to-grave indoctrination is the election of Hamas in the Palestinian Authority, she said. "Osama bin Laden would win elections in Saudi Arabia if there were elections there."

The Sept. 11 terrorist attacks were a major turning point for her, and led her to begin speaking out against terror and the culture that produces it.

In 2004, she founded www.ArabsforIsrael.com, a website of moderate Muslim dialogue. She has worked as an editor and translator and is now a freelance writer.

She said the Danish cartoon fiasco, and the response to it, is no surprise.

Muslims urged the world after 9/11 to not judge Islam by the acts of 19 terrorists, she said. "But how come they judge the whole West by one cartoon?"

The hatred is so strong that radical Muslims want to kill non-Muslims, she added.

"There are powerful forces in our culture working against peace," she said, noting that radical Muslim clerics are free to preach violence and terror.

"Instead of being a source of comfort and wisdom, they have been a source of hate, rape, anger and paranoia. Terrorism does not happen by accident. It is a direct result of the worship of jihad."

Islamic terrorism occurred before the Six Day War in 1967 and before any occupation, she said.

"We must be honest with ourselves and end the blame game. Israel is the scapegoat. Arab leaders point fingers instead of building hospitals, roads, jobs."

With 22 countries, Muslims, she said "don't have a shortage of land," but "a shortage of freedom."

Darwish said that, "Every day I am grateful for the goodwill of Israel," noting that her brother was saved from death in 1995 at Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital after suffering a stroke in Gaza.

"I can support Israel and still support the Arab world."

The Know Radical Islam event aimed to highlight the growth of Islamic extremism, one of its organizers said.

"We want to expose oppression, persecution, and the trampling of women's rights. Ignoring radical Islam isn't the way to make it go away," said Jonathan Jaffit, 21, a U of T biology and Jewish history student, and a member of Betar-Tagar.

Moral clarity, he said, only develops from open dialogue.

Zionist conference held in Miami

By JONAH BROTMAN
Special to The CJN

About 80 Jewish university and college students across North America gathered last month in Miami to learn about Israel activism and address the issue of clashes on campuses between Israeli and Palestinian students.

The Young Zionist Leadership Conference, which ran from Jan. 27 to 29, was organized and sponsored by USD/Hagshama, the World Zionist Organization and the Jewish Agency.

The conference's aim was to arm students with tools to intelligently defend Israel on their campuses. It included lectures by Israeli diplomats and student-run sessions dealing with bias in campus media. The keynote speaker, Yonatan Geffen, father of Israeli rock star Aviv Geffen, delighted the audience with personal anecdotes and poems from a generation past.

"The conference was very effective in terms of brainstorming and in reaching the conclusion that we wanted to steer away from the confrontational tactics that have plagued campuses recently," says Assaf Weisz, a York University student.

The Canadian contingent at the conference, representing the University of British Columbia, York University, McGill University, the University of Guelph and Carleton University, was also concerned about on-campus confrontations between Palestinian and Israeli students.

"Being [from] a small town, you get lots of people that either don't know anything about Israel and the conflict or they think Israel is always wrong and they try to prove it to you," says Michael Unea, a third-year student from Guelph.

"It can be intimidating so this conference definitely helped me in that way."

For others, the experience was also a break from the grind of the Canadian winter and the winter school semester.

"The conference taught me new ways to handle real situations that arise on my campus in terms of the Israeli-Palestinian debate. But then again, the sunny weather and the beaches of Miami were pretty fun, too," says Michael Nilevsky, another Guelph participant.

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Shana is recognized as an outstanding leader in Jewish Education by the internationally renowned Lookstein Centre of Bar Ilan University in Israel, and acts as a mentor to other Jewish Day School principals in the Diaspora.

A change in leadership of an organization creates opportunities for new styles, ideas, and attitudes. Shana represents a balance between continuity and creative change to move our school forward from strength to strength.

We wish Shana a hearty Mazel Tov and welcome her to her new position!

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- **Helping the Homeless**
  Help out with a variety of activities at the Good Shepherd Centre
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  Organize & clean up a neighbourhood centre for the disadvantaged
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- **Help Make a House a Home**
  Help a newly-arrived family from Israel get settled
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  Light cleaning in this assisted housing project
- **Like Talking on the Phone?**
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- **Big Brother Project**
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Chocolate Chocolate – the ultimate in decadence!

By NORENE GILLETZ

For award-winning author Lisa Yockelson, chocolate has long been an obsession, a craving, a calling. *Chocolate Chocolate* (Wiley) is a dream cookbook that blends how-to information and 200-plus tantalizing recipes with a delicious collection of chocolate memories. You'll find 155 mouthwatering colour photographs that illustrate Yockelson's specialties in all of their chocolate glory.

Yockelson has been baking with chocolate since she was seven years old. She is transfixed by chocolate. "It is something that has always charmed me. Not just because I love the flavour, but because of all the things that derive from chocolate: the texture, the consistency, the lusciousness."

From Chocolate-Times-Four Mud Squares to Toffee-Almond Turtle Bars, from Dark Chocolate Waffles to Chocolate Chip Cracks, temptation beckons from every page.

With 512 pages of recipes, charts and lists, the book could almost be classed as a textbook. *Chocolate Chocolate* reveals baking with chocolate as a sweet and simple art. The book's unique "baking diary" format arranges chapters by theme, reflecting Yockelson's fresh and personal approach to baking.

You can use the book in several ways – to find a recipe for a sweet that's packed with chocolate, to learn how chocolate behaves and interacts with other ingredients, or to gather information on the various types and uses of chocolate. A comprehensive chart shows the relative strengths and uses of 180 different chocolates. This meticulous guide to baking with chocolate is sure to become a timeless reference that all home bakers will return to again and again as a source of instruction, inspiration and pure indulgence.

If you love to read about, dream about, talk about or bake with chocolate, then *Chocolate Chocolate* deserves a place on your cookbook shelf! Enjoy…

CHOCOLATE CHIP CRACKS

The chocolate dough is formed into balls and rolled in confectioners' sugar just before baking. As the cookies bake, they fracture and open randomly, and the casual splits form contrasting patches of dark dough and light sugar.

1½ cups bleached all-purpose flour
1 tbsp. unsweetened alkalized cocoa powder
1½ tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
6 tbsp. vegetable oil (such as canola)
1½ cups granulated sugar
3 oz. unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled
2 tsp. vanilla extract
3 large eggs
1 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips
about 2 cups confectioners' sugar for coating

Sift the flour, sugar, cocoa powder, baking powder and salt onto a sheet of waxed paper.

Mix the oil, melted chocolate, vanilla extract and eggs in the large bowl of a free-standing electric mixer on moderately low speed for 2 to 3 minutes, or until well-blended. On low speed, add the flour mixture in 2 additions, beating until the particles of flour are absorbed. Scrape down the sides of the mixing bowl frequently to keep the mixture even-textured. Blend in the chocolate chips. At this point, the mixture will resemble a thick batter more than a firm or dense cookie dough.

Cover the bowl of dough and refrigerate for 6 to 8 hours, or until firm enough to handle (it stores nicely in the refrigerator overnight).

Preheat the oven to 350. Line several cookie sheets or rimmed sheet pans with cooking parchment paper. Have the confectioners' sugar at hand in a shallow bowl. Take up rounded 2-tbsp.-size mounds of dough and roll into balls. Roll the balls in the confectioners' sugar to coat well. Place the balls of dough on the prepared pans, spacing them 2½ inches apart.

Bake the cookies in the preheated oven for 12 to 14 minutes, or until set. The insides should remain moist and somewhat fudgy. Let the cookies stand on the pans for 2 minutes, then transfer them to cooling racks, using a wide offset metal spatula. Store in an airtight tin. Makes about 2½ dozen cookies. Bake and serve within 2 days.

Norene Gilletz is a cookbook author, cooking teacher and food consultant. For information, call 416-226-2466 or visit her website at http://www.gourmania.com

Jewish Failed Messiahs and Their Followers

Messiahs were always fascinating and attracting followers throughout Jewish history. Who were they and why the appeal?

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For meeting times and room numbers.

UJA Federation JCC

Seniors Scene

From left are Jaimie Alter, Judi Alter, Itzy Norris, Jeffrey Alter and Lexi Alter.

Hard work and schnapps key to long life: 95-year-old

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

If there is one man whose many virtues encapsulate what a quintessential zaide is, then it may very well be Itsy Norris.

"He's the type of guy – the adorable Jewish zaide – that everybody loves," says grandson Don Moscoe.

"He makes everybody laugh and feel good about themselves."

The great-grandfather of 18 turns 95 on Feb.19, and nearly the entire family and a legion of friends will celebrate the occasion in Florida, where Norris spends the winter months.

Close to 100 people are expected to join in the festivities, and the predictions are that Norris will be the first one on and last one off the dance floor.

"We just had my daughter's bat mitzvah and we couldn't get him off the floor," says grandson Jeff Alter, beaming.

"He'll be dancing all night at his party."

A fixture of Kitchener's small, tight-knit Jewish community in southwestern Ontario, Norris is in shul most Shabbats at Beth Jacob Synagogue, where he held the post of head gabbai until recently.

He landed in Kitchener as a 13-year-old immigrant from Poland, and as was common in those days, needed to work from an early age.

At 15, he became a peddler, travelling from town to town with a cart full of scraps to buy and sell.

Eventually, the cart pushing evolved into the establishment of a scrap-metal yard, a family business that is still in operation today.

"My grandfather never worked in the office," Alter says.

"Even up until he retired, he continued to work outside in the yard, separating and cutting the metals."

Many people attribute Norris' longevity in part to his hard work.

"I bet you the manual labour has something to do with it," notes Moscoe, adding that a positive outlook has also been key.

"He's absolutely 'the glass is half full' person, no matter what's going on," Moscoe relates.

To that end, Norris hasn't let potentially devastating life events set him back, including the loss of two children and his wife.

"He's so happy, it's unbelievable," says Moscoe.

"There are certain people who are like that, able to look at the bright side of life."

In addition to his legendary work ethic and optimism, Norris also has a reputation for fun and adventure.

At 16, rather than allow a relative to arrange his marriage, Norris secretly wed the love of his life, Lillian, with whom he had four children.

And still to this day, the consummate zaide has a ritual shot of liquor each day.

"He tells me that he lives so long because of the hard work and schnapps every day," Alter says.

Norris relishes spending time with people, particularly family.

"He doesn't just know his great-grandchildren by name – he knows these kids and has a different relationship with every one of them," Alter says.

Alter and Moscoe note there are many lessons to be learned from their zaide, but the most valuable one, they agree, is to have a genuine zest for life.

"He has always treated and thought of life as a wonderful blessing and he reminds all of us of this," Alter says.

Family Moments

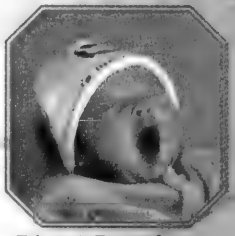
only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

Mazel tov to Tamara Steinberg & Jeff Saul on their engagement!

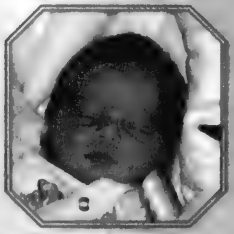
Clara Schwartz celebrated 90 years young on Nov. 18. Mazel tov and love always from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Batya Hennah Deltoff was born on the second day of Chanukah. Mazel tov to her parents, Yocheved & Marshall, and brothers Dovid, Yaakov and Periel.



Ethan & Emma have a brother, Ely, born Jan. 13. Proud parents are Lisa & Jonathan Miller, grandparents Lynda & Charles Weinberg, Diane & David Miller.

Samara & Jeffrey Bordan announce the birth of Zachary Saul. Thrilled are great-grandparents Yetta & Harry Kleinman, grandparents Rowena & Josh Kleinman, Zlona & Norman Bordan.



On Jan. 8, Zackery Kai Nudelman arrived to proud parents David & Marla. Excited family members, great-grandma Ruth Cherns, grandparents Bonnie & Earl Moskovitz.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, Feb. 20, is the deadline for the March 2 issue and Monday, Feb. 27, is the deadline for the March 9 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Feb. 16

TREES IN THE CITY

In honour of Tu b'Shvat, Mosaic Outdoor Club presents **Dr. Andy Kenney**, of University of Toronto's Faculty of Forestry, on "Trees in the City: What are the Challenges?" Also purchase or contribute toward $18 tree in Israel. 7 p.m. at the Wolfond Centre. 36 Harbord St. $6.

Saturday, Feb. 18

BEAT THE BLUES DANCE

Solel Congregation hosts "Beat the Blues Dance," featuring the Rich and the Poor Boys Band. 8 p.m.-1 a.m. $12 in advance, $15 at the door. RSVP to **Sandy**, 905-597-0423, or **Linda**, 905-813-0144.

HALTON-PEEL SERVICES

B'Nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel, an egalitarian Conservative synagogue in the Mississauga and Oakville area, invites the community to join its monthly Shabbat service at 10 a.m., followed by kiddush. For location and info, call **Sandra** at 905-824-3783.

TORAH IN TORONTO

United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism hosts its annual "Torah in Toronto" at Shaar Shalom Synagogue. **Rabbi David Golinkin**, of the Schechter Institute, delivers the keynote address "Judaism and Modernity," followed by sessions with the local rabbis. 7:15 p.m. Music and refreshments. $18. USY and KOACH members free. 416-667-1717 or canadian@uscj.org.

Sunday, Feb. 19

BROTHERHOOD BREAKFAST

Beth David Brotherhood presents "Creation vs Evolution: The Ongoing Debate," with **Rabbi Philip Scheim**. 9:15 a.m. Charge. 416-633-5500.

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc. for those 50+ for a "Lost River Walk" from Queen St. to the St. Lawrence Market. Meet at the corner of Bay and Queen St. at 1 p.m. For info and pre-registration, e-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

STREISAND'S *YENTEL*

The Beth Tikvah Friendship Club screens *Yentl* with **Barbra Streisand**. 2 p.m. $3, non-members $5. Info, **Betty**, 416-223-7117.

EXHIBIT: NEW BEGINNING

Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue's new exhibit "New Beginning: From the Old Worlds to the New," highlights members who immigrated to Canada, the items they packed, their determination to hold onto their past and their connection to their families and religion. Opens at 4 p.m.

PAPERCLIPS

The Jewish Family Institute presents the movie *Paperclips*, 7 p.m. at the Village Shul. To reserve, call 416-785-1107, ext 204.

SINGLES GAMES NIGHT

Beth Torah presents a games night for singles 21-39 and 40-69. 7:30 p.m. $8. For info, call 416-733-3634.

Monday, Feb. 20

ANTIQUITY TO MODERNITY

Beth Emeth Sisterhood presents "From Antiquity to Modernity" with **Dr. Violet Esser.** Journey through 2,500 years of Jewish history in Abraham's birthplace and explore the heritage of the Iraqi Jewish community from ancient times to the present. 8 p. m. 416-633-3838.

Tuesday Feb. 21

ADDICTION & VIOLENCE

The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health presents a free forum on domestic violence and addictions. 6:30-8:30 p.m. at 33 Russell St. 416-535-8501, ext. 4553 or visit www.camh.net.

Continued on page 21

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The Reena Foundation wishes to thank its sponsors and donors for making Reena's 3rd Annual Theatre Night a success! Your kindness helps enrich the lives of children with developmental disabilities.
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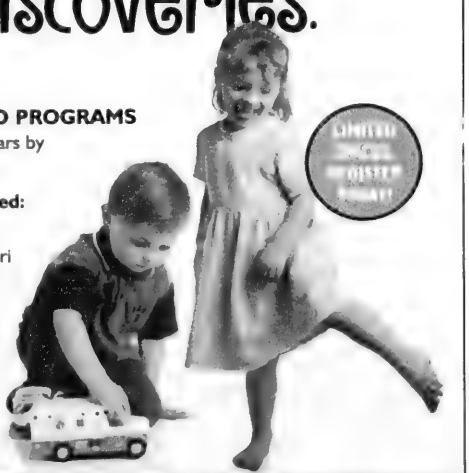
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Continued from page 20

Wednesday, Feb. 22

CHANGE THE WORLD

Explore and discuss the power of speech, thought and action at a free four-week session hosted by Ve'ahavta and The House. 7:30-9:30 p.m. For students ages 17 to 26. Call **Sara** to register, 416-569-6647.

THE KHAZARS

Temple Israel of London presents **Art Benjamin** on "The Jewish Kingdom of the Khazars." 7:30 p.m. 519-858-4400.

HEBREW READING II

Beth Emeth Synagogue begins a six-week Hebrew Reading Course, II, starting tonight at 8 p.m. Participants should know nouns and vowels, and will practise reading, singing and understanding prayers used during daily and weekly Shabbat services. Free. To register, call 416-633-3838.

THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS

Congregation Bnai Torah presents **David Goldberg**, of the Canada-Israel Committee, analyzing the upcoming Israeli election. Tonight, "The Platforms and the Promises." 8 p.m. 416-226-3700.

MYSTIC CIRCLE

Anshei Minsk Synagogue continues a study group of Jewish mystical writings led by **Rabbi Shmuel Spero** through March 29. 8-9:15 p.m. 10 St. Andrew St. 416.595-5723 or reachus@theminsk.com.

JWI MONTHLY MEETING

Jewish Women International Markham Unionville hold a meeting tonight. 905-294-9706.

Other news

OSHRA KOREN

Spend the morning with **Oshra Koren**, dynamic head of MaTaN Ra'anana, and discuss "Eliyahu and Elisha: Prophets, Prophecy and Promise." Thursday, Feb. 23, 9:15 a.m.-noon at 11 Forest Wood. $18. For info and registration, call Mekorot, 416-877-2050.

ISRAEL'S IMAGE ABROAD

David Baker, senior foreign press co-ordinator in the Israeli prime minister's office, talks about Israel's international image and the difficulties of dealing with the global media while handling the world's most covered news stories, Thursday, Feb. 23, 8 p.m. at Beth Shalom Synagogue. $5. 416-783-6103.

SHMIRAS HALOSHON

The Shmiras Haloshon Organization presents **Rabbi Mendel Kessin** speaking on "One Mitzvah: The Key to Both Worlds." Thursday, Feb. 23, at Bais Yaakov High School. 8:15 p.m.

HALACHAH AND SCIENCE

Joseph Bodenheimer, president of Jerusalem College of Technology, speaks at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Feb. 25 and 26. On Saturday, Feb. 25, he speaks on "The Curious Nature of Miracles" at 11:15 a.m. and "When Science and Technology Meet Halachah," at 4:30 p.m. On Sunday, Feb 26, at 8:30 p.m. he addresses "What Did Chazal Know About Science?" 416-789-3213.

SATURDAY NIGHT JAZZ

Join the Don Glaser Trio for "Motzaei Shabbat Jazz," at the Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. and support Or Chaim and Ulpanat Orot Schools. Saturday, Feb. 25, 8 p.m. $45, $84/couple. To reserve, call 416-630-6772, ext. 34.

EXPLORE NEW WINES

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation invites you to learn to use your nose and palate with a wine connoisseur and enjoy fine desserts. Saturday, Feb. 25, 8:30 p.m. Advance registration by Feb. 21. $22, non-members $25.

TFILLAH IN CRISIS

Oshra Koren and **Rabbi Yair Kahn** speak on "Tfillah in the Wake of Crisis: Religious Zionists Reckon with God After Disengagement," Saturday, Feb. 25, 8:30 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. $10. 416-633-5770.

WILD WEST MUSICAL FUN

The North Toronto Players' present *The Mikado* set in the Wild West. Leah Posluns Theatre, Feb. 25 and March 4 at 8 p.m., Feb. 26 and March 5 at 2 p.m. For tickets, call 905-727-2209 or visit www.northtorontoplayers.com.

CHANOCH TELLER

Rabbi Chanoch Teller speaks at breakfast following davening, Sunday, Feb. 26. For time and location, call **Gedalia Zweig**, 905-886-6305.

CELEBRATE ROSH CHODESH

Z'havah, a group for women in their 30s and 40s, celebrates Rosh Chodesh, a time of women's renewal and learning, Tuesday, Feb. 28, 8 p.m. at Beth David Synagogue. Non-sisterhood members $5. E-mail z-havah@bethdavid.com.

SHABBAT ACROSS CANADA

Or Hadash Synagogue of Newmarket joins synagogues across North America on Friday, March 3, as they celebrate Shabbat. Services 7 p.m., followed by a traditional Shabbat dinner. Call 905-898-2220 or visit www.orhadash.org.

HESCHEL ARTS FESTIVAL

The Toronto Heschel School Arts Festival takes place Sunday, March 5, 11 a.m.–5 p.m. at Adath Israel Synagogue. Free. Call 416-635-5501, ext. 400, or e-mail artsfestival@torontoheschel.com

BIKUR CHOLIM LUNCHEON

Bikur Cholim of Toronto honours **Yitty Weber** and **Dr. Jon Barrett** at its annual spring luncheon, Monday, March 6, noon, at the Sephardic Kehillah Centre. To reserve, call 416-783-7983.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Jewish Hospice & Volunteer Visiting Hospice 30-hour training course begins March 9. Topics include emotional and ethical issues as well as care for the caregiver. For info, 416-635-2860.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jiastoronto.org. or 416-630-6481.

Conversation Café, every Thursday at the BJCC, 7-9 p.m. Practise English in an informal setting. Participants and volunteers, call **Joanna** at ext. 30.

Family to Family: Volunteer to connect to a newcomer family. Call **Allison** at ext. 28.

JIAS weekly activities for youth ages 8-12 and 14-18. Call **Allison** at ext. 28.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Happiest Baby On The Block: A workshop for parents of newborns and infants on calming your baby. Based on the work of **Dr. Harvey Karp**. Wednesday, Feb. 22, at the Family Resource Centre, 7 to 9:30 p.m. Registration required and fee includes a Parent Kit.

When You're About To Separate – What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. Tuesday, Feb. 28, at the Promenade Mall, #313, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors meets on Thursday, Feb. 23, at 1:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. **David Phillips**, senior climatologist for Environment Canada speaks on "Confessions of a Weather Weenie." For info, call **Tammy Parker**, 416-635-2860.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday dance, Feb. 19. Casino Rama, Wednesday, March 8, 22. Bridge, Thursdays, 12:30-3 p.m. For information, call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. Feb. 16, movie. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

"Beat the Winter Blahs Beach Party and Barbecue," Thursday, Feb. 23, 12-1:30 p.m. in the Fireside Lounge. Lunch $5-$12. Registration required. Call ext. 2267, 2275 or 2297.

Lunch and Learn, Tuesday, Feb. 28, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. with **Marilyn Peringer**, storyteller. Lunch $5, guests $7. Reserve at ext. 2267 or 2275.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Memory & Aging: What's Normal, What's Not and What You Can Do About It," Tuesday, Feb. 21, 10-11:30 a.m.

Spend Thursday, Feb. 23, at The Betel: "Stories from the Heart," 12-1 p.m., Fun with Yiddish 1-2:30 p.m. and Nafty Naftolin's Komedy Kabaret, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Plan for a spring get-away to Washington, D.C. Cherry Blossom Festival trip, March 26-29, members $500, non-members $600.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

The BJCC computer lab specializes in computer and Internet classes for those 55+. Each course is four weeks long, two classes per week for a total of 16 hours. Call ext. 235 to register.

Registration open for September 2006 for school and day care. BJCC offers a full-day program for children 18 months through 5 years and a morning preschool for children 2-5. Call ext. 248.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Intermediate Yiddish I, an eight-week course, Thursday, March 6-April 10, 7:30-9 p.m. For students with basic knowledge of Yiddish. $154, non-members $186 + $10 materials.

The Yiddish Song, a four-week seminar, Thursday, March 6-April 24, 7-8 p.m. $80, non-members $93 + $10 materials.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 26

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Silber, Jennie	Dec 15/05	7601 Bathurst St.
Freidenrich, Peter	Dec 15/05	1 Emerald Lane
Bernstein, Samuel	Dec 16/05	19 Northern Heights Dr
Tanner, Hyman	Dec 16/05	16 Acton Ave.
Herman, Ruth	Dec 17/05	24 Kindale Way
Rubner, Kalman	Dec 18/05	228 Carmichael Ave.
Dvir, Michael	Dec 19/05	28 Rosedale Heights Dr
Schwartzbaum, Estera	Dec 19/05	567 Old Orchard Grove
Eisenstein, Esther	Dec 20/05	128 Cline Av, Hamilton
Kraichik, Makhlya	Dec 20/05	Private
Soroka, Grigory	Dec 21/05	Private
Kirsh, Cindy	Feb. 1/06	330 Spadina Rd
Wisebrot, Hilda	Feb. 3/06	343 Clark Ave. W.
Goldman, Murray	Feb. 3/06	Private
Gross, Ann	Feb. 3/06	3565 Bathurst St
Mandel, Hyman	Feb. 3/06	Private
Mason, Sadie	Feb. 4/06	Private
Zabow, Cherie	Feb. 6/06	192 Banbury Rd
Sugar, Louis	Feb. 6/06	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Estelle Teperman	Jan 29/06	23 Suncrest Dr
Ben Sniderman	Jan 29/06	21 Mayfair Ave
Samuel Gilbert	Feb 2/06	3560 Bathurst St
Nathan Stein	Feb 4/06	19 Lower Village Gt
Ruby Fidler	Feb 3/06	30-D McMurrich St
Eva Salinas	Feb 4/06	58 Letchworth Cr
Rose Epstein	Feb 3/06	4300 Bathurst St

HEDREW DASIC

Stuart Landis	Jan 23/06	448 Glencairn Av
Saul Goldberg	Jan 27/06	3170 Kirwin Av
Teresa Birnbaum	Jan 29/06	3560 Bathurst St
Rose Shinen	Feb 1/06	102 Rajah Street
Mildred Shrott	Feb 3/06	22 Langholm Dr

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To place any other family related notice, please call at least 10 DAYS prior to the issue date

Obituary

Leonard Kitz, Halifax's first Jewish mayor

BY JOEL JACOBSON
Atlantic Correspondent

HALIFAX — Leonard Kitz, the first-ever Jewish mayor of Halifax, died Jan. 30 of heart failure at age 89.

In 1948, at a time when Jewish citizens of Halifax were barred from many social and athletic clubs, Kitz ran for election as a city alderman and won, serving for seven years.

In 1955, he ran for mayor and also won, becoming the city's first-ever Jewish mayor.

After serving in the Canadian Army in Europe in World War II, he had returned home with the aim of altering the thinking in his hometown.

At the time, Halifax was generally divided along Catholic and Protestant lines, and mayors of each religion alternated for one-year terms. Schools and their governing chairmen were also divided along religious lines. The phenomenon even extended to the appointment of city staff: if the fire chief was Catholic, the police chief had to be Protestant. Jews were grouped with the Protestants.

In 1955, when it was time for a Protestant mayor, Kitz threw his hat in the ring. He won, convincingly. During his term, in 1956, the province enacted legislation that extended the term of office for mayor to three years.

Kitz ran again and won.

His wins broke the Catholic-Protestant succession order and signalled that the days of segregated religious hospitals, schools and universities in Halifax would soon be over.

"He was proud of his religion. Proud to be a Haligonian and a Canadian," said his wife Janet, whom Kitz married in 1971, two years after the death of his first wife, Alice.

"He couldn't take any activity lightly. He went into things with intensity. He told me being the first Jewish mayor [of Halifax] wasn't as important to him as being a good mayor."

She said Kitz had interest in, and time for, people of all races, religions and colours.

"He wasn't insular. He wasn't limited to one small fraction of society. During the recent mourning period, I received cards, letters, e-mails, phone calls and visits from people of all races and from around the world."

During Kitz's term as mayor, Halifax instituted new management rules, including the hiring of professional managers, and undertook a major renovation of the council chamber.

Kitz was born in Halifax in 1916 and earned a law degree at Dalhousie University in 1938. He became an infantry officer, then a captain, with the Princess Louise Fusiliers during World War II, serving in Italy and Holland.

In 1945, he married Alice Duff Findlay, a doctor from Aberdeen who was serving with the British Army. They settled in Halifax after the war, and he opened a small law practice while carrying on his father's real estate company. He built the law firm into one of the largest in Halifax and eventually merged it with other Atlantic Canadian firms.

In 1958, Kitz, a staunch Liberal, decided not to run again for mayor. Instead, he ran for Parliament, but was defeated in the John Diefenbaker-led Conservative sweep. That ended his political career, but it didn't stop him from being involved in the community.

He was a founder of the Halifax Grammar School, a private school, and served as vice-president of its board of directors. He also sat on a number of other boards, including the Technical University of Nova Scotia, the University of King's College and the first board of directors of the National Arts Centre in Ottawa. King's College granted him an honorary doctorate in 1980, prior to his serving on its board.

After his retirement, Kitz still went to his law firm to offer assistance and advice. He also played bridge with his friends at the Halifax Club, grew fruit, flowers and vegetables in his garden, read history, fished, listened to music, collected art and enjoyed debates.

In addition to his wife Janet, Kitz leaves his three children, Hilary (Steven Janus), John (Ann Colville) and Alan (Meredith Annett), and eight grandchildren.

Coast to Coast

Yossi Olmert advocates more Diaspora involvement with Israel

By REBECA KUROPATWA
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — Yossi Olmert, the brother of Israel's acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, and a leading Middle East scholar, says that "building a safe and secure country, a good homeland for all Jews who want to be there is the key for the future of Israel."

In an interview, Olmert said that Diaspora support for Israel is important, but he would like to see more Diaspora Jews living in Israel and more participation of Diaspora Jews in the Israeli economy.

He added that Diaspora support of a mother country in the way that Jews support Israel is unique. "There is nothing like this in any other ethnic community in Canada or the U.S. So we are an exception there."

Olmert contends that "there should be an attitude of inherent solidarity between Diaspora Jews and Israeli Jews, and vice versa." But "people could decide for themselves what they want to do for each other.

"I don't think it is good for me to come and say, 'You should do this or that.' What is good for me is to tell them the needs of Israel, and for them to think of what they might like to do for Israel, the way they want to do it. We need to create a dialogue based on voluntary desires of people – to help each other, to build a country and to be one people."

Olmert observed that Israel should be a source of inspiration for people of goodwill who understand that you can build a new country, even when enemies surround you.

"You can construct a new society and revive an old language. Altogether, we have done well in Israel. We are looking ahead with a great deal of hope."

Israel still has many problems, and "not everyone likes the Jews, not everyone likes the State of Israel," he said, "but we are moving in the right direction. There are more and more people living in Israel. There are more and more achievements for Israel – scientific, educational and others."

Olmert said he hopes the future of Israel will be bright and that the country will do well economically. "It could be better, but it is on the right track. We are doing better in terms of getting international recognition for the State of Israel, and getting more and more international friends," he added.

On the subject of terrorism, Olmert said, "Terrorism is never justifiable. The killing of innocent people for the sake of killing them cannot be justified because killing innocent people in order to achieve political goals is morally wrong. It cannot be justified under any circumstances."

Olmert, fluent in both Hebrew and Arabic, was the director of the Israeli Government Press Office and an adviser to former prime minster Yitzchak Shamir.

Olmert was recently in Winnipeg where he addressed the Winnipeg Zionist Initiative at the Asper Jewish Community Campus. Members of the the Jewish Students' Association, March of the Living alumni, birthright israel participants and alumni and members of the Young Adult Division of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg attended Olmert's talk.

Salvador Dali images painted for Israel's 20th birthday

WINNIPEG — Salvador Dali is legendary for his surrealist, melting wristwatch imagery, but what the painter is arguably less known for is his later-life artistic shift, when emotive, religious and historical themes came to permeate his work.

The Winnipeg Art Gallery (WAG) is currently exhibiting Dali's "Aliyah Suite," until March 19. New York's Shorewood Publishers originally commissioned its 25 works in 1966 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Israel's independence.

The WAG collection consists of 25 lithograph images all signed by the artist. Dali painted his originals in mixed media and gouache, and 250 lithographs were made in a Zurich and Paris printing house.

WAG curator Helene Delacretaz said the collection "was first displayed in 1968 at the Israel Museum, and the Winnipeg Art Gallery has owned [its version] since 1974."

She said the response to "Aliyah Suite," has been remarkable.

"The interest in this show has been huge, and it has drawn a wide demographic. People have come from as far away as California just to see it," Delacretaz said.

"Their reasons for coming vary: some are interested in Jewish history, and some are curious students and general public, interested in seeing rare Dali lithographs."

This Dali collection has a "very slick, emotional, and bittersweet quality to it," Delacretaz said. "It is involved, complex work."

An ironic twist to Dali having been selected to do this collection is that "he was known for his anti-Semitic views," Delacretaz said.

Nancy Mullick, a former University of Winnipeg student, wrote her thesis on the subject. In it, Mullick notes, "It was all a great game to Dali – pitting Jewish publisher against Jewish publisher—exploiting both Catholic and Jewish themes to the hilt."

Mullick describes Dali's pieces as depicting the "tension between the necessity of war and the desire for peace."

His paintings are both tragic and hopeful, she writes. "Dali is to be commended for his brilliant inspiration, which incorporated numerous facets of religious, political, and cultural history that is as relevant today as it was for the 20th anniversary of independence."

Delacretaz said she hopes people coming to see the exhibit "gain an appreciation for his later work. This work is much more emotionally bare. Each piece tells a story, without requiring knowledge of the actual events."

— R.K.

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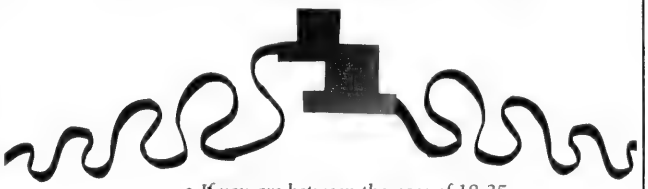
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Coast to Coast

Daniel Pearl maintained dignity to the end, says his sister

By LAUREN KRAMER
Special to The CJN

VANCOUVER — This month marks four years since the brutal murder of Daniel Pearl, a reporter with the *Wall Street Journal* who was kidnapped and killed while on assignment in Pakistan.

Tamara Pearl, Daniel's older sister, delivered a talk titled "The Alchemy Of Hope" at Vancouver's King David High School recently. She spoke movingly about the kind of person her brother was, of her total desolation of spirit in the years following his death and of how she came to reconcile her grief and anger.

Pearl tried to introduce the audience to the Danny she knew, a man who found life fascinating and had a wonderful sense of humour. She read a humorous excerpt from one of his articles, recalling the time he had dressed as a woman in order to report on a striptease show exclusively for women.

Tamara Pearl
[Lauren Kramer photo]

He was a determined man but was fairly confident of his safety in Afghanistan, promising Pearl he'd be careful and withdraw from any situations he thought might be dangerous.

On January 23, 2002, he went missing, throwing the Pearl family into what would be a month-long nightmare leading to his assassination in February 2002. "I was paralyzed with fear," Tamara recalled. "We waited in anguish in that month, sometimes receiving false news. And we implored the broadcasters not to mention the fact that he was Jewish and that his parents are Israeli."

After news of his death, Pearl found herself in a spiritual quandary. "I wrestled with whether life was good or not," she said. "How could I still embrace this world after seeing so much suffering? I talked to people, read all the books and walked around with lots of questions." To this day, she cannot bring herself to watch the recorded footage of her brother's murder.

His memory, however, inspired her to find a way out of the darkness of mourning, grief and constant questioning. "Danny always had complete faith in reality, despite the tragic things he witnessed as a journalist," Pearl said. "He valued people and friendships, and built bridges through his writing. And he was very open and accepting of other cultures, wanting to understand them as best he could."

Even in his last words, Daniel maintained his dignity and strength. "He said 'I am Jewish' with such inner strength and conviction, never losing his connection to that which is life affirming," Pearl said. "He transformed the hatred that surrounded him in his final hours into his life-affirming identity, and that was inspiring to me."

The Pearl family channelled their sadness into a humane response, establishing the Daniel Pearl Foundation, a non-profit organization that aims to promote cross-cultural understanding, combat geographical and religious hatred, encourage responsible and creative journalism and unite people through the universal language of music. All these goals were inspired by Daniel, a reporter who travelled with his violin and mandolin, using music to bring people together.

The foundation has an array of programs and initiatives. There's Daniel Pearl Music Days, a week-long network of concerts that take place worldwide in October, dedicated to promoting tolerance and humanity. There are journalism initiatives such as the annual Daniel Pearl Fellowship, which brings mid-career journalists from South Asia and the Middle East to a U.S. newsroom for six months, where they can experience a free press environment. And there's the Daniel Pearl Dialogue for Muslim-Jewish Understanding, in which professors Akbar Ahmed and Judea Pearl discuss contentious issues that divide the two faiths. Ahmed and Pearl have so far brought the dialogue to 11 cities in the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada.

"I've discovered that being Jewish gives us the tools we need to perform alchemy, and ultimately repair the world," Pearl said. "By creating this foundation, we're using Danny's legacy to help bring people together. In this way, he's still alive."

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Winnipeg federation withdraws from Folklorama

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — The Jewish Federation of Winnipeg decided to withdraw from Folklorama in 2006, citing financial losses over the past four years.

Folklorama is Winnipeg's yearly summer celebration of the city's ethnic communities. The federation has operated Shalom Square – the Israel pavilion – at the Asper Jewish Community Campus for the past four years, ever since the Rady Jewish Community Centre withdrew its support from the pavilion.

A committee led by Ted Lyons, the federation's current president; Michael Kowalson; and Jeff Lieberman, the Rady JCC's current president, managed Shalom Square. Bob Freedman handled the pavilion's finances and administration.

Lyons reports that the pavilion lost about $7,000 each year of the first three years of federation management. Last year, financial losses reached $15,000. Poor weather accounted for some of the losses, he says.

Attendance was down this year because of the August long weekend, which fell on the week the Israel Pavilion was open. Folklorama runs two weeks, with half of the pavilions open the first week and the rest open the second week.

Food costs at the pavilion have always been a problem, Lyons says. "Most pavilions make a profit from the food. The first year, we agreed with Shmoozers, the campus restaurant, to handle all of the food and we would split the profits." Shmoozers made a modest profit, but did not want to continue the next year.

As a result of a new agreement with Schmoozers, the pavilion tried different menus and pre-plated foods over the next three years but nothing worked well, Lyons said.

He points out that the Israel pavilion has to rely on Shmoozers services to keep food at the right temperature. "Health inspectors always check our pavilion," he says.

Lyons describes Shalom Square's food as "only average" compared to other pavilions, but he says the Israel pavilion has the best entertainment in the Chai Folk Ensemble. And while the famed Israel dance troupe donates its services, there are ancillary costs. For example, the stage costs about $12,000 to rent each year.

"We considered building a stage," Lyons says. "That would cost about $20,000 and could be used by others during the year. We applied for and received a grant from the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba to build a stage two years ago, but did not use it because there is no place on-site to store it."

Lyons says that his committee has received letters and verbal communication from Jewish past presidents of the Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg who expressed dismay and concern over the decision not to participate this summer.

"Bob Freedman [federation's longtime executive director] and I have spoken to many who agreed with the approach when they were given all of the facts," Lyons says.

A new committee, led by David Kroft, was formed to look at all sides of the issue and make a recommendation to federation's executive and board about future participation in Folklorama. Committee members had some ideas and tried to raise new sponsorship moneys, but in the end they agreed to withdraw the Israel pavilion from Folklorama this year.

Shalom Square has always had a large volunteer base and many of the volunteers are disappointed about the federation's decision to close the pavilion. "We all hope that Shalom Square will reopen in 2007," says Avrum Charach, one of the chairs of last summer's pavilion.

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Coast to Coast

KIDS GATHER FOOD: Students at Leo Baeck Day School's Thornhill campus answered the call recently when they heard the Pride of Israel Synagogue's food bank faced imminent closure unless it received donations immediately. In just five days, they collected more than 200 kilograms of food. Pictured, front row from left, are Erin Chesney, Corinne Shapero and Ruth Shvalbe, and, back row from left, are Laura Teeger, teacher Irith Rosen, Josh Silverman, teacher Joy Badler, Nicole Korb, Hayley Goldenberg, Jacob Mazer, Benji Blum and Elliot Seetner. [Jan Lapedus photo]

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

ייִדיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פֿון: אַלעק סילווער

ייִדיש לעבן אין מאָנטרעאָל

אַ שיינע שמחת תורה אין דער „שומרים לבוקר" שיל

פֿון גרזניאַ סלוצקי־קאַהן

די שיל „שומרים לבוקר" איז גוט באַקאַנט אין מאָנטרעאָל און נישט נאָר אין מאָנטרעאָל. ס'איז נישט קיין רייכע שיל, קיין סך גבֿירים דאָווענען דאָ נישט. די שיל איז אָבער ריין מיט אירע מעשׂים־טובֿים, מיט דער וואַרעמער אַטמאָספֿערע, וואָס הערשט אין שיל, מיט אירע טראַדיציעס, און ספּעציעל מיט איר רבֿ יונה ראָזנער, וועלכער האָט געשאַפֿן אין דער שיל די וואַרעמע אַטמאָספֿערע — איין גרויסע פֿריינדלעכע משפּחה.

הרבֿ יונה ראָזנער איז אַ ייִד אַ חכם. ער איז אַ מענטש מיט אַ סך וויסן, געדולד און מאַקט. אין דער שיל זיינען אָקטיוו אַ סך וואָלונטירן. איך האָב שוין מריצר געשריבן וועגן אַ פּורים פֿייערונג דאָ. איצט וויל איך באַשרייבן די פֿריילעכקייט דעם לעצטן שמחת תורה וווּ א גרויסער עולם האָט אַנטייל גענומען.

קודם כּל וויל איך אויסדריקן מיין פֿערוואָלעכע דאַנקבאַרקייט, ווי אויך אַלעמענס דאַנק צו שידלי אַלישאַנסקי, וועלכע האָט אַליין צוגעגרייט דעם זאָל פֿאַר 300 מענטשן און אפֿשר נאָך מער, באַשטימט ווער ס'וועט זיצן ביי יעדן טיש. עס איז נישט קיין גרינגע אַרבעט אַלעמען צופֿרידן צו שטעלן. די האָט באַפֿרצט די טישן מיט לעבעדיקע בלומען, באַשטעלט דאָס עסן ביי דעם „קייטערער" ערני, וואָס האָט מאַקע געמאַט אַ יידישן טעם, זייער געשמאַק.

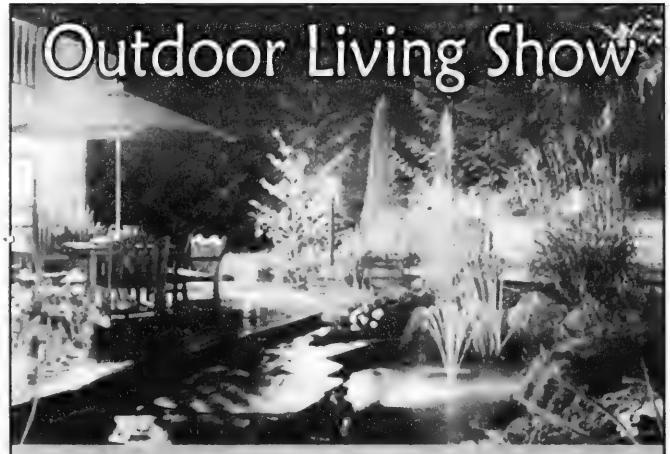
קיין משקה האָט אויף די טישן נישט אויסגעפֿלט. די שטימונג איז געווען אַ געהויבענע נאָך אייַדער מיר זיינען אַריין אין זאָל. עס איז געווען אַ פֿאַרגעניגן צו זען ווי דער יונגער דור טאַנצט אַרום מיט די ספֿר־תורות, ווי אויך דער עלטערער דור. אַ שיינע יוגנט האָט זיך פֿאַראַמלט אין דער שיל, האָבן שיין געדאָונט און מיר האָבן געשעפּט נחת פֿון זיי.

נאָך אַזא שרעקלעכן תורבן צו זען אַזא שיינע יידישע יוגנט, וואָס בייט אויף יידיש וועגן אַן פֿרייַד זיך אַזוי מיט דער תורה, איז פֿאַר מיר אַ גרויסע פֿרייַד. ווייל איך טאַקע האָנקען נאָט, וואָס כּהאָב דערלעבט צו זען אַזא שמחה. מיינע צוויי איניקלעך האָבן אַרומגעטאַנצט מיט די ספֿר־תורות צוזאַמען מיט די אַנדערע יונגע בחורים. עס איז שווער אויסצורעכענען אָלע נעמען.

דער נייער יונגער חזן ישׂראל אַרזאָן פֿון ישׂראל האָט אַרומגעטאַנצט מיט זיין 16־חדשימדיק טעכטערל, וועלכע האָט נעפֿאַשטשט מיט די העכטעלעך און זיך געפֿרייט ווי אַ דערוואַקסענער מענטש.

ביי דער נעלענדייט האָט מען אויך אָפּגענעמן דעם גהויפֿעריקן כּבֿוד און זייער וואַרעם באַריסט דעם גרויסן זעלבן פֿרעזידענט פֿון דער שיל, מאַקס האָופֿמ. פֿאַר זיינע טעטיקייטן. ער לייגט נאָך היינט אויך צו אַ האַנט. מאַקס האָופֿמ איז געווען אויסגעקליבן ווי דער בעסטער מאַן פֿון יאָר. ער האָט עס כּשר פֿאַרדינט. דעם כּבֿוד האָט ער געטיילט מיט אנדרז און אויך דעם שיינעם טאָרט.

די רביצין ראָזנער האָט נישט נעקענט אַרומטאַנצן, ווייל זי האָט צעבראָכן אַ פֿוס. זי האָט זיך אָבער זייער געפֿרייט מיט דער שמחה. קיינעם האָט זיך נישט נעגלוסט צו גיין אַהיים. אַ האַרציקן ייישר כּח אויך, שידלי אַלישאַנסקי און דעם „קייטערער" ערני פֿאַר אַזא געלונגענער שמחת תורה פֿייערונג.



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Threats to school rekindle security concerns

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Two threatening phone calls to the same Jewish elementary school in less than a week this month have reminded the Montreal Jewish community that despite its heavy investment in security, little can be done to escape harassment by apparent pranksters.

Opinion is divided on whether schools and other Jewish institutions should automatically decide to evacuate after receiving a menacing message, but when there is no evidence of danger – as did the administration of Jewish People's and Peretz Schools (JPPS) on both occasions.

The brief calls to JPPS on Feb. 2 at approximately 1 p.m. and on Feb. 6 at around 11 a.m. mentioned a bomb. They were apparently made by two different males in English. Police and FEDERATION CJA community security co-ordinator Michel Bujold were called immediately and arrived within five minutes in both cases.

Police spokesperson Const. Stephane Eid, said the Feb. 2 caller spoke of a bomb being at the school, and the Feb. 6 caller said, "today is the day." Eid said the investigation continues, but police have no suspects. He said police have no knowledge of similar recent threats to Jewish institutions.

Although an inspection inside and outside the Van Horne Avenue school found nothing suspicious in either incident, JPPS administrators sent the more than 500 students to the nearby Gelber Conference Centre. They walked the two blocks with their teachers to the centre, where parents were asked to pick up their children. The school remained closed for the rest of both days.

JPPS executive director Barry Rishikof said the community's protocol in such incidents was "followed to the letter" and that the safety of the children must be paramount. He would not, however, discuss the incidents in any detail, referring questions to Canadian Jewish Congress, because, he said, "this has an impact on all schools and institutions."

CJC spokesperson Eta Yudin downplayed the seriousness of the incidents, but left specific comment to Rabbi Reuben Poupko, chair of the community-wide security co-ordinating committee.

Rabbi Poupko suggested the school overreacted, causing unnecessary panic and possibly encouraging more threats.

"What happened is that on two days, a 30-second prank by two different people was able to terrorize a whole school. Common sense dictates that there was no real threat. All schools, Jewish and non-Jewish, public and private, receive these prank calls from time to time. Even though [JPPS] was given the all-clear, they still decided to evacuate," he said.

The community guidelines on such situations has established a protocol on what to do, but whether to evacuate is a "judgment call" by those in charge, he said.

However, Rabbi Poupko avoided directed criticism. "It is very hard not to take that extra step when hundreds of children are involved. I don't know what it would be like to have that responsibility."

He noted that in the case of the United Talmud Torahs (UTT) firebombing in April 2004, there was no warning. "In the overwhelming number of cases, those who talk about it don't do it."

The first threatening call to JPPS coincided with the news that UTT arsonist Sleiman El-Merhebi's statutory release, after serving two-thirds of his jail sentence, had been approved by Correctional Service of Canada.

The UTT attack was what prompted the federation to raise $2.3 million to invest in the security of all Jewish schools and day-care centres. This included the hiring of the New York-based firm International Security Associates to conduct an assessment of all 40 campuses and the hiring of the first community-wide security expert. Bujold was head of security at Concordia University for 12 years.

Equipment such as surveillance cameras, intercom and access-control devices, as well as improved fencing and lighting, have been installed at the schools. Staff have also been trained in safety procedures.

Private security guards were also placed at all schools, at the federation's expense, for the remainder of the school year after the UTT attack, but few today have them.

Rabbi Poupko conceded that "everyone thinks they are an expert" on security. "If you ask the JPPS parents, half will say the school is not doing enough, and half will say that it did too much."

Rishikof acknowledged that the opinion among parents on how the school handled the incidents is "across the spectrum," but he added that all of the school's board members are also JPPS parents and they approved of how things were done.

Following the second call to JPPS, the school held a meeting with parents, teachers and other staff in which concerns were addressed by Bujold and Simonetta Barth, commander of police station 25, who said police have stepped up patrols in the area.

At the meeting, the school also announced the implementation of further security measures, but Rishikof asked that they not be reported.

Counsellors from Jewish Family Services came to JPPS to speak to students and staff.

Rabbi Poupko concluded: "The lesson from this is that we need to take reasonable steps after any threat, using common sense and the advice of police and security professionals. It takes fortitude to say enough measures have been taken."

While Bujold couldn't be reached for comment, when he was hired in 2004 after the UTT arson, he said that "we have to find the right balance between ensuring the safety of our children, their teachers and their administrators, while ensuring that they are able to learn in an open and nurturing environment. We don't want security to become so overly obtrusive that it interferes excessively with the daily routine at school."

Four Jews among Order of Canada appointees

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Montrealer Steven Cummings, a former president of FEDERATION CJA and a current member of *The CJN*'s board of directors, was one of four Jewish Canadians who were named to the Order of Canada or had their rank promoted earlier this month.

"It's an honour, a great honour to be recognized by this great country, and I'm thrilled," Cummings told *The CJN*.

Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean announced the appointments, among 56 in all, on Feb. 3.

Cummings, president and CEO of the real estate company Maxwell Cummings & Sons Holdings, said he didn't know who nominated him.

His late grandfather, Maxwell, was named a member of the order in 1978.

Cummings was named to the order in recognition of his numerous volunteer activities. He has served as president of the Jewish General Hospital and its foundation, co-chaired the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA), and is founding chair of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre and founding co-chair of ProMontreal.

Cummings also serves on the boards of several public and private companies, including the Caisse de dépôt et de placement du Québec and VIA Rail.

Three other prominent Jewish Canadians, all of Toronto, were among those named to, or promoted within, the order.

• Bernard Ostry was promoted to the order's highest rank, companion, in recognition of his career in public service at both the provincial and federal levels, as well as for his role in "shaping Canada's and Ontario's social, cultural and industrial policies," and as an "outspoken advocate of cultural sovereignty and ethics in public service." At one time Canada's highest ranking public servant, Ostry served as deputy minister in a number of ministries, and he served as chair and CEO of TVOntario, as well as on the boards of several universities, and on the boards of the Canadian Conference of the Arts and Heritage Canada.

• Gerald Schwartz was made an officer of the order for achievements in the sphere of "industry/commerce/business." A native of Winnipeg, Schwartz, with the late Izzie Asper, formed CanWest Capital Corporation, which later became the media giant CanWest Global Communications. Schwartz then founded Onex Corporation, becoming its chair, president and CEO and making it one of Canada's largest companies. Within the Jewish community, Schwartz is a co-founder of CIJA, and he established the Gerald Schwartz/Heather Reisman Centre for Jewish Learning at Toronto's Holy Blossom Temple, served as honorary chef de mission for Maccabi Canada, and has been active in UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

• Lawyer Clayton Ruby was made a member of the order for his legal and social activism. Ruby practises criminal, constitutional and administrative law, and has served as counsel in many high-profile cases. He has served as a director of PEN Canada, the Sierra Legal Defence Fund and other human rights and environmental groups.

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Psychologist's book helps people cope with life changes

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

After an unexpected health crisis forced her to put her life and work on hold, Dr. Sharyn Salsberg Ezrin was inspired to write a book to help others through their own life or work transitions.

Dr. Sharyn Salsberg Ezrin

The idea for the book emerged when she began talking about her transition with others, who were going through their own life-changing situations, said Salsberg Ezrin, an applied psychologist and the author of *Living Through Transitions* (Trafford Publishing).

"The experience that I had was learning to live with arthritis. It took me through many different phases," she said explaining that her bout with arthritis was due to an auto-immune disease, not the kind that is brought on by wear and tear of joints.

"It was unlike any transition I had ever planned or faced unexpectedly because I did not know how or when it would end. My transition lasted three years and my work and life situations changed as a result," she wrote in her introduction.

"I decided to research stories of others who had experienced work or life transitions so I might test out some of the ideas and approaches I has developed for myself."

She began to interview people in 2003 and developed a structured questionnaire for 75 people.

"One of the things that I learned was that whether it was planned or unplanned, there were some features in their transition experiences that were very different."

Salsberg Ezrin explained that there are many unexpected situations in life that would lead someone to want to make a change, such as a death in the family, the loss of a job, or an illness.

Others may simply be looking to take matters into their own hands to improve their lives.

"So, what we have to do is understand what their patterns have been up to that point in time. What it takes to make a change, what they need before they make a transition and how to prepare themselves."

While her book is classified as a self-help book, she said it is different from most others.

"One of the things that I found, which was not helpful to people, is that many of the self-help books are very prescriptive. There are many steps and you have to follow the sequence they recommend. You are actually making yourself work hard, which is something I didn't want [for the book]," Salsberg Ezrin said.

"I wanted people to understand the process and to value the process and to find the process meaningful, rather than to rush through it to finish it."

The book is divided into two parts. The first, the courage of the heart, is what helps you move beyond the sense of shock and despair, and the second, the courage of the mind, is what helps you establish the steps you need to take to complete the transition.

"If the person who is being coached is gung-ho and knows what they need to do, and is focused and practices, it is very hard for them not to do well because [the process] is so logical," Salsberg Ezrin said.

The transition, which usually takes between six months to a year to complete, would be very hard to do alone, without the support of family and friends, she said.

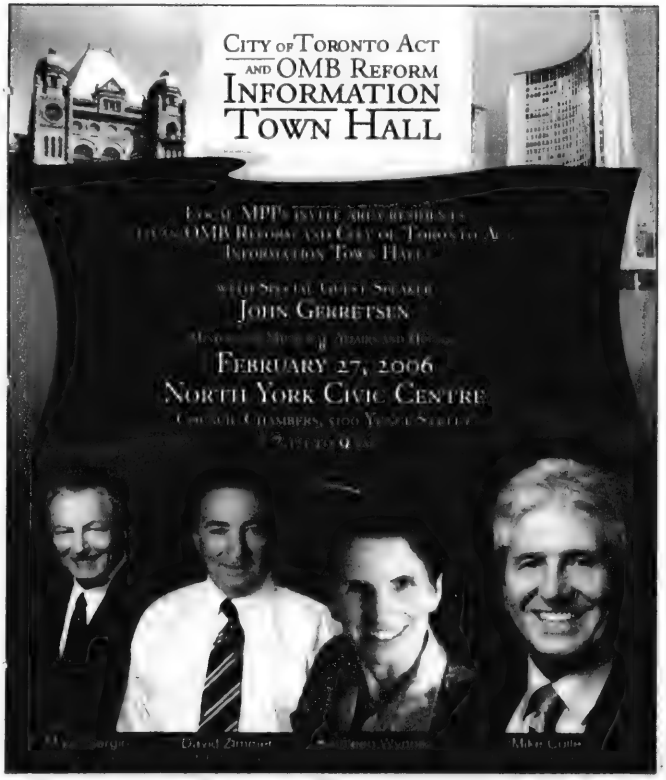
"It is very important to get feedback from somebody."

Salsberg Ezrin, who will be launching her book on Feb. 27 at the University of Toronto at 5:30 pm, hopes that the book will act as a catalyst, and "give people a reality check," about where they are in life and dreams that are within their reach.

Salsberg Ezrin also hopes the process will be an enjoyable experience.

"You should enjoy the transition as an end in itself. And most of the other books that are written with this idea in mind put more emphasis on the transition as a means to an end. I see it as an end in itself."

For more information or to order a book, visit www.transitionstory.com.



MAD FOR MOZART

The Associated Hebrew Schools' Neptune Avenue campus celebrated Mozart's 250th birthday recently. Dressed in their best Mozart or musical costumes, more than 250 students were treated to the story of the composer's life as told by Mozart himself, played by principal Eric Golombek, right. The program took place in the Posluns Auditorium at Baycrest. Pictured with Golombek are Wilf Posluns, left, and students Oren and Shira Krupat.

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Is Russia's Hamas overture the end of the 'road map'?

By DAN BARON
JTA

JERUSALEM — Cracks are showing in the international demands on Hamas to recognize Israel and renounce terrorism before it takes over the Palestinian Authority.

Ignoring the preconditions, Russian President Vladimir Putin has offered to host leaders of the radical Islamic group in Moscow, prompting similar overtures from elsewhere in Europe.

"We believe that it is an initiative that can contribute to advancing our positions," French Foreign Ministry spokesperson Denis Simonneau was quoted as saying late last week in *Ha'aretz*. "We share with Russia the goal of leading Hamas toward positions that would allow for the goal of two states living in peace and security to be reached."

There was consternation in Israel, which had hoped to parlay Hamas' unexpected victory in last month's Palestinian Authority election into a chance to make the Palestinian terrorist group embrace a new political pragmatism.

While analysts wrote off Putin's move a bid to boost his diplomatic standing, many Israelis predicted it would spell the end of the "road map" to peaceful coexistence with the Palestinians, which had been co-sponsored by Russia.

"As far as Israel is concerned, the Quartet, which adopted the road map in 2003, now becomes a 'Trio' whose members are the United States, European Union and United Nations," analyst Ze'ev Schiff wrote in *Ha'aretz*.

Fending off a hailstorm of Israeli criticism – as well as a possible showdown with Washington – Russia insisted it only wanted to help tame Hamas.

"We will ask Hamas to change their position according to the latest decisions of the Quartet, which are recognition of Israel, rejection of terrorism and execution of the Palestinian Authority's past agreements" with Israel, said Russia's Middle East envoy Alexander Kalugin.

Such declarations did little to convince Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, who has worked to convince the international community that Hamas reform must precede its recognition abroad.

"First they start with talks, after that they 'try to understand.' Then give money, then legitimacy. This is what we must act against," she told Israel Radio.

"This is a black-and-white situation," Livni said. "The biggest problem is that Hamas does not accept the terms of the Quartet."

Olmert, the front-runner for Israel's March 28 general election, assumed a more resigned tone over the Russian move.

But he told his Cabinet that once the new Palestinian Authority Parliament is formed – beginning this coming weekend – "the rules of the game will change." The remarks were interpreted as a threat that Israel could sanction a future Hamas-led government by refusing to hand over taxes collected on behalf of the Palestinian Authority.

Despite the pressure piled upon it, Hamas insists it has no plan to change its charter – calling for jihad against the Jewish state – or give up its weapons. At best, some Hamas leaders have offered Israel an extended truce – cold comfort, given that the group's theosophy predicts Zionism's end by the early 2020s.

Some Israelis predict that Hamas will end up paying at least lip service to the idea of peace, which will be eagerly welcomed by an international community embattled by the U.S.-led "war on terror" and the more recent Danish cartoon furor.

"Hamas will say something, out of the corner of its mouth, a hazy bit of mumbling with deliberate dissembling, in order to allow the world to establish ties with it, talk to it, and recommend it to Israel as a negotiating partner," wrote *Ma'ariv*'s editor-in-chief, Amnon Dankner, in a front-page commentary.

"Will the tensions between the Muslim world and the Western world lead Europe to appease the Muslims in Israeli coin?"

Iran's Jews speak out

JTA

TEHRAN — The leader of Iranian Jewry criticized the country's president for denying the Holocaust.

"How is possible to ignore all of the undeniable evidence existing for the exile and massacre of the Jews in Europe during World War II?" Haroun Yashayaei wrote in a recent letter to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, copies of which reached the international press this week. "Challenging one of the most obvious and saddening events of 20th-century humanity has created astonishment among the people of Iran and spread fear and anxiety among the small Jewish community of Iran."

There was no word on whether Ahmadinejad, who has recently drawn global censure for his Holocaust denials and calls for Israel to be "wiped off the map," responded to the letter.

There are around 25,000 Jews in Iran, which has a total population of 70 million people, and the community is under close scrutiny by the state.

Sharon undergoes colostomy

By JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — During Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's three-hour emergency operation to remove a third of his large intestine on Saturday, a stoma was inserted into his abdominal wall so that the condition of his colon could be followed without necessarily having to perform further surgery.

A colostomy procedure was carried out, which involves the attachment of the cut end of the remaining colon to an opening (stoma) in the abdominal wall, allowing feces to emerge through it and into a bag instead of the normal process. It can be reversed if, and when, there is no further necrosis of the colon, which forced the urgent operation, Hadassah Medical Organization sources said on Sunday.

Contrary to reports in the Hebrew newspapers, his intestinal surgery does not automatically require another operation in a few days. If blood supply to the remaining large intestine remains good and more tissue does not become gangrenous, he will not have to have more surgery.

Hadassah sources said that the necrosis resulted not from a blood clot in a branch of the supreme mesenteric artery to his colon, but merely from reduced blood flow, which happens quite often in long-term comatose patients.

Sharon remains in serious but stable condition and not in immediate danger in the ground-floor intensive-care unit of the Hadassah University Medical Center in Jerusalem's Ein Kerem. He will continue to receive his nutrition intravenously until he is well enough for the food tube to his stomach to be restored.

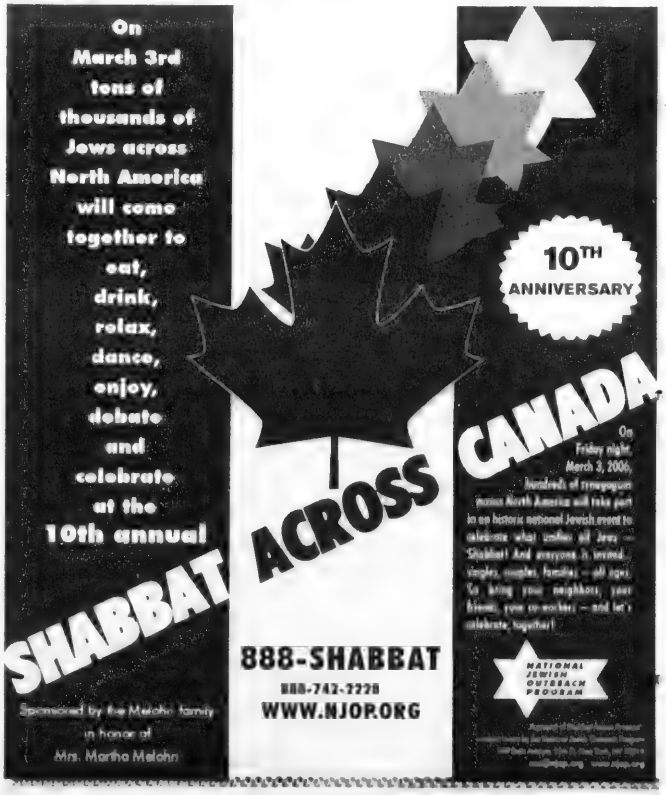
A spokesperson for Hadassah Medical Organization declined to comment on an anonymous quote in *Ha'aretz* on Sunday in which a "senior Hadassah doctor" claimed that if Sharon had "not been prime minister," the emergency operation would not have been performed and he would be allowed to die.

Sharon is being watched round-the-clock by chief anesthetist Charles Weissman, and anesthetist Yoram Weiss, along with a team of nurses.

The move from the seventh-floor neurosurgery intensive-care unit, where he has been treated for nearly six weeks since his massive hemorrhagic stroke on Jan. 4, to the ground-floor intensive care unit was complicated by security logistics.

Staffers on the seventh floor said they were "sad to see him go," but some family members were relieved because the high security there made access more difficult.

Consultations were due to be held this week about the possibility of several long-term nursing and rehabilitation facilities where he could have been transferred, but due to his setback, they have been postponed.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Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

Annual Passover Literary Supplement

We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. Stories should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 10. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office. E-mail: **info@cjnews.com.** Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Please note: submissions will *not* be returned. Only writers whose work is chosen for publication will be contacted.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual **Purim Art Contest**.

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of *CJN* employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN*'s 2006 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for $25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, 2006. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 3, 2006.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 16, 2006. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des Loteries et courses du Québec.

Hamas was a key agenda item at Sunday's meeting of the Israeli cabinet. Seen with acting Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, right, are, from right, ministers Tzipi Livni, Tzachi Hanegbi and Meir Sheetrit. [Israel Sun photo]

Hamas on agenda as German foreign minister visits

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier arrived late Sunday for his first visit to Israel, during which he was expected to reiterate Germany's strong position against dealing with Hamas until it disarms and disavows terrorism, recognizes Israel and accepts all previous agreements.

Both German and Israeli officials said emphatically that Steinmeier would have no contact with anyone related to Hamas. He was to meet with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and PA Foreign Minister Nasser al-Kidwa in Ramallah on Tuesday. Merkel made crystal-clear her opposition to dealing with Hamas during her visit here.

Steinmeier was scheduled to meet Monday with acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni.

In related developments, Livni last week rebuffed Qatari efforts to "mediate" with Hamas, saying Israel will have nothing to do with the organization until it changes its ways.

The Qatari overture came last Thursday evening, when Livni was in the United States. The Qatari officials who contacted her discussed brokering a long-term *hudna* (cease-fire) between Hamas and Israel.

According to Israeli officials, Livni said there would be "no middle ground with Hamas," and that the organization needed to accept the three conditions placed on it by Israel and the international community: disarm and disavow terrorism, recognize Israel and accept all the agreements with it.

Olmert told the cabinet at its weekly meeting Sunday that "the rules of the game will change" as soon as the Hamas-led Palestinian Legislative Council is sworn in.

The new PLC is expected to be sworn in on Saturday.

Olmert's comments came in the context of explaining his decision last week to transfer some $50 million (US) in tax and custom revenue to the Palestinian Authority. He took a jab at Likud chairman Binyamin Netanyahu, who criticized him for approving the transfers, saying that when Netanyahu was finance minister the funds were transferred sometimes just a day or two after a suicide attack.

Olmert said once the new government was sworn in, the PA would then effectively become a Hamas government. He said from Israel's perspective "it is unimportant if it is a government of technocrats or the ministers are formal Hamas members."

Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz, who also briefed the cabinet, said once the council was sworn in, Abbas was expected to charge Hamas with forming a government. He said this would begin the "countdown" toward the establishment of a new government and the possibility that Abbas would transfer responsibility for some of the PA security services to Hamas.

Mofaz noted that in this case, Hamas would be in charge of fulfilling the PA's commitment to dismantle the terrorist infrastructures and move toward implementing the "road map" peace plan, something extremely unlikely since Hamas officials have said they have no intention of recognizing Israel or of "abandoning the resistance."

Olmert termed Russian President Vladimir Putin's recent invitation of Hamas to Moscow for talks a mistake, even though the Russians said they were not backpedalling from the three conditions the international community has placed on Hamas. He also said French President Jacques Chirac assured him during a phone conversation last week that France supported Israel's position on this matter. This despite a French foreign ministry spokesperson's comment Saturday showing understanding for Putin's initiative.

Mofaz said Russian Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov told him at a NATO meeting over the weekend that Putin's invitation was meant to pressure Hamas through direct dialogue, not through public statements. He said Israel's position on the matter was made clear.

Livni briefed the cabinet on her talks in Washington and at the United Nations last week. She said it did not matter whether Hamas was democratically elected or not, or whether people voted for Hamas because they were sick of PA corruption and not because of Hamas' jihad ideology. What mattered was the bottom line, she said, which was that Hamas was a terrorist organization and that a government it led would be a terrorist government.

Abbas said before the elections the vote was needed to give him the legitimacy necessary to dismantle the terrorist organizations and put the PA security apparatus under one authority. Livni said she called on the United States and the UN to hold him to this pledge.

Vote 'simplistic and unbalanced'

Continued from page 1

such as Caterpillar Inc., until they change their policies."

The decision was a "one-eyed" response that "only rebukes one side," said Rev. Carey, and displayed the Church's "propensity to reduce complex issues to black and white."

In his Feb. 10 letter to Rabbi Sacks, Archbishop Williams said the church has been misunderstood and had "not resolved to disinvest." Sacks, evidently prepared to try and downplay the dispute, welcomed the Williams clarification.

Archbishop Williams wrote that the church was seeking to register its "concern" over the "demolition of Palestinian homes" by the Israeli government and to "review whether we should or could continue with an investment policy which appeared to accept something with which we were deeply uneasy."

The archbishop acknowledged that the timing of the Synod vote was "unfortunate," following closely upon the Hamas electoral victory, but he stated that the church had "emphatically not" recommended a boycott or compromised its "commitment to oppose any form of anti-Semitism at home or abroad."

The Church of England's own ethical investment advisory group recommended against divestment last fall. While the latest vote is not binding on the church, it would probably compel the advisory group to review its decision when it meets in May, Lou Henderson, a spokesperson for the Church of England, told the *New York Times*.

A year ago, the Anglican Church of Canada assured Canadian Jewish Congress that it had "no intention at this time" of exploring divestment in Israel.

Nothing has changed since, Eleanor Johnson, director of partnerships for the Canadian church, told *The CJN*'s Ron Csillag.

"We are looking at ethical screening of our investment. But that's not new," Johnson said. "There aren't very many moments for those kinds of considerations in terms of policy. Nothing has happened in terms of policy."

She said the Canadian church has no investments in Caterpillar.

Unlike the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, with 77 million members worldwide, is divided into 38 self-governing "provinces."

Also last week, a Presbyterian committee investigating the U.S. church's possible financial disengagement from Israel said it would not recommend divestment to the church's general assembly in June.

The church said it needs more time before it makes its decision, Religion News Service reported.

The Presbyterian Church USA upset Jewish groups when it voted in 2004 to pursue "selective" divestment from Caterpillar, Motorola, ITT Industries and United Technologies if the companies refuse to stop doing business with Israel.

But the Presbyterian Church has yet to divest from any company, and the idea has largely failed to gain support elsewhere, including within the Episcopal Church USA.

Jon Benjamin, CEO of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, branded the Anglican vote "simplistic" and "unbalanced."

"What it shows is that the thinking of people who support these resolutions is not very sophisticated," he said. There were sound reasons why the Israeli government had adopted its security policies, but these were never "aired or discussed" by the synod, Benjamin said.

During the one-hour debate that preceded the vote, a letter from the Episcopal bishop of Jerusalem, the Rt. Rev. Riah Abu al-Assal, was read to the synod.

In it, the bishop complained that "nonviolent instruments such as divestment from companies that produce death rather than life, does [sic] not get the same attention" as the church gives to issues such as human sexuality.

American Jewish leaders, who thought they had successfully swayed Protestant churches on divestment, were alarmed by the Church of England's decision.

"You could say that it was naivete on the part of the Presbyterians when they voted like this two years ago," said Rabbi David Elcott, director of United States interreligious affairs at the American Jewish Congress. "But you can't say that now, with the election of Hamas and the other changes. The Anglican decision pulls them out of the coalition for peace and puts them on the side of violence."

But one influential English bishop, the Rt. Rev. John Gladwin, said he held Israel responsible for the worsening plight of Palestinian Christians, telling the synod, "Caterpillar may be a company being used for dreadful purposes across the world, but the problem is not Caterpillar. The problem is the situation in the Middle East and the government of Israel."

A counter motion offered by the pro-Israel pressure group Anglicans for Israel was not presented to the synod, which adopted the motion by a show of hands, with Archbishop Williams voting in favour, and the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu, abstaining.

The World Jewish Congress (WJC) decried the Anglican decision as a "shameful" act and one that is reminiscent of the "Dark Ages."

Israel Singer, chair of the WJC's political council said in Jerusalem, where the congress last week held meetings of its governing board: "We will continue our dialogue with other churches, such as the Catholic Church, and through dialogue, we will fight such one-sided acts."

Livi warns of 'terror state'

The Palestinian Authority will become a "terror state" if Hamas controls the Palestinian parliament without renouncing violence or recognizing Israel, Israeli foreign minister Tzipi Livni told reporters last week after meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice in Washington. Rice said the United States would continue reviewing its aid to the Palestinians in light of Hamas' victory. "There simply has to be a recognition of the State of Israel's right to exist," Rice said. The two also discussed Iran's nuclear plans and regional security issues.

Katsav to visit Greece

Moshe Katsav was to visit Greece in what is believed to be the first state visit by an Israeli president to Athens. During the Feb. 14-16 visit, Katsav was to hold meetings with Greek President Karolos Papoulias, Prime Minister Costas Karamanlis, and Greek Jewish leaders. The presidents were also slated to travel to Thessaloniki together, where they were to visit the Jewish museum and the Holocaust memorial to recall Jews from the city who died in the Shoah.

Gaza farmers to be retrained

Hebrew University plans to retrain evacuated Gaza Strip settlement farmers. The university said last week some 100 farmers evacuated from Gaza would receive advanced training at its faculty of agricultural, food and environmental quality sciences. The state-funded studies begin March 5 and will last up to 24 months. The project aims to help evacuees return to farming.

Soccer game a go

A Denmark-Israel soccer match will go on as scheduled. The Danish Football Association confirmed it would send a team to Israel for the March game despite concerns the Danes would cancel the match because of fears of reprisals. Denmark has been the target of Muslim protests after a Danish newspaper printed editorial cartoons that many Muslims find offensive.

Hebron observers forced out

Members of the Temporary International Presence in Hebron were forced to leave their headquarters for the first time since its inception because of violent Palestinian protests over Danish cartoons seen as insulting Islam. Scores of protesters last week threw stones and some forced their way into the mission headquarters, damaging property.

Gay pride stabber jailed

An Israeli man was jailed for 12 years for stabbing three people at last June's Jerusalem gay pride parade. Yishai Schlissel, a 30-year-old West Bank settler was also fined $65,000. The court said it gave him a stiff sentence to deter more ideological violence. Schlissel said God ordered him to carry out the attack to defend Jerusalem's sanctity.

From JTA and Jerusalem Post

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Amona inquiry might also probe army's conduct

By YIGAL GRAYEFF
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — The commission of inquiry that will examine the actions of the police during the evacuation of Amona two weeks ago should also scrutinize the army's performance, Internal Security Minister Gideon Ezra said last week.

"The body that has control over Judea and Samaria is the army and not the police," he said. "The police was at the service of the army. The commission needs to examine everything."

The Knesset has voted to establish the commission to look into the violence at Amona, when police clashed with demonstrators who were trying to prevent the demolition of nine houses. The Police Investigative Department (PID) said early last week it would conduct its own inquiry.

Ezra agreed with the police officers that the army should have done more to prevent protesters from reaching the outpost, but said this was something for the commission to examine.

Ezra and the police said they respected the Knesset vote, but privately, officers were unhappy that all the focus had been placed on them.

"The army was responsible for the evacuation. They should also be criticized," said one officer.

"Why didn't the army ensure that those who arrived were barred from entering?" he added. "If the army had done its job properly, these people wouldn't have entered and there would have been less of a mess."

Before the police carried out the evacuation of the houses, army units had taken up positions on the perimeter and were supposed to prevent protesters from arriving in Amona. In addition, soldiers set up roadblocks on the approach to the outpost.

However, the officer said this was not enough. "The army should have closed the place earlier," he said. "They knew that they were going to carry out an evacuation on that Wednesday. They should have closed the area two or three days or even a week beforehand in order to stop people from arriving...

"Roadblocks aren't closing the place off. They shouldn't have allowed them to get to the area where the houses were located."

Another officer expressed his resentment at the creation of the commission.

"There is a lot of anger among officers who were in the field," he said. "It gives legitimacy to those who want to use violence against the police. If a policeman did do something wrong, then the PID will investigate."

The army declined to comment on Ezra's statements and those of the police, saying it was a political matter. However, senior Israel Defence Forces officers said that the strategy of Central Command was to disturb the routine life of the thousands of settlers living in the area as little as possible.

"The main road serves thousands of settlers living in the region, and the decision not to set up checkpoints earlier was measured against the disturbances they would be forced to endure had such measures been taken," one army officer said.

Ezra said that it was very difficult to close off the area.

"The place was open from all four sides," he said. "They came by foot from the *wadis*. It wasn't possible to stop all of them. It is impossible to close an area for a long time."

The Knesset House Committee will take up the issue and define the commission's brief, after which the plenum will carry out a second reading. The commission is expected to be charged with examining complaints that the police used excessive violence and that officers physically, verbally and even sexually abused settlers and their supporters at the scene.

However, Ezra doesn't believe the commission should have been set up in the first place.

"I don't think the Knesset should be the PID," he said, adding: "The police were carrying out a court decision, and there is therefore no reason for a commission of inquiry. I will give my full backing to the police. They predicted that there would be violence and prepared for it beforehand."

Internal Security Ministry spokesperson Yehuda Maman said the commission should also examine the role of the protesters.

"If you are already carrying out a probe, then investigate the leaders who encouraged the evacuees to use violence," he said. "It must not be forgotten that the protesters prepared for this with blocks and iron."

About 250 people were injured in the clashes, including 82 police officers. Of the latter, 54 were hospitalized and all but two were discharged the same day. A teenage demonstrator's skull was fractured, and his mother said he had been hit by a police baton.

One border police officer, Alon Madar, 19, almost lost his sight after being hit by a piece of glass, while cavalry officer Peretz Margalit was injured in the leg by a stone. Both were hospitalized and released earlier this week.

A border police officer was stabbed with a makeshift weapon and lightly injured, as were officers who were hit on the head by blocks and large stones. According to Judea and Samaria Police spokesperson Shlomi Sagi, riot gear prevented their injuries from being more serious.

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PERSONALITY OF THE MONTH

This month, we wish to honour the memory of Bora Laskin, the son of Russian immigrants who became the first Jewish judge on the Supreme Court of Canada.

After graduating from U of T and Harvard Law schools with Master's degrees, he was confronted with law firm's quotas for Jewish lawyers, so he went to work teaching at the University of Toronto. There he took on a prodigious workload, teaching more courses than anyone else, working late into the night to satisfy his commitments.

Appointed to Canada's top court in 1970, Chief Justice Laskin served for 14 years. Under his leadership judges were encouraged to include social issues in their deliberations. This remains one of his most important changes to jurisprudence because even today, it affects the quality of life for all Canadians.

We shall always remember his extraordinary contribution to Canada with pride and affection.

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"Two years ago I had my Bar Mitzvah and contributed to the Kroft Bar/Bat Mitzvah Fund at Toronto Hadassah-WIZO. I bought siddurim and tallitot for boys at Ben Yakir Youth Village. During winter break I was in Israel and visited Ben Yakir. I met some of the boys who received my gifts. I wasn't sure what to expect, but when I got there, we quickly started talking. We had a great conversation about what having a Bar Mitzvah meant to us. After I met the boys, I felt really good about what I did; I realized they were great guys who unfortunately have had some unlucky situations."

Text by Bryan Flatt

Celebrate with the Stars

"People often have the misconception that planning a wedding, bar or bat mitzvah has to be a stressful and tedious experience," states Marla Kay, organizer of "A Celebration of Stars," a trade show which assembles a large variety of party professionals serving the Jewish community.

"As a bridal and party consultant over the past 20 years, I know how wonderful it is to plan a simcha. There are so many details to be looked after. For the past 10 years at each of my shows, I have brought together over 60 professional "stars" of the party industry to display their wonderful products and services."

This year, the Celebration of Stars Wedding, Bar and Bat Mitzvah Show will take place on Wednesday, March 22, 2006 at Meron Banquet Hall. It starts at 6 p.m. and runs until 10:00 p.m. This year Manieh Fanaian Couture will be presenting their 2006 bridal collection on a fabulous runway fashion show, which will begin promptly at 8 p.m.

When you attend the Celebration of Stars Show, all of your entire party needs will be represented and you will be able to meet our party's finest on an informal basis. Each of the various stages of party planning will be available and by having more than one company displaying their unique talents in a particular category, you have the choice of which individual will suit your needs. You may choose from a variety of party professionals who will strive to maintain the highest standards of excellence in their particular area of expertise. You will be offered bridal and party consultants, catering (Kosher), invitations, florists, make-up artists, personalized party favours, photography, videography, cakes, creative room decor and centrepieces, orchestras, DJ's, and jewellery & giftware. Some of the "stars" are very well known in the simcha industry and there will also be some new faces as well.

"Every Celebration of Stars Bridal, Bar and Bat Mitzvah Show that I have organized has proven to be so successful for both guests and exhibitors that as soon as I finish one, I begin plans for the next one," says Kay. "Organizing a party is what I do best and I think that it is certainly reflected in my shows."

Come and see for yourself that the Celebration of Stars has got it all and is one show that you don't want to miss. Admission and parking is free. For further information ... contact Marla Kay at **905-669-0777.**

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Grease raises funds for kids with cancer

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

With theatre as his personal passion and charity a core value, it made perfect sense for Jason Spetter to start up a production company that raises money for important causes.

Now in its fourth year, Fallen Rock Productions will be presenting the timeless classic *Grease* next week, with all proceeds going towards the Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario.

"To me, *Grease* is a slice of life from the 1950s," says Spetter, 33, who in addition to being co-creator of Fallen Rock with Eric Weisz, is a lawyer by day and the director of *Grease* by night.

"It's a high-energy show with songs that are familiar to everyone."

In addition to its charitable mandate, Fallen Rock strives to nurture young, local talent, of which there is no shortage in Toronto, according to Spetter.

"We really promote ourselves as being a company looking to give young performers the opportunity to show their stuff," he says. "And fortunately, in the city at this time, there's not a lot of work for stage actors, so we've been successful in finding actors."

The 40 or so cast and crew members of *Grease* are primarily volunteering their time, though many have professional training and experience.

Choreographer Marc Kimelman, who teaches dance professionally, says it's especially rewarding to work with volunteers because they seem to be extra appreciative.

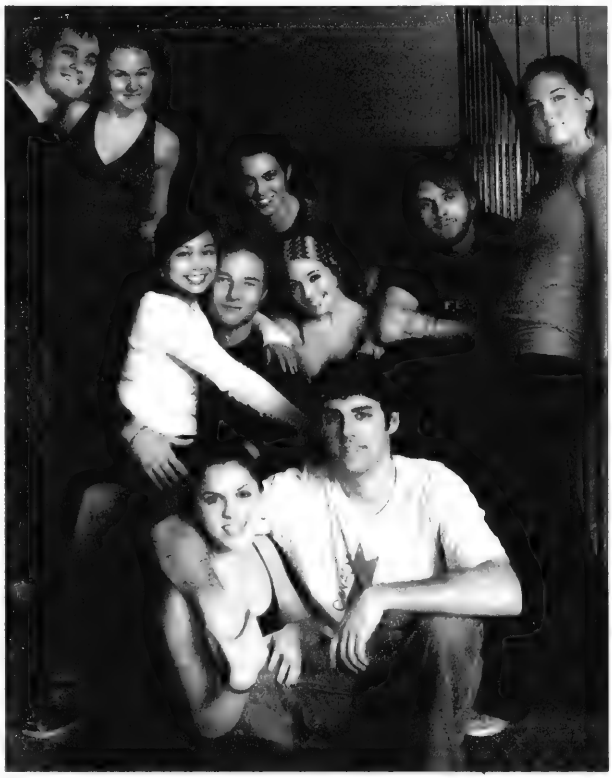
"It's so great seeing how dedicated and committed they are," says the 25-year-old. "For them, it's more fun than work. So when I'm with them, I'm reminded of how much fun it is and I never associate work with it because they bring such a great vibe."

Since most of the people involved have other jobs or school commitments, rehearsals were spread out over three months, with the group getting together a couple of times a week.

While *Grease*'s songs and dances are cult classics, Kimelman notes he has thrown in a few twists and turns to keep things fresh.

"With *Grease Lightning*, we've tried changing it with different steps," he says.

"And we've done the same thing with *Hand Jives*, by creating a big production number that makes it much bigger than it normally is."



Fallen Rock Production's cast of *Grease*

Previous shows presented by Fallen Rock include *Moulin Rouge*, *West Side Story* and *Little Shop of Horrors*.

Spetter says much more is in store for Fallen Rock and he's intent on growing the company.

"I hope we continue to build our reputation in the community and grow our success, artistically and financially," he offers. "The more well known we are, the easier it is to raise funds, and that's the ultimate goal."

Grease will be performed at the Isabel Bader Theatre, 93 Charles St. W., from Feb. 22 to 25.

For tickets, call 416-978-8849 or go online to www.uofttix.ca. For more information about Fallen Rock, visit www.fallenrock.ca.

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Arts & Travel

TRAVEL TALK

BY BILL GLADSTONE

JEWISH MUSIC FESTIVAL SET FOR NEW ORLEANS

The New Orleans International Jewish Music Festival will be "integral to rebuilding Jewish culture in New Orleans after the devastation of Hurricane Katrina," according to co-organizer Gary Rosenthal, a Washington, D.C.-based artist who hopes the festival "will reinvigorate Jewish culture in The Big Easy."

Scheduled for April 1 and 2, the two-day celebration of Jewish music and culture features the likes of Neshama Carlebach, the Moshav Band, RebbeSoul, Sam Glaser, Theresa Andersson, the New Orleans Klezmer All-Stars and others. Ticket packages are $25 (students), $50 (out-of-state attendees), and $250 (patrons).

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, the New Orleans Jewish community consisted of about 9,500 people. It is believed that about 75 per cent suffered severe damage to their homes and that less than 50 per cent have returned to the area.

Other sponsors of the festival are *Moment Magazine* and the Jewish Federation of Greater New Orleans. For details, visit the websites www.hiddurmitzvah.org or www.howlin-wolf.com.

* * *

Medical History in Jerusalem: "Materia Medica in the History of Jerusalem," a permanent exhibition of traditional medical remedies used in the region over the last 3,000 years, opened recently in the main lobby of Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem.

The exhibition consists of five displays representing the First and Second Temple eras, the Byzantine and early Arab period, the Mamlukite period, the 19th century, and the period after Shaare Zedek's founding in 1902. An estimated 15,000 people pass through Shaare Zedek's lobby each week.

* * *

Eilat Underwater Photography: A first prize of $10,000 and two additional prizes of $3,000 each should attract flocks of amateur and professional photographers, working with either film or digital cameras, to the SanDisk 2006 Red Sea Underwater Photo Competition, to be held in Eilat from April 24 to 29.

The contest is open to photographers from around the world, who may submit underwater photos shot at any time and from any location. "The last competition received a great deal of attention among underwater photographers and divers from around the world," said David Pilosof, the competition's originator. "We expect even more entrants and press coverage this year due to the larger prizes."

Co-sponsors of the event include Isrotel and the Israeli Ministry of Tourism. For more details, phone 972-9-745-7055 or visit the website www.sandiskredsea.com

* * *

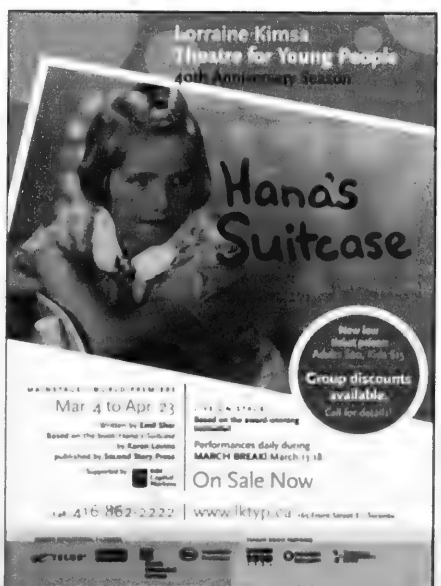
Kudos from Conde Nast: A select panel of readers of *Conde Nast Traveler Magazine* have included four Israeli hotels among 700 hotels worldwide that made the magazine's prestigious 2005 Gold List. The four Israeli hotels are Le Meridian Dead Sea Hotel, the Inbal Jerusalem Hotel, King David Jerusalem, and Hilton Tel Aviv. Conde Nast calls the Gold List "the ultimate guide to the finest establishments in the world."

* * *

Sephardi Museum in Portugal: A new Jewish museum has opened in Belmonte, a mountain village in central Portugal where a historic medieval Jewish community once thrived, which is still home to hundreds of crypto-Jews. The Belmonte Jewish Museum has space for permanent and temporary exhibits and a 70-seat auditorium and houses the Adriano Vasco Rodrigues Center for Judaic Studies.

* * *

Russia by Riverboat: Brian Stein, travel consultant for East-West Travels, has organized a heritage trip to Russia involving riverboat travel between St. Petersburg and Moscow, and an itinerary that includes Jewish sites in both cities. Departs May 17. Early-bird discount until March 1. 416-961-8234.



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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

POPULAR CHILDREN'S BOOK *HANA'S SUITCASE* ADAPTED FOR STAGE

Hana's Suitcase, the multi-award-winning best-selling children's book by **Karen Levine**, is set to premiere next month as a stage play at Toronto's Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People (LKTYP). The playwright is **Emil Sher**, who called the theatre's artistic director, **Allen MacInnis**, with a proposal for dramatizing the story just as MacInnis had put the book down with the same idea. "Clearly, we were meant to be working together on this extraordinary project," MacInnis said.

Hana's Suitcase relates the true story of a young Jewish brother and sister who lived in Czechoslovakia during the Nazi occupation, and the group of Japanese schoolchildren who, decades later, yearned to know more about the girl, **Hana Brady**, whose name and birthdate were painted on an old battered suitcase provided by the Auschwitz Museum.

Employing a cast of eight, the play uses multimedia and other innovative staging techniques, and alternates between two time-frames: Tokyo in 2000 and Czechoslovakia in the 1930s and '40s.

A producer for CBC Radio, Levine first heard of the story from *The CJN*. Her radio documentary on the subject drew an immense response, inspiring her to expand the tale into a children's book. Published by Second Story Press of Toronto, the book has won 16 awards, been translated into many languages and sold more than 250,000 copies internationally. A television documentary, feature-length documentary and two films based on *Hana's Suitcase* are now also in the works.

Recommended for ages 10 and up, *Hana's Suitcase* premieres on LKTYP's Mainstage on March 9 and runs through April 23. Previews start March 4. $20-$15. 416 862-2222. www.lktyp.ca

* * *

Chai Tea Documentary: The next Chai Tea event of the Toronto Jewish Film Festival features *Diameter of the Bomb*, a documentary about a suicide bomb in Jerusalem in 2002. Equal parts thriller and mystery, the film follows Israeli police, secret service and military as they try to prevent the attack and track down the terrorist cell behind it. Sheppard Grande, Yonge and Sheppard. $15 in advance or at the door. Sunday, Feb. 26. Chai Tea 4 p.m., film 5 p.m. 416-324-9121, www.tjff.com

* * *

Names in the News: Former Toronto poet **Yerra Sugarman**, a university writing instructor in New York, participated recently in "A Hundred Years of Henry Roth," a program of the New York Public Library. She and writers **Gary Giddens** and **Cynthia Ozick** read excerpts from Roth's novels; **Daphne Merkin**, **Jonathan Rosen** and other scribes spoke about Roth's literary contributions, including his classic novel *Call It Sleep*; and Roth's son, **Hugh**, and several close associates of the late author offered reminiscences.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• **Hal Niedzviecki** launches the Vintage Canada paperback version of his novel *The Program*, which focuses on the world of advertising guru **Maury Stern**. Author **Lee Gowan** also reads from his novel *The Last Cowboy*. This Ain't The Rosedale Library, 483 Church St., upstairs. Sunday, Feb. 26, 7:30 p.m.

• The Toronto Jewish Film Festival hosted five free screenings of the acclaimed feature documentary *Paper Clips* last week for an estimated 1,300 students around Toronto. The film tells the inspiring story of a school project in Tennessee to collect six million paper clips to represent the number of people lost in the Holocaust. The film was shown at Cummer Middle School, Harbord Collegiate, St. Joseph's College, Dublin Heights, Armour Heights and United Synagogue Day School.

* * *

At the Galleries: Toronto artist **Rochelle Rubinstein**, a child of Holocaust survivors, is one of two contemporary artists included in "Unnatural Disasters," an exhibition at the McMaster Museum of Art that surveys acts of genocide, injustice, war, rampage and other upheavals as depicted by various artists since the Renaissance. **Goya**, **Durer**, **Kollwitz** and the late Polish-Canadian painter **Gershon Ishkowitz** are among the others chosen for the show, which is on view through Feb. 26.

Jessica Greenberg as Hana in *Hana's Suitcase*. [Daniel Alexander photo]

Rubinstein's pieces include embroidered prints on silk of aerial views of Auschwitz, 9/11, the tsunami and post-Katrina New Orleans; a mixed-media book-work in English and Hebrew called *Lamentations*; and a series of life-sized woodblock prints of anonymous villagers, printed and quilted on fabric.

Ingrid Mayrhofer, assistant curator, expressed delight at including the works of Rubinstein and contemporary artist **Oscar de las Flores** in the show. Rubinstein "appropriates impersonal images from the public domain, such as the Internet," Mayrhofer said, noting that her art attempts "to process unacceptable [too threatening] visual information as derived from newspapers, books and family stories."

Another Holocaust-related piece to be included is the Ishkowitz watercolour *Buchenwald*, one of many borrowed works from McMaster's permanent Herman H. Levy Collection. McMaster Museum of Art, 1280 Main St. W., Hamilton, 905-525-9140.

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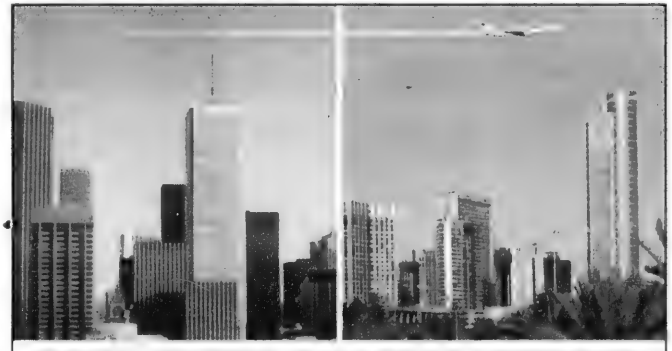

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Arts & Travel

Nutcracker Suite was a turning point for Toronto-born ballerina

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Rachel Fox, a member of the English National Ballet's corps de ballet, has been dancing since she was three years old.

"My parents were really keen to have all [four of] their children active," the 21-year-old recalled recently on a trip to her native Toronto to visit her family.

The busy youngster, who attended Associated Hebrew Schools until she was 11, also took gymnastics and piano, and was involved in Girl Guides.

Rachel Fox

By age eight, she had started to devote more of her time to dance. One Sunday morning the following year, when her father, Harry – an accountant who has since retired – was driving her to Yiddish class, Fox heard about children's auditions for the National Ballet School on a CBC radio program.

She quickly wrote down the number, and told her mother, Helen, now principal of the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, that she "really wanted to try.

"I think she didn't really realize how serious I was."

Although Fox wasn't accepted on her first try, she entered the prestigious school, which combines dance training with academics, at age 11. She graduated in 2002 with the Governor General's Award for the highest grade point average in her class.

Leaving her Jewish day school involved some internal struggle. "I was really into Jewish studies... and my bat mitzvah was coming up," she said.

However, she continued her Jewish studies with a tutor until she was 14.

The only Jewish member and one of only two Canadians in her 64-member company, Fox enjoys her new milieu. London is "a great place to be" with much to offer artistically, she said.

She has also performed in Athens and Barcelona as well as several cities in England. Her credits include the *Sleeping Beauty*, *Giselle* and *Swan Lake* in the round. As well, she was a semi-finalist in an international dance competition in Rome last July.

Fox, who enjoys writing in her spare time, left Canada after high school to study at the English National Ballet School. She had already participated in student exchanges in Melbourne and Amsterdam.

After 20 auditions with different companies, she was offered a position with the ENB in 2003. "I don't think it's easy to get into any ballet company," she said. "The ballet world is very small."

For her, she said, ballet has turned out to be what she envisioned.

It was in Grade 7, when Fox's class was part of the cast of the *Nutcracker Suite*, that something clicked for her. "I remember being on stage [and] realizing it was just what I wanted to do. I really felt like I was in the right place."

Ballet is "a very difficult profession in many different ways," she said. But she is accepting of the restrictions, she added, because "when you get on stage, it's such a great feeling.

"If you are a ballet dancer, 24 hours a day, seven days a week you have to remember that," she said. "Other people my age can go out partying and have a few drinks. They might feel rough the next day, but they can still show up at work. I couldn't do that and go on stage. You have to make sure you have enough sleep, and that you have the right things to eat."

Also, she said, ballerinas have to think about how they present themselves even when they're not on stage.

When she went on birthright israel in 2004, she made sure to eat healthily ("lots of fresh fruit and vegetables"), ran regularly to maintain her fitness, and even went into the hallway to stretch when her hotel room wasn't big enough. "You just do what you have to do. It didn't deter me from having a good time."

She emphasized the importance of "the journey" – always striving to improve professionally – for anyone who wants to make a career of dance. "If you go in knowing that, and you enjoy the journey, it's a really special profession."

[footprintsphoto.com photos]

Ballet may be a difficult profession, but for Rachel Fox, of the English National Ballet, being on stage is "such a great feeling."

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Convergence of young prodigies

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

An acclaimed mix of young musical prodigies will converge in North York on March 4 in the second annual Young Stars of the Young Century gala concert.

The 10 artists, who range in age from seven to 20, will perform both solos and operatic choruses written by such greats as Mozart and Tchaikovsky.

Featured instruments will include the piano, trumpet, violin, flute and a special Russian folk instrument called the dorma.

For the grand finale, the artists will join together with the Canadian Children's Opera Chorus, singing a famous Russian tune.

Producer Svetlana Dvoretskaia of Show One Productions says the energy exuded by the young stars is unique.

"The feedback and energy you get from working with young, talented kids is not comparable to anything else," she says.

"They give everything they have to the audience."

David Lakirovich

Hailing from such places as Armenia, China and Canada, the performers have all won national or international awards and many have recorded albums.

Toronto violinist David Lakirovich,16, who began playing at the age of three, is one of three Canadian musicians taking to the stage.

"I'm obviously honoured to play," says the virtuoso, who is a Grade 11 student at Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, and practises four hours every day.

"It's not even about the violin. It's about being together with these musicians."

In the week leading up to the concert, the musicians will perform in Montreal, Ottawa, Brampton and Huntsville.

They will also give a charity concert and share their talents with peers at performing arts schools.

"For other kids who see people the same age as them who have already achieved so much…it's really inspirational," says Dvoretskaia.

"That's especially important these days with kids staying at home and sitting in front of the computer or television."

Following the Toronto event, the group will go to New York's renowned Lincoln Center.

The Toronto event is affiliated with the Vladimir Spivakov Foundation, which grants scholarships to young artists and raises funds for critically ill children.

Proceeds from the concert will go towards the Hospital for Sick Children assisted by financial contributions from Alex and Simona Shnaider.

Dvoretskaia, the North American representative for the Vladimir Spivakov Foundation, says the charity component of the tour is dynamic.

"What's very unique about this project is that not only are these kids coming here to perform concerts, but they are doing charity work," she says.

The impresario hopes to make the annual concert even bigger and more international next year.

"Hopefully, for the next year, we're going to expand and bring bright young stars from Israel," she says.

The concert will take place at George Weston Recital Hall in Toronto's Centre for Performing Arts.

Tickets can be obtained through ticketmaster at 416-870-8000 or www.ticketmaster.ca. For more information about the concert and performers, log onto www.showoneproductions.com or call 416-737-6785.

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Feminist's 'obsessing' over weight gain leads to a play

By KYLE GORDON
Special to The CJN

Eve Ensler, author of the international phenomenon *The Vagina Monologues*, is returning to the stage with her new play *The Good Body*.

"I woke up one day and discovered I had a not-so-flat, post-40 stomach and I was appalled," Ensler said.

As a radical feminist, Ensler wanted to understand how she could strongly believe in women's rights and empowerment and at the same time be fixated on her body.

"I couldn't believe how many hours I was spending obsessing and dieting," she said.

Ensler began writing a journal to her stomach to determine what was going on inside it. "It was very instructive. It just began to teach me a lot about myself," she said.

On a personal journey to accept her less-than-flat stomach, Ensler travelled to Rio de Janeiro, Mumbai, Moscow, Beverly Hills, New York, South Africa and Rome, where she asked women "What do you think of yourself – do you like your body, do you like your stomach?"

Eve Ensler

The Good Body is based on the conversations Ensler had with women around the world about their bodies. That includes Helen Gurley Brown, author and editor of *Cosmopolitan* magazine; actress Isabella Rossellini, a former model; a 40- plus Jewish woman from Los Angeles; and a 74-year-old African woman.

The majority of women Ensler spoke to believed that if they changed one part of their body everything else would work out.

"I realized that everywhere I went, it didn't matter what country I was in, women were driven to be 'good,'" she said.

The Good Body is Ensler's attempt to redefine the word "good," to step off the capitalist treadmill and encourage women to find a way to survive without being flat or perfect.

"'Good' isn't polite, quiet, behaved, thin, disappeared and non-existent. It might be radical, wild and outrageous. To be able to work with opposites and encompass everything and be fully alive with that rather than just being 'good,'" she said.

Ensler encourages all women, especially young girls, to strive for greatness, to be better than "good."

"You have to make a decision if you want to be good or you want to be great. If you opt to be great, you will lie down at night and you will know that you were living the life you were meant to live and no one can take that away from you," Ensler said.

At 52, Ensler has finally accepted her body. "I really like my body now. Not for vain reasons like 'oh, I look so fabulous.' But, 'I have just come to appreciate my body,'" she said.

"I am so grateful that I'm travelling around the globe, that I'm doing eight shows a week and that I'm not getting sick. It's so generous. How can we not like these bodies that we were given?"

The Good Body opens in Toronto on March 7 at the newly renovated Music Hall, 147 Danforth Ave. Tickets are available at www.ticketmaster.ca.

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Sports & Leisure

Slalom skier to represent Israel at Olympics

By SHIMRIT BERMAN
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — A little piece of Israeli history will be written next week in the Italian ski resort of Sestriere, some 100 kilometres west of Turin, where the 2006 Winter Olympics started last week.

On Feb. 20, when skiers line up at the top of the Giovanni Angelli slope for the alpine ski slalom races, one from Israel will be among the competitors for the first time in the nation's history.

Michael Renzhin has only been in Israel for 4½ years, but he has been skiing for more than 20. His father, a skiing coach, taught him how to ski when he was just three years old, and at 13, Renzhin had already decided on a competitive career. Now 28, he hasn't stopped yet.

"I didn't have much choice, really," he joked.

Born in Latvia but raised in a small town in the Ukrainian Carpathians, Michael was a member of the Ukrainian national team for six years before moving to Israel.

"I decided to stop racing for Ukraine because I was always ranked third, and only the top two got to go to competitions and training camps abroad," he explained.

But he didn't come to Israel for an opportunity to compete internationally. If at all, he thought the decision meant the end of his skiing career.

But life had other plans for him.

"When I decided to come to Israel, I didn't think I'd still be skiing," he recalled. "But when I was preparing all the required documents prior to my arrival, the Jewish Agency in Ukraine contacted the Israeli ski federation and that's how we found each other."

It turned out to be quite a successful arrangement. Michael achieved what he had always dreamed of – qualifying for the Olympic Games, where he will compete in the slalom and giant slalom races – and the Israeli ski federation will finally see an Israeli skier in the Olympics.

To qualify for the games, Renzhin had to achieve the international federation criterion of less than 140 points, as well as the much tougher Israeli criterion of less than 65 points in any competition he took part in. The points are calculated on the basis of time difference from the race winner.

"We've had more athletes competing in the world championships since 1993, so we've gotten better," said Stanley Rubinstein, honorary chairman of the Israeli ski federation. "Also, having Michael there can give us some exposure, although there is quite a bit of exposure to ski in Israel already. Maybe it will give some exposure to the competitive side of the sport."

> ***'We have snow here ... it's not Jamaica'***

For Renzhin it's more personal. He is at a loss for words before he finally said, "I'm delighted to be going to the Olympics. It's every athlete's biggest dream. But it's more than that. It's representing Israel, and I'm even happier to be the first one to do it.

"I feel it, but I'm trying not to think about it. I don't want it to distract me. I'm trying to think about the here and now, and not about how important it is."

After qualifying for the Olympics, his next goal is to make it into the top 30 finishers at the games.

Ironically, due to his intense skiing career, Michael has hardly spent any time in Israel since his arrival. In fact, he spends so little time in the Jewish state that he doesn't even have his own place – while in Israel, he stays at the Wingate Institute.

"I'm here for about three months every year. I have competitions stretched from December to April, and then there are training camps abroad, too. Last summer, the Israeli team, senior and junior, practiced in Argentina and Chile. It was really good."

Renzhin's family still resides in Ukraine and he claims it's more convenient that way, since he travels around Europe a lot of the time.

"I think that when I stop skiing, they'll move to Israel, too."

Even though he doesn't get to spend a lot of time in Israel, he did endure one of the most intense Israeli experiences – military service, even if only symbolically. Since he arrived in Israel at 24 and had already served two years in the Ukrainian army at 18, his IDF service was reduced to 39 days.

"It was just doing basic training all over again. The only difference was the M-16 instead of the Kalashnikov," he said.

Renzhin now speaks fluent Hebrew, and he attributes his command of the language to his ulpan teacher, but adds that "we also speak Hebrew in the national team."

The current team consists of three men and one woman, and together they experience the gruelling routine of a competitive skier.

"We have around 45 competitions per season," Renzhin explained. "Every competition day is very long, and when we don't compete we have to prepare our equipment. The big stars have people to do it for them, but we do it ourselves. We have our weekends off, but usually there isn't enough time during the weekdays to work on our equipment, so we do it then."

The Israeli team only trains abroad. "We can never know when it's going to snow on Mount Hermon, so we have to practice abroad," Rubinstein explained, referring to Israel's only ski resort.

Despite fickle skiing conditions, Rubinstein insisted the sport is popular among Israelis. The history of skiing in Israel, he said, goes back to the days of the British mandate, when the Palestine ski club was established.

"It was also popular in the 1950s, but it really blossomed after the Six Day War. There were no cable cars at Mount Hermon at the time, so people would climb the mountain riding mules."

The Israeli ski federation was formed in 1976 and joined the international federation.

"I happen to talk to a lot of people about skiing in Israel," said Renzhin, "and I'm surprised to find out how much they know about skiing. I don't know where they get all the information."

Funding and practice of the sport is limited to non-existent in Israel, which is part of a group of small nations – including Cyprus, Portugal, Monaco and Ireland – who have similar problems. Nonetheless, the Israeli ski federation often provides help for the ski federations of some North African countries.

"We mostly help them with equipment and arranging training sessions," said Rubinstein. Even though Israel is not the only country with competitive skiers and no practicing conditions, non-Israelis are often surprised to find out it's possible to ski in Israel.

"We tell them that we have snow here, and a mountain. It's not Jamaica. It's very easy to get ski equipment here. But it's still interesting to see Israelis ski. It's not like seeing someone from Austria ski," Renzhin said. "But we tell people Israelis ski, abroad and on the Hermon."

Though Renzhin takes pride in being Israel's only skiing option, he has never actually skied there himself.

"There is snow there for two months or so, so I guess it's possible to practice there a little, but that period of time always overlaps with my competitions abroad, and I must compete. That's why I haven't done it yet," he explained. "But I will."

The Canadian Jewish news

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The Muslim world desperately needs a free press

ARTS IN FOCUS
BY OREN SHEFA

Yet another clash between Western ideas and Islamist dogma has once again raised tensions throughout the world.

Last September, the Danish newspaper *Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten* published a collection of 12 satirical depictions of the Muslim Prophet Muhammad. Recently, those images found their way into other European and Arabic newspapers, sparking a furor throughout the Muslim world.

According to Muslim *sharia* law, it is expressly forbidden for the image of Muhammad to be represented in any form, regardless of the intention.

In an apology, *Jyllands-Posten*'s editor-in-chief Carsten Juste expressed regret that the illustrations were taken out of context and said that the images, which he called "sober," were part of an "initiative [that] was taken as part of an ongoing public debate on freedom of expression."

As the *Jyllands-Posten* cartoons reached a wider audience, the world has watched with increasing horror as radical Islamists have threatened Denmark and the rest of the western world with financial sanctions, boycotts and bombings, and as mobs have stormed embassies and burned flags.

While most agree that the newspaper's decision to publish cartoons that insult an entire religion was in extremely poor taste, the real tragedy is that many of those who were deeply and justifiably hurt by the paper's insensitivity have had the satisfaction of a formal apology ruined by the disproportionate responses of these radicals.

In a show of solidarity, European papers such as *France Soir* and *Die Welt* have stood firmly behind *Jyllands-Posten* under the banner of freedom of expression, while the European Union said the boycott of Danish goods violates world trade rules.

Freedom of expression is an immensely important democratic principle. In a democratic state, the knowledge that citizens have the power to question policies and ideologies is the single greatest defence against tyranny. However, as in the *Jyllands-Posten* case, this liberty has occasionally conflicted with cultural sensitivities.

With tensions between the Muslim world and the West running nervously high, many are desperately calling for cooler heads to prevail.

In an official statement released by the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the group's general secretary, Aidan White, warned, "These are dangerous times for community relations and media have to tread carefully, but they must not compromise fundamental principles as they do so." He added that this "is an ethical issue which must be discussed, debated and resolved by journalists. Governments should keep their hands out of the newsroom and stop interfering."

Indeed, interference with the media by autocratic Islamic leaders is part of the problem. Journalistic freedom in predominantly Muslim nations such as Saudi Arabia, Indonesia and Iran is simply non-existent, and a free press would go a long way toward allaying the huge amount of mistrust and animosity toward the West among Muslims. Right now, even moderate Muslims in these countries are being radicalized by the inaccurate and inflammatory messages they get from state-controlled media.

It is, therefore, more important than ever for non-governmental organizations such as the IFJ, among others, to push aggressively for a free and open press in the Islamic world.

The time for walking on eggshells has passed, and in its place should be a real sense of urgency. Today a handful of tasteless and completely inappropriate cartoons have led to heated rhetoric, the destruction of property and even the loss of life.

If things continue along this path, tomorrow's grievances could bring about an even more unsettling state of affairs.

ROAST CHICKEN WITH MAPLE-SOY GLAZE

Glaze: 1/4 cup pure maple syrup
1 tblsp soy sauce
1 tblsp rice vinegar
1/2 tsp hot pepper sauce
3/4 c dry Sherry
1 4 1/2 lb. chicken,
1/2 orange, cut into 4 pieces
1 tsp. fresh ginger, smashed
2 garlic cloves, smashed

Preheat oven to 375°F. Whisk sauce ingredients together in small bowl. Sprinkle chicken cavity with salt and pepper. Place chicken in roasting pan. Squeeze some juice from each orange piece over chicken. Stuff cavity with orange pieces; rub in ginger, and garlic.

Roast chicken 20 mins. Add 1/4 cup water to pan. Roast 15 mins. longer. Brush chicken with glaze. Continue roasting and brush chicken with glaze every 10 mins., about 40 mins. longer. Transfer chicken to platter. Let stand 10 mins. (internal temperature will rise).

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INTER-GENERATIONAL CELEBRATION: Grade 4 students from United Synagogue Day School's Richmond Hill campus celebrated Tu b'Shvat with seniors from the Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living on Feb. 8. They planted ivy and made spice boxes for *Havdalah* out of oranges and cloves. With seniors Fortuna Askenasi and Allan Pryce are students, from left, David Aharoni, Jordan Aharon, Justin Birbrager and Ben Kingstone.

And the readers' winners are...

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

The red carpet was rolled out along the Bathurst corridor earlier this month as the Yasher Koach Awards (YKAs) were metaphorically presented in a previous column (Feb. 2) to some Jewish community members who contributed significantly to the growth of the Toronto Jewish community in 2005/5765/6.

I asked readers to send in their own YKA nominees/winners. Here are some responses

I gave a YKA to Rabbi Debra Landsberg of Temple Emanu-El for being the only rabbi in 2005/5765/6 whose water broke (she gave birth to triplets). My mistake. A reader contacted me to say: "Not to detract from Rabbi Debra Landsberg's accomplishment, but she was not the only spiritual leader to give birth in 2005. Rabbi Tina Grimberg of Congregation Darchei Noam probably was the first to do so. Her son David Avraham was born Jan. 9, 2005."

Therefore, there is a tie in the category of [illegible] Motherhood between Rabbi Landsberg and Rabbi Grimberg. Mazel tov.

Another reader wrote: "This is brilliant. Maybe one day [the YKAs] could be come a reality. In the meantime, I nominate Bill Stern, who works tirelessly to promote Yiddish culture. I also nominate Heather Freed, a big-hearted volunteer who devotes much time to Na'amat, and Susan Brown, an artist and teacher who took over the list of a burial committee from her father and has since used her time visiting cemeteries to produce art that will be shown at the Market Gallery in April."

The reader also stated: "On a personal note, thank you for mentioning Simon Kalkstein. I've known him since we were teenagers. When I won the privilege of writing a tribute song for Irving Layton, Simon helped me. I'm sure the great reception the song received was because Simon's brilliance shone through the words and gave a blessing to the music."

A third reader nominated the following couple for a YKA: "Zale and Rachael Newman, for their acceptance of everyone, and for their open home and dedication to klal Yisrael. Zale and Rachel work on so many charitable projects that they hardly have any time for themselves."

I received an e-mail from a Jewish community member who enthusiastically nominated Koren Kassirer for a YKA. The person wrote: "It is with the greatest of honour that I nominate a woman who has touched not only the hearts but perhaps more importantly the souls of many in our small community [of Oshawa/Whitby/Bowmanville]: Koren Kassirer. She's a *gitte neshamah*, a *balabuste* – and that's tough being a vegetarian – and an inspiration, particularly to our children, youth and young at heart. I nominate her for most Inspiring Bat Mitzvah Teacher; for being a profound role model for whom Judaism lives and breathes and sings; and for Most Rockin' Hebrew Teacher – she is adored by her students.

"In addition, I nominate her for Best *Havdalah* service – no one does *Havdalah* like our Koren – and for Most Creative Purchase of a Torah. Koren's purchase of a Torah on e-Bay is a local legend. Sunday nights at the Kassirer home brought together mothers and their post-bat mitzvah daughters to learn, create and kibbitz. Quilts from our Judaica art group, to give one example, were completed and sent to cancer patients. I also nominate her for Best Guitarist in the Bowmanville Klezmer Band. (OK, there is no Bowmanville Klezmer Band, but if there was...)"

Of course there are countless community members who deserve Yasher Koach Awards, but the season has come and gone.

We look forward to next year, however, when this coveted award will once again be presented to the inspired, and to those who inspire, as well as to the humble, high profile and just plain hometown, groundbreaking Jews.

Yasher koach again to the winners. Carry that mighty trophy with pride!

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Critics say Ontario law discriminates against Jews. *Page 6*

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Hana's Suitcase brought to the stage. *Page 38*

Valerie Harper stars in *Golda's Balcony*. *Page 40*

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Lowering the volume on parenting. *Page 45*

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Canada Post Publication Agreement #40080684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

A problem of timing, not substance

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

Analysis
Israel and the Palestinians

Israeli policymakers would have had a devil of a time dealing with a Hamas victory in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections even in the best of times – even if Prime Minister Ariel Sharon were healthy and at the helm, and the government robust and in the middle of its term.

But the fact that critical decisions about Israel's ties to the Palestinian Authority need to be made now, in the heat of an election campaign, just makes the decision-making process that much more difficult. Matters are complicated even further considering that acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is less experienced and confident than the man whose place he is taking.

In other words, domestic electoral considerations are affecting critical decisions about a Hamas-led PA that are being made now.

National Security Council head Giora Eiland told the cabinet Sunday that he had no problem with the steps the cabinet approved, including ending

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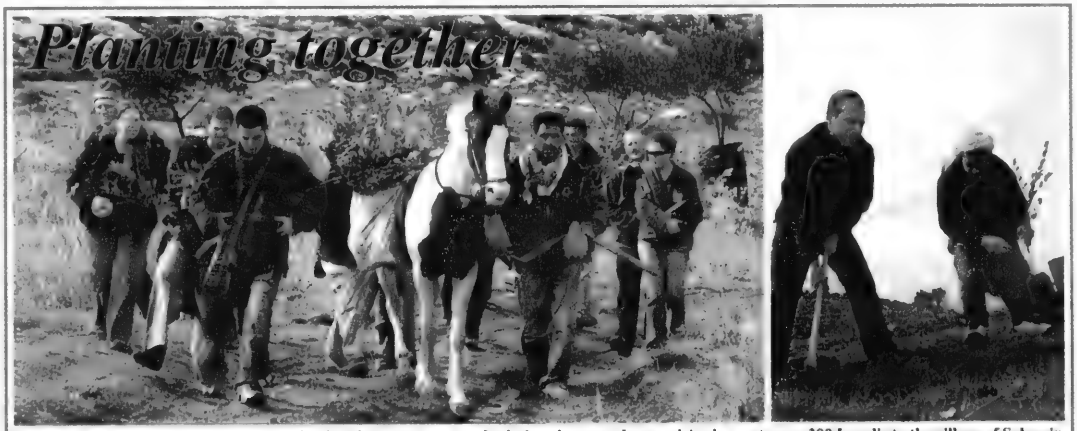

The New Israel Fund, a non-profit organization that promotes good relations between Jews and Arabs, sent some 300 Israelis to the village of Salem in the West Bank on Tu b'Shvat. They planted scores of olive tree saplings with local Palestinians as a gesture of goodwill and co-operation. *[Isranet photo]*

Russia will try to influence Hamas, ambassador tells *The CJN*

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

Georgiy Mamedov has been Russia's ambassador to Canada since 2003, but the 59-year-old diplomat, who also served for many years as Russia's deputy foreign minister, is a veteran of the old Soviet Union and has been in contact with the Canadian Jewish community on several occasions.

Mamedov sat down with The CJN earlier this month at the Russian consulate in Montreal to discuss his country's turn to chair the Group of Eight (G-8) summit this July in St. Petersburg, as well as other issues, among them terrorism, the Middle East, and the challenges faced by his country.

CJN: *It's interesting, Mr. Ambassador, that you chose to sit down with The CJN.*

Georgiy Mamedov: Last year, when I came down and saw my friends at the Holocaust Museum (in Montreal), we discussed how we could use the chairmanship of Russia in G-8 to fight against terrorism, against suicide bombing. Russia's agenda is already crowded: energy, gas and oil are always in your face. Pandemics, fighting infectious diseases, bird flu. And education – without education you will have relapses of anti-Semitism and terrible things will happen to the generations to come. My role as ambassador to Canada is not only to promote bilateral relations, but to see what Russia and Canada jointly

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Mishpatim
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Greater Toronto Area

Israel mourns folk legend Shoshana Damari — please see page 35

The News in Brief

CANADA

Campaign Sets Record

WINNIPEG — Winnipeg's Combined Jewish Appeal campaign has surpassed its goal and set a new record. The drive still has a month to go. CJA had raised $4.8 million as of Feb. 1, after passing its $4.65-million goal on Dec. 21. The campaign ends March 31. Director Elaine Goldstine said the strong showing means there should be $250,000 extra to give to more than a dozen beneficiary agencies. This year's marketing included billboard and bus bench advertising, as well as free TV ads and free ads in the *Winnipeg Free Press* and *National Post*. The TV spots featured free material from United Jewish Communities that was modified for a Winnipeg audience, Goldstine told the *Jewish Post & News*.

Israeli Extradited

TORONTO — Canada last week extradited an Israeli man who had spent the last 18 months in the country and is wanted in Israel on charges of sexually assaulting teenage boys and girls. Vitali Libshin, 46, of Ashdod, was handed over through Interpol. Israeli police suspect Libshin of links to Shimon Ben Tuv, a Kiryat Arba resident who is serving 16 years in jail for sex crimes against children from 1998 to 2004, *Ha'aretz* reported.

WORLD

Jungle Jews Get Rabbi

LIMA — The Jews of Tarapoto, in Peru's jungle region some 600 kilometres north of Lima, got a new Spanish-speaking rabbi this month. The community has several hundred descendants of Moroccan Jews who came to the area in the late 1800s. "Assimilation and intermarriage took a heavy toll on [those] who chose to remain," said Michael Freund, head of Shavei Israel, the group that sent the rabbi. "Now, however, their children, grandchildren and even great-grandchildren have begun to return to their Jewish roots." The well-organized community includes doctors, lawyers and academics.

Vandals Hit Shul

CHICAGO — Vandals painted swastikas and anti-Semitic phrases on a Chicago shul last week. Police are conducting a hate-crime investigation into the Feb. 13 incident at Agudas Achim North Shore Congregation, the *Chicago Tribune* reported. The graffiti included "Mein Kampf," "Kill the Jews" and "White Power."

Aid Depends On Hamas, PM Tells Abbas

OTTAWA — Prime Minister Stephen Harper spoke by phone last week with PA President Mahmoud Abbas and repeated Canada's commitment to a Palestinian state, but he said Hamas must renounce violence and recognize Israel.

"Canada remains committed to the goal of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East, and the creation of a sovereign and viable Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with Israel," Harper said.

"Future assistance to any new Palestinian government will be reviewed against that government's commitment to the principles of non-violence, recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the [internationally sponsored 'road map' peace plan]," Harper added, noting that Ottawa "will continue to review the situation on an ongoing basis."

Muslims Polled On Jews

LONDON — Thirty-seven per cent of British Muslims see British Jewry as a "legitimate target as part of the struggle for justice in the Middle East," a new poll found. More than half the 500 Muslims surveyed also believe U.K. Jews exert too much influence on British foreign policy, the *London Jewish Chronicle* reported.

Terror Victims Meet

MADRID — Victims and relatives of victims of terror attacks, including Israelis, gathered in Valencia, Spain, last week. Hundreds arrived Feb. 13 for the two-day conference, which aimed to give terror victims a support network and draw attention to their needs.

Contest Launched

TEHRAN — Iran's largest newspaper launched a competition for cartoons satirizing the Holocaust. *Hamshahri* issued a call in English for submissions last week on its website, saying entries can focus on "looting and crimes perpetrated by the United States and Israel as well as alleged historical events like the Holocaust." Entry deadline is May 5. The prize is $140 (US) in gold. The contest comes after Iran's president made widely censured statements denying the Shoah.

Art To Be Returned

VIENNA — A painting looted during the Nazi era will be returned to the heirs of its original owner. On Feb. 13, the Joanneum Museum in Graz, Austria, said it would return Egon Schiele's 1907 *Harbor of Trieste*, but offered no further details on the exchange. Last month, a court ruled that five paintings by Gustav Klimt must be returned to Maria Altmann, an heir of the family that owned them before the Nazi takeover of Austria.

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Vol. XXXVI, No. 9 (1,736)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation 38,949 copies
Total paid circulation 38,099 copies

CCNA verified circulation Sept. 7, 2005

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada $35.95, 1 yr. incl. GST
$63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST
U.S.A.: $100 U.S funds, 1 yr
All other countries $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr

Postmaster: Please return 29Bs and changes of address to Toronto office

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010644
Publication Mail Registration #09894

*Under current ownership

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.

Canada

The Canadian Jewish news

How To Reach Us

Head Office: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Ste. 205, North York, Ont., M3B 3K4 Tel: 416-391-1836
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Advertising E-mail: ads@cjnews.com Editorial E-mail: info@cjnews.com
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BJCC to get new name, new look

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The "central square" project of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Jewish Toronto Tomorrow (JTT) endeavour – that is, the redevelopment of the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre site – received a major donation last week that will facilitate the building of a new Jewish community centre to replace the BJC.

Martin Prosserman – the founder and CEO of clothing manufacturer and retailer Moores the Suit People, until he sold the company a few years ago – and his family have made "a very large donation," said federation spokesperson Howard English. The new facility will be known as the Prosserman Family Jewish Community Centre.

Prosserman Family Jewish Community Centre

It will be built on BJCC land, and then the existing building will eventually be torn down, said English.

The central square project will have four "anchors," English said. In addition to the BJCC, there will be a new Koffler Centre for the Arts; a centre for Jewish knowledge and heritage, to be named for the Latner family; and a renovated and expanded Lipa Green Building.

The Holocaust Education and Memorial Centre, the Albert and Temmy Latner Jewish Public Library, the Ontario Jewish Archives and Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto – all of which are currently housed in the Lipa Green building – will move to the Latner Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Heritage.

The Latner Centre will "not only provide the facilities of its constituent entities, but will run a comprehensive range of programs across the Toronto area," said English.

A new theatre is to be located immediately adjacent to the main atrium of the new Koffler Centre so that the atrium can double as a foyer of pre-function space, said Peter Cohen, chair of the Central Square development committee.

Extra space created in the Lipa Green Building will be used by UJA Federation. "We're short of space now," English said.

The recent donation does not mean that the $120-million project will proceed ahead of schedule, he noted.

"Subject to all municipal approvals and the successful completion of the fundraising initiative, we anticipate starting construction about a year from now, and it should take approximately 30 months to complete the project," Cohen said.

The JTT project also includes the new community campus being built at Bathurst Street and Weldrick Avenue in Richmond Hill, as well as the recent redevelopment of the Miles Nadal JCC and the building of the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life, which opened in 2004.

Cartoon controversy continues in Calgary

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Richard Bronstein knows he's at the centre of controversy in the province of Alberta over his decision to have his newspaper, the *Jewish Free Press* (*JFP*), publish four of the Danish cartoons that have angered much of the Muslim world.

He's read the news reports that a Calgary Islamic group, the Islamic Supreme Council of Canada (ISCC), has laid a complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission about his newspaper and the *Western Standard* magazine, which also reproduced the cartoons. He's also read that police have asked the province's special prosecutor to examine whether there are grounds for laying a hate promotion charge under the Criminal Code.

Bronstein, publisher of the JFP, has yet to hear from the human rights commission or from the public prosecutor directly. His only connection to police came when he turned over to them a phone recording of a death threat from a man with a noticeable eastern European accent who warned him to watch his back.

Continued on page 18

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Along ancient paths, today

In ancient times, the uncommonly beautiful and geographically rare Dead Sea area held a special attraction for kings, vacationers and wayfarers alike. Even then, the special qualities of the mineral salts that the oblong, turquoise lake washed up on its shores were known throughout the area.

Today, the attraction is not any less. Indeed, one could say, the attraction is even greater when one adds the considerable archeological demarcations to the spectacular ochres, browns and beiges of the rock formations that typify the area's topography.

Thus, on a cool, windy day in Jerusalem last month, I travelled as a guest of the Ministry of Tourism with my guide, Ziv Cohen, down to the fabled Sea of Salt (Yam Hamelach, the Dead Sea). I use the word "down" because after we reached the eastern-most boundary of the hills of Jerusalem, we immediately began a southeasterly descent through the stark, wind-swept wilderness of Judea that culminated at the lowest spot on the planet Earth – the Dead Sea.

Like most good Israeli nature and tour guides, Cohen was able to connect countless intersecting points of the Land's history, geography, climatology, botany, zoology and, of course, theology, too. The constantly changing scenery that lay just beyond the window of our car provided the classrooms for my instruction.

The first stop along our journey was the nature reserve at Einot Tzukim (literally, the *water springs of the cliffs*). In Arabic, its name is Ein Feshkha, (literally the *water springs from the cracks in the rocks*.) A lush, fresh-water spring that lies hidden among tamarisks, reeds, bulrushes and thick shrubs off the northwest shore of the Dead Sea, it owes its existence to the shifting of geological plates during prehistoric times.

From Ein Tzukot, we continued south, deeper into the desert. The red-crusted Mountains of Edom rose in the east past the far side of the lake like giant walnut shells worn down by wind and time.

As we drove, we saw the cliffs and rocky slopes on our right, to the west, that increasingly bear the scars of nature's vast erosive powers as if scraped and carved by monstrous tools.

After more than half an hour, we arrived at the incongruously verdant and luxuriant oasis, now nature reserve, of Ein Gedi.

Already mentioned in the Book of Samuel as the place where the young David sought refuge from King Saul, its cliffs, wadis, fresh water, dense tropical plants and interesting wildlife are a hiker's dream.

In biblical times, Ein Gedi was renowned for its rich agricultural yields of dates, vines, aromatic plants and medicinal herbs. *The Song of Songs* makes special reference to Ein Gedi. Its agricultural treasures were highly sought by Romans, Egyptians and Greeks.

Merely paces away from the pavement of the highway, we walked into another world, a corridor of high craggy stone walls that led us into a sylvan space of time present and time past. We walked further into the wadi, hearing only the sound of our shoes scraping the rock, or the chirping of the small black birds flying nearby.

It was cool, damp and windy in Jerusalem, but under the mid-morning sky of the mid-Judean desert, the sun poured its comforting warmth all over us as we walked, climbed and marvelled at nature's fine beauty.

From Ein Gedi, we motored further south some 20 kilometres to Massada.

Many readers of *The CJN* have probably been there. Therefore, not a great deal need be written in this space about that unbelievable mountain fortress.

Massada, in Hebrew, is a variation of the word fortress. Thus, nominally, literally and actually, the place is a fortress. It is a bloc of mountain that stands alone, carved by God and by man into something more long-lasting than its geology and more significant than its uncrushable rock.

They exist of course, but I imagine very few are the places on earth as utterly awe-inspiring and humbling as the remnant of the northern palace of Massada. The vista from the high plateau of the mountain seizes the imagination. Only the wind speaks. All else is silent.

Five years ago, Massada was recognized by UNESCO as a world heritage site, warranting protection and safekeeping for the benefit of all humanity.

From the summit of the mountain, some 450 metres above the Dead Sea, I could see more clearly than ever before, no matter where I looked.

By now, morning had rolled into afternoon. The sun continued to shine on us without interference. But we were hungry.

We descended the mountain in the cool comfort of the cable car on the fortress' eastern side.

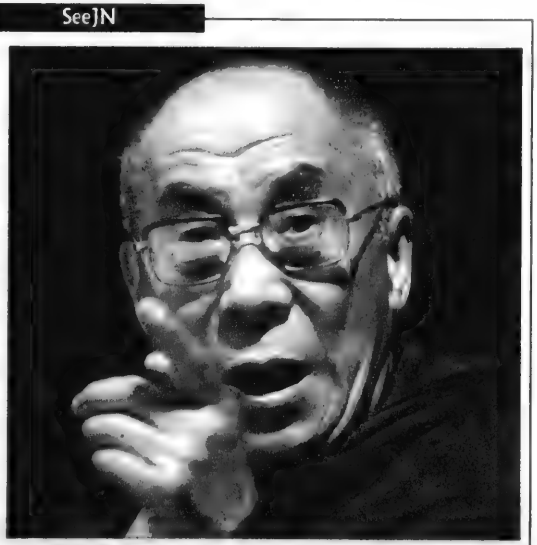
Our destination was the Crowne Plaza Dead Sea Hotel for lunch. The hotel was overflowing with visitors, and we enjoyed a sumptuous lunch from a multi-selection buffet of delicious, uniquely Israeli Mediterranean fare.

We let our meal settle, relaxed, comfortable, grateful and very happy, while sitting on lounge chairs on the shore of the sea that had brought us south for the day from Jerusalem. *–MBD*

SeeJN

SPECIAL VISITOR TO ISRAEL

The Dalai Lama was in Israel last week for his fourth visit there. The Tibetan Buddhist leader-in-exile and Nobel Prize peace laureate spoke to several groups, and met with Israel's Ashkenazi Chief Rabbi Yonah Metzger, Sephardi Chief Rabbi Shlomo Amar and Muslim religious leaders. He was honoured with the Notable of the Negev Award from Ben-Gurion University for his work on behalf of human rights. Here, the Dalai Lama speaks at the Habn Theatre in Jerusalem as a guest of Shatil, the operational arm of the New Israel Fund in Israel, a non-governmental organization concerned with issues of human and civil rights, social and economic justice, and religious pluralism. The Dalai Lama did not meet with government officials on this visit because of Israel's sensitivity to the Chinese government on the subject of Tibet.



[Isranet photo]

JF&CS head is new but he's no newcomer

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

The new executive director of Jewish Family & Child Service, Richard Cummings, may be new to his job, but he's anything but a newcomer to the organization.

Cummings, a Montreal native who has a PhD in education from the University of Toronto, was a member of the JF&CS board of directors for 15 years and is also a past president of that body.

"My experience as president was one of the most gratifying experiences. [The organization] has always had a strong place in my heart," said Cummings, 52, who for 12 years was executive director of Integra, a children's mental health centre serving children and adolescents with learning disabilities.

He first became "intrigued" with JF&CS, after his wife Joanne, a psychologist with the Hospital for Sick Children, became involved with the agency's Jerome D. Diamond Adolescent Centre and became a member of the JF&CS board.

"I had backed off from volunteer work while I was working on my PhD, but when I was ready, I knew that this would be a meaningful way to volunteer."

When the position of executive director recently became available, he said, "I realized it was a special opportunity for me to integrate my Jewishness with my desire for having an impact on vulnerable people and their families."

Richard Cummings

Cummings replaces Ron Levin, who left JF&CS in August for personal reasons.

"[This opportunity] came at the right time. I was passionate about my work in mental health, but I needed a change. Being at JF&CS [in a different capacity] would allow me to make a difference at a different level," Cummings said.

"I'm closer to the ground now. I'm experiencing the nuts and bolts of the agency."

One of his biggest responsibilities as he starts his new job, he said, is to ensure that the agency has the resources necessary to provide excellent services.

"We need to tell the story that [to invest in JF&CS is to invest in the future.] We need to support [the agency] in its work with those living in poverty in the Jewish community.

"People still think that there is no poverty in the community, but as of 2001, of the approximately 180,000 Jewish people in the Greater Toronto Area, about 20,000 are living at or below the poverty line. That does not include the working poor, whose income is above Statistics Canada's poverty line. That is a significant percentage."

Poverty is a predictor of many kinds of difficulties, said Cummings. "Stress and feelings of helplessness contribute to family disfunction, marital problems and family violence. These are the risks that accompany poverty."

He is proud, he said, to provide support for the Jewish poor along with such agencies as UJA Federation Greater Toronto, the UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education and the Jewish Camp Council. "We are partners in a network of services that address their problems."

The agency also has to get the word out to people who need its services. "People need to know that we are available to support them, enrich their lives and resolve difficulties."

He stressed, however, that "we can chip away at the needs of those who experience poverty, but our resources are limited in the face of the dimension of the problem."

Another critical service that needs attention is the women's abuse program, said Cummings. "United Way is a significant funding partner, and it supports us in our group work, but having more staff available for abused women is a priority I look forward to addressing. We need to ensure that there are no holes in the safety net."

With regard to programs for adolescents, he said, funding has not increased in many years. "I'm talking about the support needed for vulnerable adolescents. They are at a high-risk stage of development, and I wish we could do more.

"I would like to see increased services in schools. Supporting staff and students is a way of contributing and sustaining the health of the community."

Often, he said, children's aid societies need to seek support from other organizations when dealing with children and families. "At JF&CS, however, we are all under one tent. We can take a more holistic approach to supporting our community. [Many agencies] look at the model that we present."

Cummings, a member of Holy Blossom Temple and a director of the temple's foundation, said that it's essential to ensure that the agency uses its limited resources to be as effective as possible.

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Ont. law passed to ban faith-based arbitration

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

A new provincial law that bans religious family arbitration, and that critics say discriminates against Jews, will be challenged in the courts, promises a lawyer who argued forcefully against the legislation.

Last week's passage of Bill 27, which prohibits all forms of binding arbitration in family matters not conducted according to Canadian law, is "a really sad day" for Jews who look to rabbinic courts, or *beit dins*, for authority, said John Syrtash.

Syrtash, who represented the Va'ad Harabonim of Toronto and several Orthodox groups in the lead-up to the law's passage, says he will take steps to challenge the measure under the religious freedom provisions of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Unless the law is changed, "we're committed to challenging it in the courts at the first opportunity," he told *The CJN*.

Besides being possibly illegal, the law shows "complete callousness and indifference" to religious communities that have used internal tribunals to settle family disputes, Syrtash added.

Canadian Jewish Congress, however, says there's still time for the Jewish community to have its say on the law.

"Much of the regulations are still to be determined," said Mark Freiman, honorary legal counsel for CJC's Ontario region. "There's still an opportunity to soften the [law's] impact. We expect to be consulted on the regulations."

A statement from Attorney General Michael Bryant's office said the law will come into effect when the regulations are finalized. "The ministry is working with interested individuals and groups to draft regulations, which are expected in the coming months," it added.

Jewish communal groups say they were ignored in the drafting of the law. Their first chance to speak out on the issue was last month, when Syrtash, CJC and B'nai Brith Canada addressed a legislative committee that heard public submissions in between second and third readings of the legislation.

At the time, Syrtash called the bill "blatantly unfair" and asked for it to be "completely withdrawn."

He warned it would discriminate against Jews, especially the Orthodox, because it targets *beit dins*, which have been functioning in Ontario without incident since 1889.

Ontario's 1991 Arbitration Act made *beit din* rulings and those of other private arbitrations legally enforceable in a secular court, provided the parties consented beforehand.

The new law, called the Family Statute Amendment Act, covers only family matters, such as divorce, child custody and division of property.

Jewish communal leaders have noted that it will not affect most of the *beit din*'s rulings, which concern personal and business disputes, nor will it affect the granting of Jewish divorce decrees, or *gets*.

It will, however, strip *beit din* rulings in family matters of their legal authority.

And if those rulings have not yet been incorporated into secular divorce settlements, they will become void and reopen old disputes, because the new law has no transitional or grandparenting clauses, according to Syrtash.

The law owes its origins to the heated debate in Ontario over a proposal from a Muslim group to set up tribunals that would employ *sharia*, or Islamic law, in binding family arbitration.

That led to widespread fear that women would be harshly treated by a legal code that favours men.

Last September, Premier Dalton McGuinty declared that "there will be no religious arbitration in Ontario. There will be one law for all Ontarians."

Bill 27 "demonstrates the McGuinty government's commitment to protecting those who choose to arbitrate their family law matters," Bryant stated. "It means when it comes to family law arbitrations in this province, there is only one law and that is Canadian law."

Indeed, the law states that resolutions "based on other laws and principles – including religious principles – will have no legal effect and will not be enforceable by the courts."

In their submissions to the legislative committee, Jewish groups pointed out that a *beit din* bases its rulings on Jewish law.

"That's really the crux of it," said Freiman.

The act also requires that family arbitrators be trained and be members of a professional arbitration organization.

Freiman said that doesn't necessarily mean rabbis can't be family arbitrators, just that they must complete additional training.

He called the law "deeply flawed. It presumes that faith-based arbitration is innately exploitative and coercive, and that women are incapable of consenting to have an arbitration based on their religious values. I don't think the Jewish community would accept that."

What should matter, Freiman said, are results, not the process.

The legislative committee examining the bill rejected all of CJC's recommendations, including that faith-based arbitrations not be dismissed if they are compatible with Canadian and Ontario law.

The committee did not explain why it rejected CJC's suggestions.

An irate Syrtash said it's "sad" that McGuinty "felt he had to succumb to political blackmail and mob hysteria" on the *sharia* issue.

"This is the second time he has shown utter contempt for the Jewish community," the first being when the premier retroactively cancelled the tax credit for students in private schools.

"He takes the Jewish vote for granted. He figures Jews will vote Liberal anyway."

Syrtash said the new law targets Orthodox Jews because they are less likely to feel comfortable in a secular court and seek to keep family disputes private.

Conservative opposition leader John Tory supports the legislation, but said the government should have consulted affected groups, Canadian Press reported.

Freiman and others have noted that the legislation will not protect vulnerable women, who may be forced to seek a religious settlement rather than going to court. In its submission last month, CJC said the law would not eliminate faith-based arbitration but drive it underground.

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Police report big drop in hate crimes

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The number of hate crimes reported to police dropped dramatically in 2005, but Jews and blacks remain the most-targeted victim groups, according to the Toronto Police Service's *2005 Annual Hate/Bias Crime Statistical Report*.

A total of 132 hate crimes were reported in 2005 – 19 per cent less than the year before – of which 33 involved Jews and 33 involved blacks, the report stated.

"The Jewish community makes up approximately 8.3 per cent of the population in the City of Toronto but was victimized in 84 per cent of total hate crimes against religion," the report found.

Last year's findings marks a continuation of a longer term trend of declining hate crimes, which peaked with 338 incidents in 2001, following the 9/11 attacks. The Toronto Police Service has been compiling hate crimes statistics since 1993 and last year's tally of 132 was the lowest number yet recorded. The hate crimes unit classifies hate crimes – either the wilful promotion of hate or other crimes that were motivated by bias – in several categories, including race, religion, sexual orientation, nationality and multi-bias.

Looking at the data since 1993, the report found that "the most-affected victim groups, both in absolute terms and in their respective categories, have been blacks (race), Jews (religion) and gay males (sexual orientation). Blacks and Jews continue to be significantly targeted in multi-bias occurrences."

Most incidents involve mischief (graffiti), threats, assaults and hate propaganda.

Community groups said they were encouraged by the decline in hate crime occurrences. In a joint statement, Canadian Jewish Congress, Ontario region, and the African Canadian Legal Clinic applauded police efforts against hate crimes, though Congress Ontario chair Joel Richler added, "It is profoundly disturbing that our communities continue to be the target of unacceptable acts of hatred."

B'nai Brith Canada noted the drop in reported cases, but said the organization remained concerned about unreported incidents "and the overall continuing climate of prejudice and hate."

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Exhibit features objects from European immigrants

By ELI SHUPAK
Special to The CJN

An exhibit featuring artifacts belonging to members of Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue who immigrated to Canada opened recently at the shul.

"New Beginnings: From the Old Worlds to the New – 'I packed my suitcase and in it I put…'" will showcase the objects that people brought with them from Europe after the war, as well as items that congregants from other parts of the world have decided to show to the community.

In the six display cases are a gas mask and warden's helmet from World War II in London, siddurs, an original ketubah from India, a top hat brought from Berlin in the 1930s, a Moroccan coffee grinder and an official jacket of the Pakistani Cricket Club, as well as passports, original school certificates, and many more memorabilia that people have dug up.

The idea for this display came about when Rabbi William Rosenthal, a shul member, approached the synagogue because he had a collection of keepsakes that he wanted to share with others.

"I saw what he had to offer and felt this was something definitely worthwhile to put on show," said exhibit chair Marilyn Anthony. "We felt it would be a very nice idea to do an exhibit about various members from the synagogue, who had moved from other countries to see what it was that they managed or chose to bring with them."

Rabbi Rosenthal was in a World War II work camp and kept a tiny siddur with him the entire time. The siddur is featured along with a small pair of tfillin he got in exchange for work after managing to escape.Parts of one piece of jewelry on display were exchanged during the war to pay for rent and food, as well as to buy fake passports to escape.

Write-ups about the items on display are included, so people can understand how some of these things came to be significant.

"The genesis of the exhibit is to try and see what was the common thread running through, what was important enough to everybody that they would try and save it," he said.

Artifacts in the exhibit, which runs until after Rosh Hashanah, will be rotated in June.

ZIMRIYAH 2006: Family and friends filled the Toronto Centre for the Arts on Feb. 12 to hear 598 students in 18 choirs take part in UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education's Zimriya 2006. This year's theme was "The Voice of the Children" ("Kol Hayeladim" in Hebrew). In addition to Toronto elementary school choirs, the concert included performances by Kol Haneshama of York University, the Varsity Jews from Hillel at the University of Toronto, a choir from the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Richmond Hill campus, and the Renanim Youth Singers and Children's Chorus. The annual concert also welcomed the Kehila Jewish Community Day School of Hamilton for the first time.

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Warped tree, bitter fruit

As recently as Feb. 3, Khaled Mashaal, the leader of Hamas, the party that now forms the majority in the Palestinian Legislative Council, told a gathering in a mosque in Damascus: "Before Israel dies, it must be humiliated and degraded."

Less than two weeks later, on Feb. 14, he reinforced the Damascus message at a rally in Khartoum, Sudan."There will be no recognition of Israel, and there will be no security for the occupation and colonization forces. Resistance will remain our strategic option."

Four days later, the members of Mashaal's party elected on Jan. 25 by their Palestinian peers, were sworn into office and immediately heard their prime minister-designate, Ismail Haniya, reject the call by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, for the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority to honour existing agreements with Israel.

Haniya made plain that his party will not veer from its founding principle and "moral" guideline, namely, that the Jewish people has no right to a sovereign home in the Middle East.

In response to Hamas' ascension to power, the government of Israel acted as all other governments on earth would in similar situations: it announced a series of gradual measures to fight the foe that has brazenly made its pre-eminent strategic priority the annihilation of the Jewish state.

The first measure is the refusal to have any contacts with Hamas officials, that is, the people striving to destroy the Jewish state. The second is the curtailing of the transfer of monthly tax and customs revenues to the PA, a sum of more than $50 million (US) a month. Other steps are planned and will be implemented according to the developments on the ground, although humanitarian aid to needy Palestinians will not be disrupted.

There has already been a great deal of grumbling by Palestinians and their supporters against Israel that the withholding of the tax transfers will cause hardship and that Israel's refusal to release to freedom those Hamas and other party candidates sitting in Israeli jails but elected to the PLC is anti-democratic. But the grumbling is hollow and the complaints vacuous.

Palestinian voters do not obligate Israel.

There is no system of law anywhere on earth that obliges Israel to release individuals – in most cases convicted murderers – who are lawfully imprisoned under Israeli law simply because they were elected to public office somewhere else.

Israel will not yield to the priorities of its enemies. Its highest moral imperative is to the safety and well-being of its own people. Indeed most honest, fair-minded observers understand that Hamas' rise to power in the PA poses a mortal danger to Jordan and Egypt as well as to Israel.

The West must remain steadfast alongside Israel in opposing Hamas' politicidal, if not also genocidal, aims.

It is the Palestinians who will eat the bitter fruit of their warped electoral tree, not the Israelis.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

Soviet Prisoner of Zion Iosif Mendelevich was released from a labour camp and secretly flown to Israel via Austria. Mendelevich had recently ended a hunger strike to be allowed to practise Judaism. Great concern had been expressed about his welfare, especially when details about him became unavailable.

Dry Bones

AN ISLAMIC GROUP POSTED ANTI-SEMITIC CARTOONS ON ITS WEB SITE
TO PROTEST THE DANISH NEWSPAPER CARTOONS OF MOHAMMED!
NORMALLY THEY POST ANTI-SEMITIC CARTOONS ON THEIR WEBSITES
JUST FOR THE HELL OF IT.
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Danish king didn't wear a yellow star

In the penultimate sentence of your editorial ("We are all Danes!" *CJN*, Feb. 9), you refer to the popular legend of Danish King Christian X, who, during the German occupation, supposedly donned a yellow star in support of the Danish Jews. In fact, this never happened. No one in Denmark wore the yellow star because there never was an order from the Nazis to do so in Denmark.

Officially, until Rosh Hashanah 1943, Danish Jews had the same "rights" as any other Danish citizen. The Nazi proconsul in Denmark, Werner Best, had even warned Berlin to go easy on Danish Jews lest it give fuel to the growing Danish resistance movements. Yet, on that day, the action against Danish Jews was to begin. Their rescue became part of history, although even today, the rescue is regarded by most Danes as simply helping their neighbours and friends.

The legend of the king and the yellow star probably started in a Swedish newspaper cartoon, where the king is depicted as being asked what Danes were going to do if the government ordered Jews to wear the yellow star, to which the king replies, "Then we'll all have to wear yellow stars." Leon Uris propagated this myth in his novel *Exodus*. Since then, it has become one of the many legends of World War II, one at which Danes often chuckle, but one which, in truth, symbolizes the spirit of the Danish national character.

S. Howard Kaplan
Toronto

* * *

BBC reporting about Israel biased

Many organizations have chastised the BBC for its biased and unfair reporting about Israel. Here is another recent example, which surely justifies the refusal of most Israeli television channels to rebroadcast the programs from BBC.

On Wednesday, Feb. 15, one of the BBC's main stories was titled "Disabled Jenin man shot by troops." The same headline was at the top of the Middle East stories on the broadcaster's website, with the added information that the victim "was among a number of children" who have challenged the Israelis operating in the Jenin area. But when one reads the entire report, it becomes clear that the article is another blatant and cheap anti-Israel distortion, typical of the British broadcaster.

Here is what it really happened. A number of Israeli soldiers were attacked in Jenin by stone-throwing young Palestinians, including a man called Mujahid al-Simadi, who was over 20 years old, not a child, and was brandishing a gun. After al-Simadi was allegedly hit by an Israeli bullet, he apparently died in hospital. Soon thereafter, the story started circulating that he was only carrying a toy gun and that he had a "learning disability." No one, however, was able to certify the rumour, see the alleged toy gun or verify the disability claim, but BBC swallowed it without any concern for corroboration or accuracy, while adding its own little juice to the unverified allegation.

One wonders whether any British soldiers, confronting an armed attacker during a confrontation in an area where terrorist attacks are a daily occurrence, would have first verified if the weapon was a real one. A few years ago, in Vancouver, a young man in a house searched by the RCMP for drugs, took out a toy gun. He was shot point-blank and died instantly. There was a similar incident at an American school last month, with a student carrying a gun replica. In both cases, the police were found to have acted properly.

Finally, in the same broadcast, BBC reported that three demonstrators were killed by the Pakistani police while rioting in protest against the infamous Danish caricatures. Unfortunately, BBC did not investigate whether any of them had learning disabilities.

Jack Chivo
Vancouver

* * *

Building bridges with Muslims

I am not the only rabbi here involved in reaching out to the Islamic community ("Rabbi looks for way to build bridge with Muslims," *CJN*, Jan. 19). Rabbi Aubrey Glazer has been involved in an ongoing Judaic/Islamic Reading Circle meeting at the Wolfond Centre at the University of Toronto and at the Noor Centre. He also co-ordinated two *Slichot-Sulha* services before the High Holy Days. Rabbi John Moscowitz at Holy Blossom Temple has initiated a seminar with an Islamic scholar, and other rabbis are also involved in efforts at dialogue with the Islamic community.

It should also be said that my dialogue endeavours and others have been encouraged and fostered by the efforts of the Canadian Jewish Congress. This organization is to be commended for the grassroots work it does in helping to develop ongoing relationships between the Jewish community and other religious and ethnic communities. It is my hope that the work of the CJC will be recognized and appreciated by our community.

Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl
Toronto

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We settlers are not the enemy

By RABBI SHLOMO RISKIN
Jerusalem Post

Why was the demolition of the nine homes in Amona accompanied by so much violence on both sides of the ideological spectrum, whereas the destruction of the Gush Katif settlements in Gaza only seven months earlier took place amid comparative understanding and sensitivity – with crying and decrying, with dancing and denying, but largely devoid of the use of force?

Apparently, the overwhelming majority of those who feel part of the settler community, while strongly disagreeing with the "disengagement" policy – either because they are Zionistically and humanistically opposed to uprooting Jewish settlements, or because they are against giving a prize of encouragement to terror and Hamas in this critical time of Palestinian internal dissension and external aggression – might well endorse passive resistance, but would clearly stop short of violence.

So what happened half a year later in Amona? I'm not merely writing about the youth who demonstrated in Amona. I'm talking about murmurings throughout the settler community, which has been radicalized far beyond the red lines of Gush Katif.

The explanation lies between the lines of a survey conducted by Prof. Dalia Mor of the College of Management in Rishon Letzion that examined the attitudes of Israelis toward various sectors of our broader society: Ashkenazim, Sephardim, secularists, settlers, haredim, rightists, leftists, Israeli Arabs, new immigrants and foreign workers.

The survey revealed that the sector most hated by the Israeli population are the Palestinians, with the settlers a close second. And among those respondents who defined themselves as left-wingers, hostility toward the settlers ranked higher than hostility toward the Palestinians – 67 per cent versus 55 per cent.

This study helped to explain a most curious phenomenon. Israelis may have many faults – reckless driving, an inability to admit wrongdoing, a lack of subtlety – but a lack of generosity to people in trouble is not one of them. Our telephones and doorbells ring every 10 minutes with requests for aid to needy families and institutions. As well, Israel the fledgling state welcomed underprivileged and undereducated refugees from Third World countries in comparative numbers unrivalled by any other country, and our burgeoning nation was among the first to take in the Vietnamese boat people and to send volunteers and raise funds for people made homeless by the South Asian tsunami, the earthquake in Pakistan and Hurricane Katrina.

With this history, why is there no national outcry on behalf of expelled residents of Gush Katif, most of whom are still waiting to receive their government subsidies and are living in substandard housing, without any means of employment? These residents of Gush Katif did not build their settlements as thieves in the night. They were sent as the agents of every Israeli government since the Six Day War, and they turned a desert into a garden of fruits, vegetables and flowers that were exported to the world. Why is the government, as well as the majority of the population, so indifferent to their fate? It can only be because the entire settlement community has become a demonized and delegitimized sector of Israel society.

And this is what explains Amona: the government (and Supreme Court) would not accept a mere seven-day delay to enable the settlers themselves to dismantle their homes and restore whatever they could as they resumed their lives in Ofra, and the police came out on horseback, brandishing clubs and often striking indiscriminately, as the pictures seem to testify.

I certainly do not condone in any way the stone-throwing violence of many of the young people who were there. But the settler community came to Amona already feeling disenfranchised and abandoned, and unfortunately, those who feel pushed against the wall of hatred and indifference often act with violence, because they sense they have nothing to lose. And tragically, the overreaction of the police only exacerbated the settler perception that we are enemy Number 1, even before Hamas.

What is the source of our repugnant status? Some refer to us as leeches who have sucked the Israeli treasury dry and caused undeserved stagnation to the Negev and the Galil with our demands to fund our ill-advised settlements. Others even charge us with immorality, since we have robbed the Palestinians of lands that rightfully belong to them. There are voices, such as former Knesset speaker Avraham Burg, who have internalized the cruel canard our enemies have cynically flung at us, holding us responsible for the "freedom fighting" suicide bombers who murder the innocent citizens of Netanya, Tel Aviv, Hadera and Petach Tikva.

These voices have forgotten the Treaty of Versailles and the Balfour Declaration, which initially called for 18 Arab states and one Jewish state on both sides of the Jordan. They portray us as white European Boers conquering and colonizing the "South African" homelands of the native Palestinians, paying no mind that it is us Jews who have lived in this area for 4,000 years in unbroken continuity and that we comprised the majority of those who lived on and worked these lands in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

In their blind idealization of the possibilities for peace with the Palestinians, they choose to overlook the facts that from the United Nations Partition Plan on Nov. 29, 1947, to the tense period preceding the Six Day War, to the Oslo Agreements, to the Camp David Summit meeting between former U.S. president Bill Clinton, former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak and Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat, it is we the Israelis who have consistently been willing to compromise and it has been the Arabs who have refused offer after offer to share this land. Yes, you can only make peace with your enemy, but that enemy must be willing to make peace with you.

Security forces square off at Amona with demonstrators opposed to the dismantling of the illegal outpost. [Israel photo]

Nevertheless, the majority of Israelis seems to have "bought into" the "immorality" of our position and thereby condone any ill-treatment we may receive as being well deserved.

We are proud of our settlements, proud of the unique and close relationship that some of us have succeeded in establishing with our Palestinian neighbours, proud of our educational network, proud of the idealism and patriotism of our youth, who still find their way into the most elite and dangerous units of the Israel Defence Forces.

But we are hurt and dismayed by the hatred that is being levelled against us. Yes, the settler community speaks with different voices, and from varying degrees of a wide right-wing perspective, but the overwhelming majority of us are rational, committed, patriotic and idealistic citizens. Do we not deserve to be embraced and co-opted in a consensus government (even if that government rejects Greater Israel as a viable option) rather than to be cast aside and delegitimized as criminals?

Most of us would welcome a plan that would enable us to live in peace with peaceful neighbours, but instead we are being told that many of our legal settlements (beyond the "fence") will have to be dismantled even as Hamastan is gaining unprecedented (since Hitler) political support and renewed terrorism is rearing its ugly head.

The government's policy that unilateral separation will enhance our ability to defend ourselves has yet to be proven, and the government's promise that once we retreat from settlements it will be easier to extirpate the enemy has yet to begin to be implemented, but the destruction of our homes and uprooting of our settlers is taking place with great dispatch and within an atmosphere of zeal and political victory that only strengthens our feelings that we, the settlers, have become the major enemy of Israel.

Does the government not realize that the insensitivity and hatred we feel emanating from its policies only serves to energize the extremist elements of our population – and threatens to rob our state of the most committed and idealistic of our youth (God forbid)?

And now for my deepest fear. If the Israeli population hates us, the settlers, then they must also hate themselves. After all, modern Israel was founded by settlers who settled on the swamp areas of Tel Aviv, Petach Tikva, Huleh Valley and Kinneret that were claimed by the Palestinians. Indeed, the Palestinian press refers not only to Efrat as a settlement, but to Haifa, west Jerusalem, Netanya and Tel Aviv as illegal settlements. If our government continues to delegitimize the settler community and deliver us a knock-out punch, I fear that we will eventually be evacuating Tekoa, Efrat and then Jerusalem – but from the PA-Hamas perspective, it will be Tel Aviv first.

Rabbi Riskin is the founder and chancellor of Ohr Torah Stone Colleges and chief rabbi of Efrat.

Apartheid analogy rehashed

Though facts on the ground may change, and Israel's disengagement from Gaza is but one example, it seems nonetheless that the worn canards of the Palestinian narrative always remain the same. No matter how erudite the discussion, there is usually no escape from the inevitable references to "Israel's illegal occupation" or "Israel's land grab" or "Israel is an apartheid state."

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

The most recent rehash of the apartheid analogy comes not from the propaganda machines of a Middle East dictatorship, but from the *Guardian*, a widely read British daily. In a lengthy two-part report that appeared Feb. 6 and 7, correspondent Chris McGreal presents his arguments with seeming coherence and enthusiasm. Having spent more than a decade in Johannesburg and four years in Jerusalem, he brings to his writing an air of authority borne of extensive personal experience and a well-cultivated network of political contacts in both South Africa and Israel.

What is troubling about the *Guardian* articles, as with others like them, is that they tend to begin with a premise that is inherently flawed. A web of tendentious comparisons, usually embellished by carefully selected, though invariably biased commentators, provide the next dimension to the emerging opinion. It's then left to the writer to conclude with his or her own interpretation of the essay's key points.

McGreal tends to avoid this third construct. As he nears the end of his discourse, he still leaves it to the pundits to make his case. Many of the reported comments are taken out of context – coming primarily from Israelis who dwell on the fringes of the political spectrum, left and right, and from Jewish South Africans who are recognizable not only for their activism in the anti-apartheid struggle but also for their previously expressed hostility toward Israel. The end result translates into yet another scathing attack on Israeli policies and practices, with special reference to the era following the Six Day War in 1967.

There are, of course, detailed analyses that have effectively debunked the arguments that promote common cause between the State of Israel and pre-1994 apartheid South Africa. Any rational examination of apartheid will, in fact, entrench it as a uniquely South African phenomenon that ranks as one of the foremost anomalies of the 20th century. It ran its course, but, as with tyrannies that have both preceded and followed it, we have seen its demise – and rightly so.

Accusing Israel of "apartheid practices" smacks of intellectual dishonesty and moral bankruptcy. It should be seen exactly for what it is: a fallacy and an outrage used by Israel-bashers the world over to discredit and marginalize the Jewish state and those who support its viability within secure and defensible borders.

Shaking the foundations of our wishful thinking

Just about everyone was wrong. Only a few short weeks ago, pundits were assuring us of a victory in Palestinian legislative elections by Fatah, Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas' political party, and a significant showing by Hamas, with as much as 40 per cent of the popular Palestinian vote.

Russ Culiner in Jerusalem

From the highest echelons of the Israeli intelligence establishment (I heard it with my own ears) to the most expert analysts in academia (I heard it with my own ears) to the respected Palestinian pollster Khalil Shikaki (I heard it with my own ears), they grossly miscalculated.

The blame for the "intelligence failure" should be laid, I believe, squarely at the doorstep of the artificial intellectual construct we've used to shore up the shaky foundations of our wishful thinking. Since 9/11, we have tended to paint our world in black and white: Islamic fundamentalism is bad, while any alternative, Fatah included, is more desirable. This knee-jerk bias completely blinded us to the hard truth about our chosen "good guys," just as it did about our chosen Hamas "bad guys." Meanwhile, we got a few things quite wrong.

One popular, yet erroneous presupposition, for example, is that the Palestinians are largely a secular people for whom an appeal to purely Islamic sentiments is of secondary importance or concern. But secularism, as many westerners may understand it, is largely alien to the mentality of this region.

High-blown religious rhetoric infiltrates every aspect of Middle Eastern societies and psyches, Israel not excepted. Just as the notion of a Jewish state would make little sense unnourished by a deep religious awareness and history, so, too, the prideful proclamations of Hamas appeal to a deep-seated nostalgia for a glorious Islamic past among the essentially pious and long-suffering Palestinian people. And let's not forget that even the late PA president Yasser Arafat, of Fatah, purposely titled the Palestinian "national" uprising the "Al-Aqsa Intifadah", shrewdly conferring on the struggle an aura of a religious war, or even a crusade.

Another of our self-delusions was that we had a partner for peace in the person of Mahmoud Abbas. This, too, was a baseless conclusion. His whimpering reluctance to tackle homegrown terror long ago nipped in the bud any hope of meaningful dialogue. And whatever contacts there have been up to now have proved sterile and unproductive. He had shown himself to be a weak, irresolute, sort-of-likeable nebbish. Decisive leadership, vision and action were completely wanting.

And what about the danger that the sources of much-needed external funding would dry up? Well, it should not be forgotten that the Palestinian Authority has distinguished itself by rampant corruption at all levels. Hundreds of millions of dollars were squandered or vanished without a trace into the pockets of the few. The infrastructure in the Palestinian territories is a total shambles, the poor as poor and disgruntled as ever. Despair is pervasive. Everybody was thirsty for change.

And as for terror, how many have noted that the attacks of the past few months were only rarely instigated by Hamas? For the most part, they were the work of various rogue factions, but not infrequently also of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, the military wing of our deposed "partners for peace," the ruling Fatah organization!

On the surface of it, voting a radically Islamic terrorist organization into power would appear to be totally against Palestinians' self-interest. International condemnation of Hamas' ideology and activities, as well as its hatred of Jews and the West, might very well squelch any hope of progress on the diplomatic front. And no doubt many people are once again hemming, hawing and sighing wearily to themselves that this is merely one further illustration of Arabs, as Abba Eban quipped, doing their best not to miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity.

But it was Hamas, and not the PA, that for years has provided needy Palestinians with what they rightly expect and deserve from their leaders – clean administration untainted by corruption, a huge investment in education, social services and medical clinics, and a clear vision for the future.

Hamas has done some good by its people, whereas Fatah has not. And the voters told them both so in no uncertain terms, whatever we might think.

Culiner@netvision.net.il.

Canada should rethink its Jerusalem policies

Following the election victory of Hamas, it's a strange time for a group of Canadians to be proposing a "permanent solution" to the issue of Jerusalem.

But the team headed by Michael Bell, a former Canadian ambassador to Egypt and Israel and a high-level official in Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs, has decided to overlook these complexities. In the next few weeks, the groups plans to unveil a project that claims to "provide peace negotiators with ideas on how to settle [the issue of] Jerusalem within the context of a peace agreement." Bell even declares the grand goal of "changing the way people think about the old city of Jerusalem" and to present ideas that never been discussed before. This is a tall order for the Holy City, a religious centre that has been fought over for more than 3,000 years, since it was conquered and made the capital of David's kingdom.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

Beyond the natural skepticism that anyone (particularly a foreign diplomat) can provide a "solution" based on "new ideas," Bell's project suffers from what academics call methodological failure. We are told that these proposals are gleaned from interviews with 300 people "mostly in the Middle East" – a very small fraction of whom have detailed knowledge and familiarity with Jerusalem's history, meaning, and reality. And how many of these 300 were carefully chosen to justify the predetermined conclusions of Bell's team?

As a result, the publication of this report and a major press campaign may garner some short-term attention in the media, but Israelis and Palestinians – Jews, Muslims, and Christians – who make up Jerusalem's population are busy coping with reality on the ground. Jews, in particular, have not forgotten the history of failed grand peace plans and schemes for redesigning Jerusalem.

The reality is that the "peace process" to which Bell and other Canadian diplomats cling is dormant and will remain so for many years. The late Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's rejectionism, including his attempts to erase Jewish history in Jerusalem and his use of terrorism, destroyed the hopes of the Oslo process. Now, the dominance of Hamas has cemented this situation.

This is clearly not the time to promote yet another counterproductive scheme for dividing Jerusalem, particularly when it will be seen by Palestinians as support for media campaigns to portray the Israeli presence as illegitimate. Canada's new government under Prime Minister Stephen Harper would do well to stay away from this report. And Canadian groups such as the Canada-Israel Committee are helping by refocusing attention on the centrality of Jerusalem to Israeli and Jewish identity.

At the same time, there are important steps that Canada can take on Jerusalem short of naive claims of a "grand solution." The government can and should start a review of Canada's failed diplomacy over the past two decades, particularly in adopting a predominantly Arab position on the city.

In this realm, the time has come to end the foolish policy of omitting the word "Israel" from Canadian passports issued to Jews born in Jerusalem. Defenders of this policy in the Department of Foreign Affairs use the false claim that Jerusalem is illegally "occupied territory." Indeed, the Jewish Quarter and the Temple Mount were occupied in the 1948 Arab attack and 3,000 years of Jewish history was largely destroyed. In this period before the 1967 war, the armistice agreement that promised access to holy sites was ignored when it came to Jews, who were not allowed to pray at the Western Wall or elsewhere. The Canadian government's policy of refusing to allow Israeli escorts on official visits to the Jewish Quarter and the Wall is a sad remnant of this period, and it's both historically and morally wrong.

Most of the world now recognizes that when peace negotiations eventually resume, the future of Jerusalem, including borders, will be determined by the parties, and not by foreigners. The 1949 armistice lines (often erroneously referred to as borders) will finally be discarded, and the Jewish Quarter of Jerusalem, as well as other areas, will be accepted as part of Israel's capital and historic legacy. Canada can help this process by recognizing these realities, rather than continuing to promote outdated fictions.

The Kirshner File

Most Muslims in France want integration

The nationwide civil unrest that convulsed France last autumn raised painful questions about the integration of Muslims in French society. But interestingly enough, the riots hardly touched Marseille, which has one of the largest concentrations of Arabs in this country.

Sheldon Kirshner in Marseille

Salah Bariki, a 54-year-old municipal official of Algerian descent who has lived in this attractive Mediterranean port since 1963, is not surprised that Marseille – a city of 800,000 inhabitants that is still living down a reputation as a seedy redoubt of criminal gangs and drug lords – was more or less spared by the violence. Marseille, an entry point for immigrants from as close as Morocco and as far away as China, is outwardly a lot like Toronto or Montreal in terms of its "live-and-let-live" atmosphere.

A multicultural melting pot, the city is home to 200,000 Muslims,120,000 of whom hail from North Africa and a handful of whom are Palestinians. Nearly all of its 80,000 Jews are from three countries – Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia – while its 80,000 Armenians are mainly the offspring of refugees who fled persecution in the Ottoman Empire during World War I. Marseille's 300,000 Italians are the descendants of immigrants who landed here in the early 20th century.

Marseille also has a sizeable sub-community of *pieds noirs*, the French settlers who left Algeria when it gained independence from France in 1962. Much like the Jews forced out of the Gaza Strip last summer, the *pieds noirs* tend to be politically right wing, and still wax nostalgic about the so-called good old days in Algeria. In the last French presidential election in 2002, Jean Marie Le Pen's far-right, xenophobic party, the National Front, won 25 per cent of the vote in Marseille, and one can safely assume that a fair proportion of his supporters were *pieds noirs* and their children.

Muslims have been a fixture in Marseille since the French colonization of Algeria in the 1830s, and their descendants have been successfully integrated. According to Bariki, integration is the goal of the majority of Muslims today. Bariki's view is shared by Brandeis University political scientist Jyette Klausen, the author of *The Islamic Challenge: Politics and Religion in Western Europe*. But, as Bariki conceded, a small minority of Muslims have vigorously resisted integration, as did most of the Arab oldtimers who came here decades ago with the intention of making money and going straight back home.

As elsewhere in western Europe in the 20th century, most Muslims reached France through guest-worker and family reunification programs. There are presently 15 to 20 million Muslims in Europe, and that figure is expected to double by 2025. France has five to seven million Muslim inhabitants, representing about 10 per cent of its overall population, more than any other country on the continent. The Jewish population is estimated to be 600,000 to 700,000.

In an interview in his spare office in a semi-industrial part of Paris, Fouad Alaoui, the secretary-general of the Union of French Islamic Organizations, told me that projections call for France to have 10 to 12 million Muslims by 2050. The Muslim birthrate is slightly higher than the national average, but lower than in Arab countries.

Alaoui – a 44-year-old doctor from Fez, Morocco, who settled in France a quarter of a century ago to finish his education – said that French Arabs are victimized by racial prejudice and dogged by Islamophobia. "It would be harder for a Mohammed to find a job than an Andre," he said. "We have more difficulties than Jews in terms of discrimination. Jews have been in France much longer and are better accepted."

Bariki, who considers himself thoroughly assimilated and claims he has never personally encountered prejudice, agrees that Muslims face more than the usual hurdles when applying for jobs and seeking housing. Alaoui said that North African Arabs, in particular, have been made to feel like rank outsiders. Citing an example, he said that municipalities often resist Muslim requests to add minarets to their mosques. Few of the 1,500 mosques in France have minarets. "It will take time," he mused in a reference to the possible resolution of that smouldering grievance.

Due to these and other factors, Islamic fundamentalism has taken root in France and in the rest of Europe, producing a generation of disaffected, alienated Muslims. In one alarming case, a 38-year-old Belgian convert to Islam, Muriel Degauque, was recruited as a suicide bomber. Last November, in Iraq, she detonated her explosive vest in Baquba, killing herself and wounding an American soldier.

Bariki contends that militant Muslims not only endanger themselves, but they jeopardize the status of French Muslims by directly challenging France's historic commitment to secularism. "If you disagree with them, they claim you are not a Muslim," said Bariki, an avowed secularist.

French authorities have been concerned by the spectre of radical Islam since at least 1995, when the Paris subway system was bombed by Muslim extremists with a loss of several lives. Rachid Ramda, an Algerian extradited from Britain, was charged with terrorism and is soon expected to stand trial. Last March, a court sentenced six French Algerians to lengthy prison terms for their roles in a 2001 plot to bomb the U.S. embassy in Paris.

France has adopted a carrot-and-stick approach toward Islamic radicalism.

The government has dismantled networks suspected of preparing terror attacks, expelled dozens of Muslim clerics who have engaged in inflammatory rhetoric, placed certain mosques under police surveillance and banned all overt religious symbols, including the hijab – the girls' Islamic headscarf – in public schools.

Rabbi Charles Bismuth

Salah Bariki

Fouad Alaoui

[Sheldon Kirshner photos]

By the same token, France has launched a concerted program to train moderate imams and encourage the formation of a tolerant form of French Islam. Nicolas Sarkozy, the minister of interior, is considering amending a 1905 law so that the state can fund the construction of new mosques and thus bring the Muslim community into the mainstream.

These initiatives are implicitly aimed at defusing the growth of anti-Semitism among Muslim youths. Jewish community officials hold them largely responsible for the dramatic escalation of attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions since the outbreak of the second Palestinian uprising in September 2000.

When I asked Alaoui to comment on these outbreaks, he turned defensive. "I have had discussions with CRIF – the Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France – on this problem," he said. "I told them that Islam can't be anti-Semitic. Islam gives privileged status to Jews and Christians."

When I pressed him, he relented. "There is anti-Semitism, yes, but it's a question of juvenile delinquency. I don't deny that a stupid boy may attack a Jew. But CRIF has blown these anti-Semitic actions out of proportion."

Convinced that Islam does not propagate anti-Semitism, Alaoui declared that young Muslims have been inflamed by the Arab-Israeli conflict. He heatedly denied an accusation, levelled by the Simon Wiesenthal Center, that his organization has funnelled money to Hamas. "These accusations are lies. We have no relations with Hamas."

Back in Marseille, I discussed the problem with the city's chief rabbi, Charles Bismuth, who immigrated to France from Tunisia in 1961 and sits on the board of Marseille Espérance, a municipally funded organization that has promoted brotherhood since its creation in 1990 and publishes an annual ecumenical calendar.

"We have a good relationship with 98 per cent of the Muslims in Marseille," he said, accentuating the positive. "The objective of Jews and Muslims is to live together peacefully."

Jean-Michel Passeral, a Catholic member of Marseille Espérance, struck a similar tone. "The communities do not want war."

Rabbi Bismuth claimed that neo-Nazis rather than Muslim radicals were probably behind the destruction by arson of a local synagogue in March 2002, when Israel launched Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank.

To Rabbi Bismuth, anti-Semitism was an "aggravating" rather than a "determining" factor in the decision of 300 local Jews to emigrate in 2004. Almost all of them went to Israel, first to be reunited with family members and, second, to upgrade their economic prospects.

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Immigrant integration a top priority, says award recipient

RBC's Gordon Nixon to receive UJA/CIJA Words & Deeds Leadership Award

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

Human potential is being wasted in Canada when immigrants can't find good jobs to match their skills.

That's the assessment of RBC Financial Group president and CEO, Gordon Nixon who, on March 29, will become the first recipient of the Words & Deeds Leadership Award, which will be presented jointly by UJA Federation and the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA).

The award, to be conferred at the Words & Deeds Leadership Dinner at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, recognizes community leaders who make important contributions to humanitarian causes, to tolerance, inclusion and the fight against racism in Canadian society.

In an interview with Jewish Toronto, Nixon said that immigrants represent an "untapped potential" that Canada must work aggressively to release.

"Over the past decade, immigrants have arrived in Canada better educated and at similar stages in their careers as those born in Canada, but they have not found jobs that match their skill levels and they are learning less than those born in Canada," says Nixon. "This is a waste of human potential and represents a direct hit to our economy."

Ensuring successful immigrant integration into our society, he added, "is not just about social justice, it's about seizing an opportunity."

Gord Nixon presenting a donation to an after-school program at the Prince Charles School in Saint John, New Brunswick.

Nixon also believes that few cities stand to gain as much economic benefit as Toronto, because of its diversity. "In Canada, if we want vibrant, prosperous communities and an excellent standard of living, then we need to become one of the world's most competitive nations to foot the bill," he says. "You can't have a well-intentioned social agenda without a sound economic agenda and we must ensure that we have social policies if we are going to meet our challenges. This is where an issue of diversity comes in. I truly believe that one of the ways to grow Canada's economy is to better leverage diversity in our workplace and communities, and which is why I've adopted this as one of my key priorities."

The recipient of a number of community service awards in the past and an active supporter of community causes, Nixon believes that his community involvement – and that of other business leaders – is an important opportunity, one not to be wasted.

"Absolutely," he says, "CEO's are often placed in a privileged position when it comes to influencing thinking on civic issues and in areas like philanthropy. I believe corporations and their leaders have a responsibility to their communities and society-at-large. For business leaders to squander the opportunity to make a difference is a wasted opportunity and a disservice to one's organization."

With many of Canada's financial services institutions at the top of not-for-profit call lists when it comes time to ask for financial help, the ability to prioritize is an essential skill possessed by Nixon.

"As much as possible, I do try to get involved with campaigns and causes that matter to me personally and to RBC as well," he says. "But I also think that one of the most important roles a leader must play is to encourage others to get involved."

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Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

Correction

In the February 2 Jewish Toronto tribute page to Andrea Bronfman z"l, it was erroneously reported that of the 13,000 Canadians who have participated in *birthright israel* trips over the years, 2,000 were from Toronto. In fact, since the inception of the *birthright israel* initiative, over 7,000 Torontonians have participated.

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Award dinner honours RBC's Gordon Nixon

Event promotes UJA Federation / CIJA partnership

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

On March 29, Gordon Nixon, President and Chief Executive Officer, RBC Financial Group, will become the first recipient of the Words & Deeds Leadership Award.

The award, which will be bestowed on Nixon jointly by the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, recognizes leaders who make outstanding contributions to humanitarian causes and to tolerance, inclusion, and civil discourse in Canadian society.

CIJA is funded by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and other Canadian Federations through UIA Federations Canada.

"Recipients of the award will be those who demonstrate - by their words and deeds — that the efforts of one can lead to the benefit of many," says CIJA CEO Hershell Ezrin. "This award honours Gord Nixon for his contribution to a more inclusive Canadian society."

More than 1,000 guests will be at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre to attend the Awards Dinner headed by honorary chairs Gerald Schwartz and Lawrence Tanenbaum, working with co-chairs Brent Belzberg, Richard Venn and Charles Winograd, and an extensive tribute committee.

The dinner is just one of many partnership endeavours carried out jointly between CIJA and UJA Federation.

According to Ezrin, that close partnership plays an important role in CIJA's ongoing efforts to translate ambitious national objectives like Israel advocacy and fighting anti-Semitism, into local activities.

"We act as an agency for advocacy of UIA, in close contact with the Federation," says Ezrin.

The collaboration is mutually beneficial, notes David Engel, chair of the Board of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "In Toronto, we've developed an Ontario-based advocacy committee along with CIJA," he says. The committee, which includes representatives from UJA Federation, CIJA, and the different advocacy agencies, meets regularly, coordinates programs, and ensures that people are working together on issues like school funding, campus concerns, Israel-related initiatives, health care, and homecare for the elderly. Engel notes that there is communication between both lay leaders and professionals on a day-to-day basis. "There's an integral give and take in terms of what the issues are, and how we're addressing them," he says.

David Engel

Hershell Ezrin

That kind of communication is imperative because different expertise rests in different agencies, adds Morris Perlis, who serves on the boards of both UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and CIJA. "If you don't bring people together you just do your own thing without knowledge that one of your sister organizations may have done it before, or might know somebody."

Democracy in Action, an initiative of CIJA, brought UJA Federation participants to Ottawa in November, 2004 to meet with members of Parliament. Here, participants meet with Stephen Harper, then leader of the opposition, and today, the Prime Minister of Canada.

CIJA also works with UJA Federation - as well as its constituent organizations - the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) and Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) - to send missions to Israel involving Canadians of influence. "We've taken politicians and business leaders to Israel," says Ezrin. "What they tell other people is incredible."

According to Ezrin, touring Israel with non-Jews and first-time visitors allows veteran UJA mission participants to see Israel through fresh eyes. At the same time, non-Jewish participants get a first-hand look at the commitment of the Jewish community to Israel and to community service.

As a board member of both organizations, Perlis is in a unique position to comment on the partnership. "We have a better operating relationship than has existed for many years," he says. "Before CIJA was created, there was a separation of the lines of responsibility and communication between the Federations across the country and the local Congresses. Even if they were often physically close by, there wasn't the demand for the day-to-day interaction or the process to ensure commonality of focus."

Belzberg and Cummings dedicated to the cause

"If you look at the world around you, you have to be active to make a difference," says Brent Belzberg.

Through their work with CIJA, Belzberg and his co-chair Steven Cummings have proven the point. "They are absolutely diligent and so involved in many different ways," says CEO Hershell Ezrin.

As an example of their dedication, Ezrin points to the weekly conference calls held by the organization's leadership. "They can be anywhere in the world, but they're on that call every week."

Steven Cummings

Belzberg, a past UJA Federation campaign chair, is the Managing Partner of Torquest Partners Inc. He has long been active in community affairs. In addition to serving as co-chair of CIJA, Belzberg currently serves as a director of Mount Sinai Hospital, Baycrest Hospital Foundation, and as an advisor to several faculties at the University of Toronto

Cummings is President and Chief Executive Officer of Maxwell Cummings & Sons Holdings Limited. Active in community affairs, he is a past president of Montreal's Federation CJA and served both as president of the Jewish General Hospital Centre Board and its Foundation Board. Cummings currently serves on the Board of *The Canadian Jewish News* and is founding chair of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre and founding co-chair of PROMONTREAL. He was recently named to the Order of Canada for his voluntary service

Brent Belzberg

Belzberg and Cummings have both been involved in CIJA since the organization's creation. "It's because of them that this thing got off the ground at all," says Ezrin.

Ezrin says that CIJA has been blessed with dedicated lay leaders. "The commitment of the other volunteers is just as strong as the co-chairs," he says.

"There's a tremendous amount of satisfaction," says Cummings. "People who have not been involved don't understand how much joy you get out of it. It's a noble way to express your responsibilities as a member of a community, as a member of the human race, for that matter."

CIJA streamlines the advocacy process

Political influence, communal cohesion, high-level partnerships. For a relatively young organization, CIJA has some impressive accomplishments under its belt.

The Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA), which is funded by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and other Canadian Federations through UIA Federations Canada, was created in January 2004 as an umbrella organization coordinating the work of groups such as the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC), the Quebec-Israel Committee (QIC), Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC), and National Jewish Campus Life.

"We were set up to address a need," says CEO Hershell Ezrin. "In the midst of the second intifada, Israel was getting hammered in the press, our government wasn't as responsive as we thought they should be, and there was an increase in anti-Semitism." Ezrin notes that while the advocacy organizations were doing a good job, they needed help to coordinate their efforts.

According to co-chair Steven Cummings, one of CIJA's greatest successes has been in creating a seamless relationship between the advocacy agencies. Centralized accounting and information-technology systems have allowed the agencies to cut administrative costs, and staff has been moved closer together so they can benefit from each other's knowledge and experience.

In 2004, Stephen Harper, then the leader of the opposition, spoke at the CIJA Democracy in Action Dinner in Ottawa.

Ezrin says that the result is an atmosphere in which the advocacy organizations can achieve greater success. One noteable example is the change in Canada's voting record at the United Nations. Canada has changed its vote on six anti-Israel resolutions over the last two years.

"It's just a first step," says Ezrin, "but it's a huge change." "CIJA has been able to get politicians on the record." Prior to the January 23 federal election, CIJA interviewed all four party leaders.

"We also have had influence in creating awareness that there's a problem with complacency," says co-chair Brent Belzberg. "People have been writing op-ed pieces, writing to their MPs, getting involved in the political process."

Other achievements include funding for *shlichim* (emissaries from Israel) in 10 major campus cities, and academic exchanges between Canadian and Israeli universities.

Perhaps the biggest accomplishment, according to both Cummings and Belzberg, is the increased awareness in the general community of shared values between Canadians and Israelis. "Canadians have to better understand that the values of democracy, liberty, free press are as dear to Israelis as they are to Canadians," says Cummings.

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Books
Bernard Baskin

The crimes were mysterious and grisly. Some sadistic or insane individual, or gang of miscreants, were slitting the bellies of horses, cows and sheep. It seemed senseless and cruel, and the residents of a rural English village clamoured for the arrest of the vicious perpetrators. In addition, obscene and scurrilous letters were being sent to the village vicar and misleading ads in his name being published in the local paper.

The year was 1902 and the bumbling police force arrested George Edalji, a 27-year-old timid and myopic solicitor, the son of the local Parsee vicar.

George had been the longtime butt of racism, abuse and intimidation. Falsely arrested for the assorted wrongdoing, he is convicted and sentenced to seven years of penal servitude.

Here is where Arthur Conan Doyle, the renowned creator of Sherlock Holmes, enters this true story. The redoubtable Doyle, convinced of Edalji's innocence, aided by the widespread public outcry, managed to secure his release. In this manner, the lives of two disparate individuals were irreversibly bound together.

In some quarters, Doyle was hailed as the British Emile Zola, the French advocate of justice, who had defended the pilloried Jew, Alfred Dreyfus, and eventually helped to set him free.

Although the blameless Edalji was granted a pardon, he received no apology or compensation for his false arrest and imprisonment. Doyle was indignant. He fulminated: "This country, this England of ours has discovered a new legal concept. In the old days, you were either innocent or guilty. If you were not innocent, you were guilty, and if you were not guilty, you were innocent. A simple enough system, tried and tested down many centuries, grasped by judges, juries and the populace at large. As from today, we have a new concept in English law – guilty and innocent. George Edalji is a pioneer in this regard. The only man to be granted a free pardon for a crime he never committed and yet to be told at the same time that it was quite right he served three years' penal servitude."

Over the years, Doyle was a staunch believer in spiritualism and tried to commune with the spirits of the dead, much to the distaste of his more practical mother. "She is instinctively opposed to the psychic world, which for her represents anarchy and mumbo-jumbo… And then there is the family to consider. Arthur is a knight of the realm; he has lunched and dined with the king; he is a public figure – she repeats back to him his boast that he is second only to Kipling in his influence on the healthy, sporting young men of the country. What if it came out that he was involved in séances and suchlike? I would dish all chance of a peerage."

Barnes, a stylish literary craftsman, author of many books, including the widely praised *Flaubert's Parrot*, delves into Edwardian society to bring to life its prim conventions, staid courtroom procedures and oafish police. Especially noteworthy is the author's facility with dialogue.

This novel is engagingly intelligent, an entertaining recreation of a long-forgotten episode related with irony and precision by a master storyteller.

Danish Jews shrug off possible Shoah cartoons, rabbi says

By LAURYN KRONICK
Special to The CJN

ARHUS, Denmark — With the announcement that Iran's largest newspaper, *Hamshahri*, was holding a contest for cartoons that satirize the Holocaust, Danish Jews are waiting to see what the reaction will be from Danes and Muslims0.

"[The Iranians] are just looking for a fight and to get a reaction from us," said Rabbi Yitzi Loewenthal, director of Chabad in Denmark and one of Copenhagen's two rabbis.

"Most Jews will just shrug their shoulders and ignore the comics. Maybe they will even laugh."

After cartoons of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, published in September by the Danish daily newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, became widely circulated in the Muslim world, Denmark's Jews have been breathing sighs of relief that they haven't been targeted in ensuing protests.

Along with other Danes, Jews have tried to go about their daily business, ignoring acts of violent protest in Muslim and non-Muslim countries across the world.

Rabbi Loewenthal said that Jews' successful assimilation into Danish society is the main reason they haven't been targeted in a similar way by Denmark's media outlets.

"The Danish Jewish community was successful in assimilating and integratng into [Danish] society," Rabbi Loewenthal said. "We are known and considered as Danes."

Mette Bentow, the youth and activity co-ordinator for the Jewish community, agreed that Denmark's Jews are not targets.

> ***Community successful in assimilating into society***

"As Danish Jews, we do not have anything to worry about here," she said.

"But in the Arab world, we are a little nervous about our profile. The whole Islamic debate is ridiculous, and for [Iran] to pull in Israel and the Holocaust, they're just trying to stir up more trouble."

Earlier this month, after reports that *Jyllands-Posten* would publish the Holocaust cartoons from Iran, the paper's editor-in-chief assured readers that it would not.

In a statement on the paper's website, Carsten Juste said he would never publish any anti-Jewish or anti-Christian cartoons, adding that *Jyllands-Posten*'s culture editor, Flemming Rose, had been pressured into telling an Iranian interviewer that he would consider publishing the Holocaust cartoons.

Bentow said she was confident *Jyllands-Posten* would never publish cartoons of an anti-Semitic nature, noting that Juste cleared up the "misunderstanding" shortly after it surfaced.

Ulf Haxen, chairman of the Society for Danish Jewish History and editor of the country's Jewish cultural magazine *Rambam*, believes the Iranian Holocaust cartoons won't affect Denmark's Jewish population.

He said that Jews have dealt with more difficult issues and that the cartoons are just a weak retaliation tactic on the part of Muslims.

"What's the problem? We've had [children's] cartoons like *Tintin*, where a strip features the prophet Muhammad," said Haxen. "The [Muhammad] cartoons are innocent, and should not result in such hysterical reactions. They can't be taken seriously."

Lauryn Kronick is a Concordia University journalism student.

Jewish Life

Maimonides offers lessons for us moderns

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

JEWISH EDUCATION
The Next Generation

You all know his name. His books were banned as heretical, his perceived challenges to traditional Jewish ideas raked over the coals. Much discussion of his views – and much of it ill-informed – has taken place and continues to smoulder about the precise problem with his work.

Though his writing was meant to combat difficult issues in the relationship between faith and reason, and thus he came to praise Torah and not to bury her, this central fact was erased in the wake of vicious attack and counterattack, public pronouncements and private condemnations. He questioned whether some of the scientific statements of the Sages actually accorded with the best of contemporary thinking. His name has become synonymous with controversy. I refer, of course to Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon – Maimonides.

Supremely self-confident, the Rambam was never lax in sharply criticizing what he saw as erroneous thinking or pompous self-importance among supposed Jewish leaders. The Gaon of Baghdad in the 12th century was Shmuel ben Ali, who saw fit to malign Maimonides' great work of codification, the *Mishneh Torah*. In explaining to one of his students why he was attacked, Maimonides' "apology" for Shmuel ben Ali is deeply ironic: "Why, my son, should you take offence that a man whom people accustom from his youth to believe that there is none like him in his generation; when age, high office, aristocratic descent, the lack of people of discernment in this town, and his relationship with individuals, all have combined to produce this execrable consequence that each and every individual hangs expectantly on each word pronounced from the academy… why do you wonder that he has acquired such [evil] traits? How, my son, could you imagine that he should love truth enough to acknowledge his weakness?… This is a thing that a man like him will never do, as it was not done by better men who preceded him" (from a letter to Joseph ben Judah in *Iggerot ha-Rambam*, ed. D.H. Baneth, 1946).

Although Maimonides clearly and emphatically advocated the mastery of the classical Jewish curriculum, including Tanach, Talmud and Halachah, his vision of Jewish education went much further. As Haim ben-Sasson has noted, Maimonides ultimately viewed typical Talmudic study, when seen as an end in and of itself, as "being of questionable value." When he discusses Shmuel ben-Ali's son-in-law, Zecharia, Rambam's tone turns caustic: "He is a very foolish man. He studies very hard at this talmudic discussion and its commentaries, and thinks that he is the greatest of his generation, having already attained the peak of perfection."

The problem is paradoxical. Of all great Jewish thinkers, Rambam best understood the need to keep certain, more complex teachings off limits to the ordinary reader, who might become confused and hence lose faith in the tradition. Yet it was this very same Maimonides who pushes for truth – truth from all sources, Jewish or gentile – as the benchmark of enlightenment and the prerequisite for real spiritual attainment. Put another way, he did not view the world or the nuances of Torah in binary black and white fashion.

As the decibel level rises in contemporary religious debate in all communities – Jewish, Christian and Islamic – and the level of intellectual discourse and simple courtesy has radically lessened, the lessons and the legacy of Maimonides are worth remembering and, indeed, following.

Did you hear the one about…?

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

The Jewish Highway

Purim is getting closer, and that means it's time to lighten up. But rather than presenting you with a list of Jewish jokes (just go to Google and type in "Jewish jokes"), I'm going to focus on the tradition of Jews poking fun at authority figures, their enemies and, of course, themselves.

Hershey H. Friedman argues that Jewish humour goes all the way back to the beginning. Granted these biblical examples won't have you rolling in the aisles, but perhaps they planted in the Jewish people their love of humour. Friedman says you will find many examples of "sarcasm, irony, wordplay, humorous names, humorous imagery and exaggeration" in the Torah. The reason: "Humour brings God closer to humankind." **[http://tinyurl.com/b3ufs]**

Some examples from the Tanach:

• **Turnabout:** "The Purim story is a comedy in the classic sense," explains the Ohr Somayach site. "All seems set for disaster, and in an instant, everything is turned on its head. This combination of total reversal and perfect timing gives Purim its special flavour of joy." **[www.innernet.org.il/article.php?aid=216]**

• **Humourous situations:** When Balaam, the gifted but arrogant seer is sent to curse the Israelites, he refers to himself as "one who hears the sayings of God and knows the knowledge of the Most High," (Numbers 24:16). But it is his donkey, not Balaam, who sees his way blocked by an angel. As Friedman notes, "You might say that God made an ass out of Balaam."

• **Sarcasm:** When the newly freed Israelites complain about the approaching Egyptian army, they ask Moses "Was there a lack of graves in Egypt, that you took us away to die in the wilderness?" (Exodus 14:11)

The Jewish penchant for arguing with authority figures didn't end in the desert. In "Divine Humour in Talmudic Literature," Friedman points to the many instances that Jews low (Tevye) and great (Abraham, Moses) have "blamed, criticized and haggled" with God. He cites the story of the famous Rabbi Levi Yitzchak of Berditchev, who "once declared to God that if He did not forgive the Jewish people their sins then he would tell the whole world that God's phylacteries [tfillin] were invalid. According to the Talmud, God's phylacteries contain the verse: 'And who is like Your people Israel, a unique nation on earth?' Rabbi Levi exclaimed that if God did not forgive Israel their sins then they were not a 'unique nation on earth,' thus making His phylacteries invalid!" **[http://tinyurl.com/88d28]**

Eliezer Segal continues the talmudic theme in his article, "Rabbi, Watch out for that Beam!" He explains that the Talmud describes many fanciful accidents in order to open discussions about who is legally at fault. But Segal says you can almost imagine something "quintessentially vaudevillian" about the scenarios presented. There are stories of two people walking, one holding a pot, the other a beam, who of course, collide. Or of five people seated peacefully on a bench until the sixth takes his place and the bench collapses. Segal concludes, "Is it just my own impish irreverence, or are all Talmud students motivated by the hope that the next folio will bring them a fateful new encounter between a rabbi and a banana peel?" **[http://tinyurl.com/8oqo5]**

"I do not know whether there are many other instances of a people making fun to such a degree of its own character." –Sigmund Freud on Jews and Jewish humour. I found that quote in a fascinating piece by Jules Chametzky who looks at the ability of Jews to laugh at themselves. Here's one repeated by Freud that plays on the stereotype of Jews as dirty: "Two Jews meet in front of the bath house. One sighs and says to the other, 'A year goes by so fast.'"

Chametzky also looks at tales of Chelm, the legendary town inhabited by fools. "One such is of their building a tower at the edge of town from which it would be easier to see the approach of the Messiah. The watchman employed to keep the vigil, the town beggar, was asked what he was being paid. 'Not very much,' he answers, 'But it's steady work.'" **[http://tinyurl.com/9kan9]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway(@)rogers .com.

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Send your response to: **"The Dairy of Anne Frank" Contest**, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4 or fax to: 416-391-0949
Employees and family members of The CJN, Fairview Library Theatre and Stage Centre Productions are not eligible to enter.

Kiever shul launches bid for new members

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Specialto The CJN

In the newly renovated basement of the Kiever Congregation, one of two remaining old synagogues in Kensington Market, some 30 people gather around a long festive table laden with trays of fruit, nuts and seeds in celebration of Tu b'Shvat, the birthday of trees.

People alternately bless and consume the bountiful trays of pineapples, mangoes, pomegranates, apples, grapes, figs, dates walnuts and macadamia nuts, to name some of the many varieties of fruit and nuts at this Tu b'Shvat seder.

Shul president David Pinkus, whose association with the Kiever goes back at least 70 years – his father, Isadore, was one of its founders– noted that the Tu b'Shvat seder is a first for the shul.

"It's a unique idea. There hasn't been anything like it in my memory, and I've been coming here since I was a baby."

The seder is a pilot project for a new outreach initiative, said Pinkus, adding that Tu b'Shvat, one of the four new year celebrations in the Jewish calendar, is a very appropriate time to start the new program.

He explained that the Kiever, which received its charter in 1914, when the centre of Jewish life in Toronto was downtown, has seen its congregation dwindle over the years as members died or moved north along the Bathurst Street corridor. For this reason, it was important to hire a professional worker who could spearhead a revitalization of the shul by running educational, social and music programs to attract new members.

The person who has taken up the challenge is Martin (Menashe) Solomon, who comes from a long line of cantors. (His late father, Moshe Zvi, and grandfather, Elimelech Dov, were cantors in Los Angeles and Jerusalem, respectively.) An experienced community worker with a master's degree in social work from Yeshiva University, Solomon is also the former chazzan and spiritual leader of the east-end Riverdale Shul.

His official title is chazzan sheinee (second cantor), as he leads services when honorary cantor Pinchas Gutter is not available. "Mr. Gutter has been the cantor emeritus at the Kiever for many years," Solomon said. "He will always be the first cantor."

Martin Solomon, the newly appointed chazzan sheinee for The Kiever Congregation leads a Tu b'Shvat seder.
[Barbara Silverstein photo]

The role of the chazzan sheinee will involve outreach to the local Jewish community, Solomon said. "There is this beautiful structure completely available for use by the community. Mr. Pinkus, who has been the driving force in keeping the shul running all these years, understood the importance of renewal."

The position was actually offered to Solomon, a longtime resident of Toronto, after he had left the city. He went back to his native California temporarily before making aliyah to visit his ailing mother, Edith Solomon. She recently died of cancer.

It was during this period that Pinkus approached Solomon to lead the new outreach initiative, Solomon said. "Mr. Pinkus he's been the president of the shul since 1979 and basically looking after most things – wanted to maintain *kavod* or respect for the old while expanding the appeal to a younger group.

"He said, 'Would you do this? It would be a huge mitzvah. We'll find a way that you'll be able to fulfill that dream of aliyah down the road.'"

Solomon said Ori Carmona, the former baal koreh (Torah reader) at the Riverdale Shul – he now performs this role at the Kiever –was also instrumental in convincing him to return to Toronto.

Another key supporter of the new outreach project is Benjie Cooperband, a former Winnipegger who now assists Pinkus. "I'm there to make sure that there's some continuity once Dave [Pinkus] decides to hang up his hat. I'm there to help him."

He said the outreach program will further increase the shul's utilization by the community.

In particular, he said he wants to publicize the Kiever as a heritage venue for Jewish simchahs, such as weddings and bar and bat mitzvahs. "This is a historical place."

He said revenue from bar and bat mitzvahs – there are about 30 a year – helps cover the shul's upkeep costs.

Cooperband, who books the simchahs, noted that bat mitzvahs are Orthodox, so girls read a Haftorah, rather than a Torah portion. "Last year, my youngest daughter was up there on the bimah doing her Haftorah. It was wonderful," he said.

"We are looking for more opportunities for women to participate in synagogue life," Solomon said.

"Our objective is to carry on the Orthodox formal tradition, but we're open to everyone. We're offering easy access so everyone feels comfortable. We want people to have a genuine spiritual encounter, and at the same time feel a strong link to the past."

For more information on the Kiever Shul, call 416-593-9702.

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Misperceptions are killing Judaism, rabbi says

'We often damage ourselves spiritually in the way we think about Judaism'

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Perceptions that Judaism is a religion based on restrictions, is not spiritual, and is only good for people who need an emotional crutch are killing Judaism, said Rabbi Michael Skobac.

"We often damage ourselves spiritually in the way we think about Judaism."

He said that he has encountered very few Jews who reject Judaism as a whole, but has found that many do tend to reject Judaism based on a number of misconceptions.

"I think the number 1 connection we make about Judaism is that it is a religion. I believe that we don't have positive associations about religions," Rabbi Skobac said during a lecture titled "Is Religion Killing Judaism?" at the Minsker Shul in downtown Toronto recently.

"We might think of things within religion as restrictive, as a thing that holds us back. People might think of Shabbat, for example, as a day of things that you cannot do.

"The truth is that we have to reframe it and think, Shabbat is a day that allows us, and frees us up to do all things we want to be doing," such as focusing on your relationships with your friends, family, God, and other things we put on hold during the work week.

Rabbi Skobac said another association people make with religion, is that it is for the weak.

"We assume often that the only people who should be involved with religion are those that are emotional and psychological cripples."

"If we see religion as something to solve our problems, it is understandable that people would say, it's nice if you need it."

Another misconception about religion is that it is completely separate from spirituality, something that people have become very interested in lately, he said.

"That becomes the killer for religions. If the popular assumption is that religion is not spiritual, and everyone is into spirituality, religion is the last place you want to go."

Jews, he added, tend to get caught up in the details and miss the bigger picture.

"A wise man once said, the difference between religion and spirituality is like the difference between reading the menu and eating the meal."

He explained that if we think of Judaism as a religion that requires us to go to shul and pray every day, we're missing the point.

"When we say the *Shema*, if we are just reading words that tell us we're supposed to love god, that's religion. That's the menu."

But by learning what the words mean and how to love God, we can become spiritual.

"For those people who experience Judaism just as tradition, and ceremonies and customs, it is not very satisfying spiritually. It's when you discover that every single thing we do as Jews is somehow developing our relationship with God [that you can become spiritual]."

He explained that when he was a young hippie with "hair down to his tuchas," he was a politically active idealist who attended protests and was disillusioned with the idea of Judaism and religion.

"To me, religion was the worst thing in the world, because I saw religion as something that divided people and caused most of the problems in the world," said Rabbi Skobac, who added that he was voted the class anti-Semite in high school.

"I had a big chip on my shoulder. Here was a guy, who hated Judaism and hated religion," he said of himself as a young man.

He said one of his high school teachers used to say, "when it comes to politics and religion people speak with a sense of authority aversely proportional to their knowledge."

And a friend said to him, "You know, Skobac, for someone who hates Judaism so much, it's interesting that you almost know nothing about it."

Rabbi Skobac then decided he should educate himself about the religion if he was to have a real position on the subject.

He attended a "special school in New York for wayward Jews," where he learned that

Rabbi Michael Skobac

Judaism and religion is not responsible for all the evil in the world, rather Judaism is a movement dedicated to creating unity in the world.

"What also impressed me was the realization that Jewish idealism has a system to it. I appreciated the fact that as a hippie, my idealism was very sloppy. That I could express my idealism when someone organized a protest or demonstration. But it was very ad hoc. It was very scattered."

"What I appreciated about Judaism was its ability to weave our idealism into our lives 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

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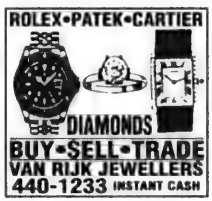

Greater Toronto Area

Doctor saves lives in Ethiopian hospital

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Among travellers to the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, Dr. Rick Hodes' Friday night dinners have become somewhat legendary. Stories have been written about how the American-born doctor for the Joint Distribution Committee welcomes visitors to his home for a vegetarian Shabbat meal, and how travellers of all stripes sit together and enjoy the friendly ambience created by the good doctor.

When Sari Stitt decided to accompany her husband, Allan, to Ethiopia for his business meetings, she decided it would be a good idea to get in touch with the doctor and join him on Shabbat.

Recently returned from Addis, Stitt declares that Hodes, who's lived in the eastern African state since 1985, is an inspiring figure. Not only does he minister to the health needs of the Falash Mora – Ethiopian Jews who converted to Christianity over the past century and who now await repatriation to Israel – he also provides medical services to the wider population. He helps the local Mother Theresa's Mission for Sick and Dying Destitutes (MTM) as a volunteer, taking care of gravely ill patients.

He obtains badly needed – and hard to get – medications for MTM's patients, sometimes taking money out of his own pocket to do so. Relying on his contacts around the world, he arranges surgeries for some of the patients outside Ethiopia. And the Talmud-citing doctor has adopted five young Ethiopian boys and provided a home for 10 more.

Stitt met Hodes only briefly a few days before their Shabbat dinner. She'd already had her fill of the touristy life in and around Addis. She had toured many Christian sites and was more or less tired of driving around the countryside visiting churches.

During her ventures outside the sheltered confines of the Sheraton Hotel, she was exposed to a grinding poverty that was beyond anything she had witnessed before.

Once, she came upon what appeared to be a beast of burden piled high with branches for firewood. When she got closer, she saw it was a woman beneath the heavy load.

The poor outside Addis have nothing, she said. Those better-off have tin roofs on their mud huts.

By Tuesday of her week there, while her husband met with colleagues to instruct them on the finer points of conflict resolution and mediation, she was asking Hodes what she could do as a volunteer.

He immediately suggested, "I have lots of children at my home. Can you teach them English?" she recounted.

Stitt spent four days with the boys, and she quickly became attached to them and impressed with their good spirits – despite the hardships and illnesses they endured. Most noticeable was their good nature, their desire to learn and their appreciation of the little things in life.

Sari Stitt with Ethiopian children

Hodes lives in a three-bedroom house in a gated community. The kids sleep in two of the rooms. "They're happy to sleep on the floor," she said.

Not all of the boys are orphans. Some were left by their destitute parents at the MTM when they could no longer take care of them. Some suffer from cancer, others from tuberculosis of the spine or other maladies.

One of the boys – "Duke" as he's known – is only nine. After his mother died, his father brought him to Addis Ababa. While Duke played marbles in the dirt street, his father walked away. When Duke looked up from his game, he was alone.

He lived on the street by his wits for months until he was brought to the mission. Hodes met him there and decided to adopt him.

In an e-mail interview from Addis, Hodes said he adopted the boys because "I'm trying to help a few people."

In his home, he said, he practises Judaism and observes the Jewish holidays, but he welcomes children of all faiths. In Ethiopia, there is virtually no anti-Semitism, and what's more, Ethiopians feel close to Israel. "There are long and old ties going back to Solomon and Sheba. People still talk about how Ethiopia stood still rooting for Israel during the Six Day War [in 1967]."

Hodes doesn't consider himself an ambassador of the Jewish people, "but I think perhaps I show that at least this Jew cares about all the people here."

As for the adopted kids, they "feel closer to Judaism. Three have gone to the Jewish day school in Dallas, Texas, when they were there for spine surgeries. They call my mother Bubbie.

"I want to expose them to the nice things about Judaism and they can decide where they want to go. The other kids I am helping can do what they like."

Stitt took groups of Hodes' boys with her for conversational English lessons at the Sheraton Hotel, where she treated them to exotic fare – hamburgers, fries and soft drinks – which they loved.

Though she spent only a few days with them, she was impressed by how the boys lived, something like "a brotherhood in action."

Hodes, she believes, is living by the talmudic aphorism that "he who saves one life saves a world."

Her enthusiasm for him knows few limits: "I think he could go down in history books as one of the greatest humanitarians of all time," she said.

Freedom of speech said the issue

Continued from page 3

Bronstein sloughs off the phone call and he does not feel intimidated by the legal manoeuvres. "I think it's perfectly valid for people to use the legal system," he said. At the same time, he has received unsolicited calls from lawyers offering their services – some pro bono – if he has to fight in court or at the human rights commission for his right to publish the cartoons, he said.

In its Feb. 9 issue, the JFP published several of the Danish cartoons that have inflamed parts of the Muslim world, including one that depicts Muhammad with a lit bomb in his turban.

Syed Soharwardy, president of the ISCC, which filed the human rights complaint, told reporters the cartoons promote hatred against Muslims. The Muslim Council of Calgary has lodged a complaint with Calgary police about the images.

Bronstein maintains that what is at stake is free speech, asking, "Where do you draw the line" in publishing images one religious group finds offensive? "Are you allowed to talk about Muhammad in the context of political criticism? Are you allowed to talk about Islam in the context of political criticism?" he asked.

Ezra Levant, publisher of the *Western Standard*, told Canadian Press that "diversity means we don't have to obey one person's religious laws."

Bronstein said he published the cartoons to provide background and context to the eruptions of violence that occurred in the Muslim world.

Greater Toronto Area

Israel could use a constitution: ex-MK

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Israel needs a constitution because of its diversity, but Israelis can manage without one, the former deputy speaker of the Knesset said last week.

In a speech at Temple Sinai, Naomi Chazan said constitutions are important in countries such as in Israel, where there are disagreements on the major political, social and religious issues of the day.

But a constitution can't be a substitute for sound government policy, she added.

Chazan, a left-of-centre Meretz party member of Knesset from 1992 to 2003, warned that a constitution should not be regarded as "some magic formula" that can resolve Israel's many problems.

Nevertheless, a constitution could be useful as Israel grapples with numerous pressing issues, from the status of some 400,000 new Russian immigrants who are not considered halachically Jewish to the problem of corruption in politics.

In the absence of a constitution, Israel relies on 11 basic laws, which carry constitutional weight and cover such areas as the structure of government, the status of Jerusalem and human rights.

Chazan, chair of the Association for Freedom of Religion in Israel, said a constitution should ensure that the state will not intervene in religious matters.

A constitution should guarantee freedom of, and from, religion, she said.

Whatever happens on the constitutional front, Israel must remain a democratic state with a Jewish majority, Chazan said.

Yet Israel is also a state of all its citizens, including its one million-strong Arab minority, she added.

It's not a substitute for sound government, Chazan says

In a brief survey of Israeli attempts since 1949 to draft a constitution, she said it was not a high-priority matter because "we were otherwise preoccupied" with questions of war and peace.

But the nature of party politics in Israel ultimately accounts for why it does not have a constitution today, Chazan added.

Religious parties, especially haredi ones, oppose a constitution on the grounds that Israel already has a "divine constitution," the Torah, she said, and secular politicians have been unwilling to challenge this dogma because they need the religious parties' support when coalition governments are formed. Chazan's appearance was co-sponsored by ARZA Canada and Kolel.

HOLIDAY MUSICAL: Senior kindergarten students at Netivot HaTorah Day School, under the guidance of Morah Chana Green, performed a lively musical Tu b'Shvat play for their proud families. **[Rebecca Ansel photo]**

Correction

The article "Hard work and schnapps key to long life: 95-year-old" (*CJN*, Feb. 16) contained some incorrect information. Itsy Norris was 19 when he got married and his wife, Lillian, was 16. Norris' birthday party took place on Feb. 18. *The CJN* regrets the errors.

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Author explores reasons for lapses in Jewish observance

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Faranak Margolese has always considered herself fairly tolerant and open-minded, but the importance of those qualities was driven home to her unexpectedly when she was researching her new book, *Off the Derech: Why Observant Jews Leave Judaism*.

The 33-year-old author – who lives in Jerusalem with her husband David, a native of Vancouver, and their four-month-old daughter – initially thought that people made religious choices based on their beliefs.

"That is not the case," she said in a phone interview from her home last week.

The most prevalent cause of lapses in Jewish observance – which she measured by commitment to keeping Shabbat and kashrut – were negative feelings about Yiddishkeit, she wrote. "Negative relationships with the practitioners of Judaism tend to create negative feelings toward Judaism that compromise observance."

After surveying more than 500 people and accumulating more than 1,000 pages of interviews, she had acquired many stories about negative experiences involving judgmentalism or disappointing behaviour on the part of family members, teachers and rabbis to back her conclusions.

Her information-dense yet very readable book – whose title uses the Hebrew word "*derech*" to refer to the "path" of observance – is already in its second printing following its release in November by Devora Publishing. The author is scheduled to speak at

Faranak Margolese

Toronto's Shaarei Shomayim Congregation in June.

Her idea for the project grew out of the realization when she was dating her husband that most of her friends were formerly observant Jews. She wrote that although there have been no formal studies on the phenomenon, many people feel it has reached "epidemic proportions."

Margolese, a graduate of Stern College and Columbia University – where she received a master of fine arts degree in nonfiction creative writing – was also intrigued by Orthodox Jews who are outwardly observant but feeling disconnected.

> ***The most prevalent cause of lapses in Jewish observance – which she measured by commitment to keeping Shabbat and kashrut – were negative feelings about Yiddishkeit***

Recently, she was at a local café and noticed an American seminary student – modestly dressed with sleeves covering her elbows – who was checking messages on her cellphone as she recited by rote the five-minute prayer that follows meals.

"I think that was one of the most striking things I've ever seen," said Margolese. "When you see somebody who outwardly looks the way she looks, you expect the inner experience of their Judaism to reflect that reality. She's saying the words, but there's no concentration on it."

When the inner connection goes, Margolese said, "it's not that long until the ritual follows – maybe not for her, but [possibly] for her children."

One of her interview subjects said that she tells her children that they have to pray, but nobody likes it, Margolese recalled. "There were many statements like that. They are very troubling."

Although *Off the Derech* addresses issues within the Orthodox world, with which she is the most familiar, Margolese believes her findings are applicable to the greater Jewish community.

"No matter who you are," she said, "it's important to let your kids ask questions, and it's important to answer those questions.

"All the principles are relevant, [although] the way those principles are expressed might be different. For the Conservative or Reform Jew who rejects their child over religious issues, I think there would be the same sort of repercussions."

The subject is one that Margolese is passionate about, and she is donating her book royalties to charity.

The product of a traditional Sephardi home in Los Angeles, Margolese is the great-granddaughter of the former chief rabbi of Tehran. Interestingly, neither her father nor any of his five siblings remained strictly halachically observant. However, Margolese and two of her three siblings as well as a number of their more than 30 cousins have become observant.

"I think my father did have some of the [negative] experiences, and I suspect his siblings did as well," she said.

Margolese grew up with warm, positive feelings about Judaism absorbed from her parents and the Orthodox day school she attended. She became halachically observant at a women's yeshiva she attended in Israel after high school, but was disillusioned after she was faced with severe judgmentalism by teachers over incidents she describes in the book.

"If we [all] lived Judaism the way it's supposed to be lived, we would be living a very inspiring Judaism and we wouldn't see as many people leaving the path as we do now," she said.

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TASTY TREES: Children at Holy Blossom Temple Pre-School celebrated Tu b'Shvat with a yummy tree cake. Pictured, from left, are Cole Perelmuter, Abby Shore, Jonah Aaron, Michelle Ehrlich, Noah Wilder and Nate Feldman.

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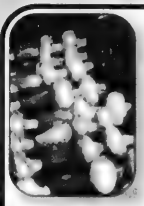

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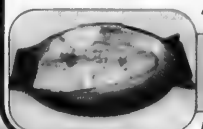

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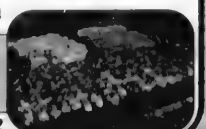

New principal believes in importance of diversity

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Janet Nish-Lapidus is reluctant to admit it, but she pursued her bachelor of education degree in the mid-1970s because it was a practical choice.

Having majored in psychology at York University, she went on to the University of Toronto to study education. "Little did I know it would be a field I would fall in love with," she said in her office at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School (DJDS), situated in the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, where she became principal at the beginning of January.

"In all honesty [my choice] was by default, and here I am 30 years later still involved and excited by what I do."

Nish-Lapidus, 54, succeeded Elysa Cohen, who is now at another school.

A native of Montreal, Nish-Lapidus has lived and worked in Toronto, Prince Albert, Sask., Halifax, and London, Ont., where she was principal of the London Community Hebrew Day School for eight years. She and her husband Philip Lapidus returned to Toronto 2½ years ago, and she served as vice-principal at DJDS from this past September until taking on her current position.

The couple, whose two children are now adults, wanted the lifestyle of a smaller city when their family was young, she said.

But the transition when they moved back was not difficult.

"I'm a city person," she said. "We were here often, even living away."

And the school felt familiar from the first day she began teaching there, she added. "It offered everything I find exciting and stimulating."

One of the elements that excites her is diversity: On her four-page curriculum vitae, Nish-Lapidus has 10 items illustrating her "commitment to equity and diversity issues."

Janet Nish-Lapidus

The 103 students at the school make up "a wonderfully diverse community, and we celebrate that," said Nish-Lapidus. Families who send their children to the school, which opened seven years ago, range from unaffiliated to modern Orthodox in terms of Jewish practice, and include racially mixed, same-sex, interfaith and single-parent families.

There is also diversity in student learning styles and abilities, she noted.

"Diversity is important because it opens up your mind to other ways of looking at things," she explained.

Nish-Lapidus, who earned her master of education degree at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax in 1996 and completed her principal's qualifications in 2001 at the University of Western Ontario, believes that administrators should be accessible. "Collaboration is very important for me... I think growth happens when people work together."

Students, she said, should be excited about learning, and should feel successful. The curriculum should inspire and challenge them, and the material be relevant to who they are, she added. "Our responsibility as educators is to create a school culture that will make that happen."

The DJDS has a "culture of respect, excitement and enthusiasm," she said.

Because the school is the only Jewish day school in the downtown area, parents "have a real drive to be involved and are committed to the success of the school."

In fact, she noted, it's due to a parent initiative that the DJDS is inaugurating a new middle school next year, in the form of a combined Grade 7 and 8 class. The school currently offers classes from senior kindergarten through Grade 6.

One parent of a Grade 6 student has decided to honour her grandparents by selling a valuable carpet that she inherited from them and donating the proceeds to the middle school, the school said in a release.

"Our parents are very involved and very excited about the vision of the school," said Nish-Lapidus. "I'm sure that exists elsewhere too, but I know that's what makes the community here so special."

WE'RE GROWING!: Grade 6 students at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School react excitedly to the news their school is opening a middle school next fall. Pictured, back row, from left, are, Sally Rosenwhite, Brooke Gangbar and Joseph Burley; middle row from left, Daniel Redelmeier, Gerald-Rene Goldwater, Ella Gladstone Martin and Jacob Cappe; and front row, from left, Hannah Walsh, Tiferet Nashman, Sierra-Skye Ashkewe and Hal Fox.

Shul renovation moves ahead slowly

Beth Tzedec Congregation is planning an ambitious renovation, including extensive upgrades to its school facilities, pending approval for rezoning and further fundraising.

The project, which has been in the talking stages for about a decade, is expected to cost approximately $25 million and to take two years to complete.

At minimum, however, the synagogue's aging infrastructure, including plumbing, must be repaired, said Blake Teichman, a co-chair of the building project, at a recent public meeting at Beth Tzedec. "We are committed to not put a shovel in the ground until we have a comfort level that we're well on the way [to our funding goal]."

The repairs alone are expected to cost approximately $5 million, and, to a certain extent, have already begun.

Of the cost for the total project, $5 million will be contributed by United Synagogue Day School and $5 million by Beth Tzedec members, Teichman said. The balance, of which more than $6 million has been pledged so far, will come from donations, he added.

Plans include better school facilities such as larger classrooms, a playing field and a full-size gymnasium, as well as underground parking to replace the current parking lot and increase the number of spaces.

The 425 students at USDS' southern campus will have use of the existing facilities while new classrooms are being built on a third floor that will be added to the building. Once new classrooms are completed, the school will use them while the old ones are being refurbished, said Rick Gosine, of Dalton Construction.

"We are targeting opening of the first preschool aspects of the school for fall 2008, with the full school opening in September 2009," said Lawrie Lubin, co-chair of the construction subcommittee of the building expansion and renovation committee.

The Beth Tzedec building, which is more than 50 years old, has an "antiquated" mechanical system and its original kitchen, Harold Wolfe, a member of the renovation committee, said at the meeting.

Major construction will begin in spring 2007 at the earliest, said Lubin.

— F.K.

USDS sells Richmond Hill building

United Synagogue Day School has sold its Richmond Hill building to a developer.

The sale closed in December, but USDS and Beit Rayim Synagogue, which rents space from the school for its congregation and Hebrew school, have use of the 27,000-square-foot facility, on Bayview Avenue north of Weldrick Road, until the end of August, said Allen Gales, president of USDS' board of directors.

The majority of the 200-plus USDS students at the Richmond Hill branch are expected to continue at the school's Bayview campus, at Beth Tikvah Synagogue, in September, although registration for next year is just beginning, Gales said. The school also has a southern campus at Beth Tzedec Congregation.

A new northern branch will open at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's Lebovic campus at Bathurst and Weldrick for the 2008-09 school year.

Discussions are under way with Beit Rayim about a partnership at the new northern location, said Gales.

For now, the 230-family congregation is looking for temporary rental quarters, probably for an interim period of two years, said Beit Rayim president Karen Baron. Its Hebrew school has applied for permits to be housed in a public school for the next two years, she added.

— F.K.

Robins adapts lessons to her students' ages

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Donna Robins says she is a professional development junkie.

From 1991 to 2000, for example, she attended about half a dozen educational summer conferences put on by the Coalition for the Advancement of Jewish Education, a North American Jewish educators' association better known as CAJE.

Currently, she's enrolled in the Tikun Chaim special-education certification program run by the UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education (BJE).

A public health nurse by training, Robins began her second career at Holy Blossom Temple Religious School 18 years ago. The third-generation member of the congregation "fell in love with teaching" within weeks. "I love the kids, and I love watching them grow, especially [when they] grow Jewishly."

Robins still teaches at Holy Blossom, where she also co-ordinates the volunteer segment of the Grade 10 confirmation class curriculum and co-teaches a tfillah class for special needs kids. The synagogue has funded some of her professional development programs.

The 63-year-old mother and grandmother also teaches Grade 7 at Temple Sinai Religious School, does secretarial work for her lawyer husband, and spent two weeks as a camp nurse last summer at Camp George.

Three years ago, she finished co-writing a literature-based Jewish values curriculum for students in kindergarten to Grade 3 as part of a BJE Etgar grant.

> ***A lesson from the teacher:*** *"There is something good in every single child, no matter the behaviour you see. You just have to look for it. There is always something worth praising."*

Last November, Robins was among 64 North American educators to receive the Grinspoon-Steinhardt Award for Excellence in Jewish Education at the General Assembly of United Jewish Communities. The annual award provides a $1,500 (US) stipend for professional development and $1,000 (US) cash.

Robins, whose speech is punctuated by her frequent hearty chuckle, is utterly serious when she explains why she is using her award stipend for the Tikun Chaim program.

"I did this because every single child has a special need," she said. "Every child is an individual."

She believes strongly in getting to know each student, as well as getting to know what works with them as a group. Conversely, she believes in letting students know who she is. "Don't be afraid to let them know you're human," she said.

With her younger students, Robins says she can do more of the "fun, silly" projects like "Hairy Harry," her Tu b'Shvat art staple. Students decorate styrofoam cups to create faces, fill them with potting soil, and plant parsley seeds inside. When the parsley grows, it becomes Harry's "hair."

"They get a big kick out of it," she said. "And the parsley can be used for Passover."

However, she noted, "You have to be a little more conventional with the Grade 7s."

Because she teaches her confirmation class in the evening when students have already had a full day of school, Robins tries to incorporate activity into her lesson when she can.

"Something as simple as a puzzle," she said. "I give them a puzzle piece when they come in. They get up and put the puzzle pieces together. It's usually a quote… and [we] go from there."

With her younger students, when she teaches *tza'ar baalei chayim* (laws regarding the treatment of animals), Robins brings one of her three dogs to class .

She denies that she is particularly creative as a teacher. "I'd love to say [I am]. It's just that I read a lot. I listen. I look at what works for other people and sometimes I borrow it, and sometimes I jump off from there."

Donna Robins [Frances Kraft photo]

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Two papers, two views on Hamas

Recent editorials on Hamas in the *Globe and Mail* and the *New York Times* provided a stark contrast in views.

While the *Globe* said a Hamas-led Palestinian government should not receive aid dollars until it moderates its policies – which the paper doubted would actually happen – the *Times* argued that a Hamas-led Palestinian government should be funded so as not to impose hardships on the Palestinians and in the hope that Hamas will become moderate.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

The Feb. 15 *Globe* editorial, "See Hamas for what it is," said that it's unlikely the pressures of governing will force Hamas to moderate: "Just as likely it will see its election victory as an endorsement of its program (if that's the word for such a mission of violence and hate). Hamas has already given itself credit for last year's Israeli withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. Its sense of empowerment is unlikely to wane once it holds the reins of power."

The *Globe* concluded: "The West must take an unblinkered view of Hamas. In practice, that means withholding all aid from a Hamas-run Palestinian government until it forswears terrorism as a method and the destruction of Israel as a goal."

The *Times* editorial of the same day, "The Right Way to Pressure Hamas," warned against withholding funds from a Hamas-led government: "If the new government fails to deliver because it puts continued terrorism over the well-being of the Palestinian people, it may indeed be booted out of office. But a Hamas that could explain continued Palestinian misery by a deliberate American-Israeli plan to reverse the democratic verdict of the polls would be likely to become only stronger."

The *Times* noted that the U.S. government has denied (along with Israel) any plan "to reverse the democratic verdict." But it ignored the possibility that once in power, Hamas may subvert any future democratic processes that could see it "booted out of office."

The *Times* editorial is silent on Hamas' anti-Jewish racism and its pledge to "liberate" all of Palestine. In contrast, the *Globe* quotes extensively from the farewell videos of suicide bombers, currently posted on the Hamas website: "This operation is revenge against the sons of monkeys and pigs... Jihad is the only way to liberate Palestine – all of Palestine – from the impurity of the Jews."

The *Times* editorial also endorsed Russian President Vladimir Putin's decision to meet with Hamas. The paper only faulted Putin on a relatively minor procedural issue – how he took the West by surprise with his invitation. But in terms of substance, the *Times* expressed hope that Putin "prods Hamas toward renouncing terrorism, accepting Israel's right to exist and reviving the peace process."

Others argue that this position is naive, even foolishly naive. They see Putin's move as a cynical stab at U.S. Mideast policy, a gesture amounting to appeasement, and a betrayal of its membership in the Quartet (along with the United States, European Union and the United Nations), which pledged not to negotiate with Hamas unless it first meets three essential conditions (underscored by Prime Minister Stephen Harper in his Feb. 14 phone conversation with PA President Mahmoud Abbas): renounce violence; recognize Israel; and accept previous agreements (for instance, the "road map" peace plan, which is premised on a two-state solution).

The *Globe* editorial denounced Putin's invitation as "the first crack in the diplomatic attempt to freeze [Hamas] out of international society."

Washington Post columnist Richard Cohen ("A Disturbing Invitation," Feb. 14) was less diplomatic than the *Globe* editorial board when, referring implicitly to Putin's refusal to recognize Hamas as a terrorist group, he caustically depicted the irony in Putin's manoeuvre: "Putin, I think, would not have been quite so quick to extend a welcome to the Chechen rebels he considers to be terrorists, but the murderers of Jews are apparently a different matter. This, after all, is a long Russian tradition."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Tory offers financial assistance for day school parents

Parents sending their children to Jewish day schools will receive some financial assistance if the Progressive Conservative Party forms the next provincial government, party leader John Tory announced last weekend.

Tory announced at his party's policy conference in Niagara Falls that he viewed the matter as a "fairness issue" but did not get into details about whether such a program would involve tax credits or grants, indicating that such financial assistance would likely go to parents rather than schools.

A tax credit for parents in all private schools was brought in by former Ontario premier Mike Harris' government but was cancelled when the Liberals were elected in 2003.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פֿון: אַלעק סילווער

סינף־און־אַכציק ביז הונדערט

און צוואַנציק

פֿון אַלעק סילווער

עס איז באמת אַ גרויס פֿאַרגענגיג וועג מען קען עמעצן וויגטשן אַ „פֿרייליכן געבורטסטאָג" („העפּי בירטהדיי"), ספּעציעל ווען דאָס צייכנט אפֿ אַ וויכטיק מיילשטיין אין לעבן פֿון דאָזיק מענטש. די פֿרייד איז באמת גרויס, וועג די וווּנטשן גייען צו אַ מענטש מיט וועמען מען איז נאָענט באַפֿריינדט שוין עטלעכע צענדליק יאָרן. אין אימטיקן פֿאַל איז דער פֿאַרגענגיג נאָך גרעסער, ווייל דער דאָזיקער מענטש פֿאַרדינט די אַלע וווּנטשן און דערצו נאָך אַ גרויס פּעקל מיט כּבֿוד, וואָס ער באַקומט אין דער ליטעראַרישער געזעלשאַפֿט. איר ווילט דאָך זיכער וויסן וועגן וועמען איך שרייב דאָ, וועל איך אייך זאָגן. איך שרייב דאָ וועגן דעם טאָראָנטער דיכטער און שרייבער שמחה סימכאָוויטש, וועלכער איז מיט עטלעכע וואָכן צוריק געוואָרן 85 יאָר יונג. דערביבער איז דאָס קעפּל אויבן — סינף־און־אַכציק בין הונדערט און צוואַנציק.

דער נאָמען שמחה סימכאָוויטש איז גוט באַקאַנט ביי אונדז אין שטאָט, אין דער לענג און בריים פון אונדזער לאַנד קאַנאַדע און אויסער די גרענעצן פון אונדזער מדינה. איך האָב נעהאַט די פֿערזענלעכע פֿריווילעגיע מיטצוואַרבעטן מיט אים אויף פֿאַרשיידענע פֿראָיעקטן, סיי אויפֿן טעכניש נעביט, סיי אויפֿן ליטעראַרישן גע־ביט. און איך וויל פֿעסטשטעלן, אז די מיטאַרבעט איז שטענדיק געווען אַ צופֿרידנשטעלנדיקע. קיין מאָל איז צווישן אונדז נישט פֿאַרגעקומען קיין סיכסוך. פֿאַר דעם בין איך אים דאַנקבאַר.

איך בין אויך דאַנקבאַר פֿאַרן פֿאַקט, אַז ער גיט מיר דעם כּבֿוד צו רופֿן מיך „פֿרייַנד" און ער דערלויבט מיר צו רופֿן אים „פֿרייַנד". גלויבט מיר, אַ גוטן פֿרייַנד איז היינטיקע צייטן שווער צו קריגן.

זיין לעבנסגאַנג פֿון 85 יאָר קען מען באַשרייבן אין עטלעכע שורות. געבוירן אין אָטוואָצק, פּוילן, איבער־געלעבט די שׂואה אין סאָוועטן־פֿאַרבאַנד, נאָכן צווייט־קומען קיין פּוילן עמיגרירט ער קיין פֿאַריז. פֿון דאָרט איז ער אין 1949 נעקומען קיין מאָנטריאָל. געלעבט אַ שטיקל צייט אין אָטאַוואַ און צום סוף זיך באַזעצט אין טאָראָנטאָ, ווו ער לעבט ביים היינטיקן טאָג.

אָבער צו שרייבן וועגן זיינע ליטעראַרישע אויס־טוען, צו מאַכן אַפֿהאַנדלנגען וועגן זיינע 16 ביכער, צו אַנאַליזירן זיינע עסייען און אָפּשאַצן זיינע ליטעראַריש־קריטישע אַרטיקלען, פֿאַר דעם דאַרף מען שוין האָבן אַ סך צייט און אַ סך מער פֿאַסיר. מען דאַרף אויך דערצו האָבן אַ סך מער ליטעראַרישע פּעיקייטן ווי מיינע. און איך ווייס, אז עס איז פֿאַראַן אַ גרויסע צאָל ליטע־ראַטור־קריטיקער מער באַהאַנדטע ווי איך, וואָס האָבן געשריבן וועגן דעם דיכטער און וועגן זיינע שאַפֿונגען.

צווישן זיי קענט איר געפֿינען אַדעלכע ווי אלי ווייזל, וועלכער האָט געשריבן: „וייט געבענטשט איר פֿאַרמאַכט טאַלאַנט און ווייזע". אָן אַנדערער איז מרדכי באַנין, וועלכער האָט געשריבן: „דורכצונאַכן דעם וועג וועלכן איר האָט דורכגעמאַכט און האָבן דעם כּוח צו שאַפֿן אַזעלכע גוטע לידער ווי איר שאַפֿט, דאַרף מען האָבן גבֿורה". וויטער זיינען די אַרומנעמענדיקע וועך־טער פֿון דוד וואָלף: „סימכאָוויטשעס לידער פֿלוס די פֿראַזע־פֿרקים זיינען זיין איינציקע קול, דער סימכאָוויטש־גינון, וואָס איז איך גינון־ייִדיש".

וועל איך פֿאַרענדיקן מיינע שורות וויידער אַמאָל מיט דעם אַלטן וווּנטש: **עד מאה ועשרים**: זאָל ער צו־אַמען מיט זיין ליבער פֿרוי אַרן משפחה האָבן נאָך לאַנגע, געזונטע אין שעפֿעריש יאָרן!

On Campus

Silence worse than racism, expert says

By LAUREN BRESLIN
Special to The CJN

Combating hate and racism in Canada is about more than absorbing the lessons of the Holocaust, Karen Mock, executive director of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, said.

She was speaking at a recent York University anti-racism conference titled Mending a Broken World: Lessons of the Holocaust, aimed at future educators from Canada and Europe.

"It's about how am I, when I go home, going to take a stand to combat racism and hate. How am I going to take a stand to help young people recognize what kind of action can happen locally, regionally and internationally?" she said

Mock urged her audience to break the silence about racism. Quoting the late Rabbi Joachim Prinz, an influential Jewish leader and civil rights advocate, Mock said, "Bigotry and hatred are not the most urgent problem. The most urgent, the most disgraceful, the most shameful and the most tragic problem is silence."

Rabbi Prinz spoke those words at the March on Washington in Aug. 28, 1963, just before his friend, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr,. delivered his "I have a dream" speech.

Mock said the power to change attitudes in the future lies with young people in multicultural early childhood education programs, and she stressed that it's important for educators to understand the dynamics of hate.

"The targets of hatred are characterized as taking advantage of the rest of society," she said.

"When people are feeling insecure, when they're frightened, when they're looking for people to blame for their problems – economic problems, security problems, you name it – inevitably it leads to the scapegoating of any identifiable minority."

Jews, she continued, know a thing or two about scapegoating.

"Throughout the history of the western world, Jews have been traditional scapegoats, and anti-Semitism can be considered to be the prototype of racism," she noted.

Mock has organized educator study tours, in which groups of Canadian educators travelled to Germany, Poland and Israel to experience the kind of Holocaust education one cannot learn in a classroom.

While national director of the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada, Mock compiled a manual called *Taking Action Against Hate*, with the subtitle *Protection, Prevention and Partnership*.

"Protection means protection of the laws – strengthening our anti-hate laws and our human rights laws," she says. "Prevention – that's education in all its forms, right from the earliest childhood level."

Partnership means a show of solidarity with anyone who is like-minded in the fight against racism. "It behooves us not to use the tactics of the perpetrator in disparaging them and competing with them."

Mock believes optimism, along with hope for a better future for our children, is key in combating racism. "You've got to be a cup-half-full person," she said. "We have to be committed, as educators, to be change agents."

Mending a Broken World: Lessons of the Holocaust was sponsored by the Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Anti-racism Education and was a joint initiative of the Centre for Jewish Studies and the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies at York.

Birthright applications outpace available spots

JTA

Birthright israel has received many more applications for its upcoming trips than it has spaces available.

Some 14,000 young Jews applied for 8,000 spots in the program's spring/summer 2006 trips in just the first 12 hours of registration on Feb. 8.

The organization provides free trips to Israel for Jews aged 18 to 26. In the six years since its founding, birthright has brought 98,000 people from 45 countries to Israel. An upcoming trip will include the program's 100,000th participant.

"The level of demand is unprecedented and well exceeds our financial capability to accommodate the majority of those who currently wish to go on Taglit-birthright israel trips," said Susie Gelman, chair of the birthright israel Foundation. Taglit is the Hebrew name for the program.

"As Taglit-birthright israel grows rapidly and develops into a community-supported organization, we hope that our friends will support us in enabling more young Jews to participate in the Taglit-birthright israel experience, so that we can send the 100,000th participant and plan for the next 100,000."

Elizabeth Sokolsky, the Toronto-based vice-president of education and operations for birthright israel, said the situation in Canada is relatively the same.

In a week since registration opened, about 2,500 Canadians applied for only 1,000 spots available on trips this summer, she said.

"This is the first time we've had so many applicants so quickly. This is the largest onslaught of applications we've had over the period of one day, one week," Sokolsky said.

She said that applicants are dealt with on a first-come, first-serve basis, while the others are put on a waiting list.

With files from Sheri Shefa

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Yale Massey, Director and Producer, Hart of the Annex (Rogers television)

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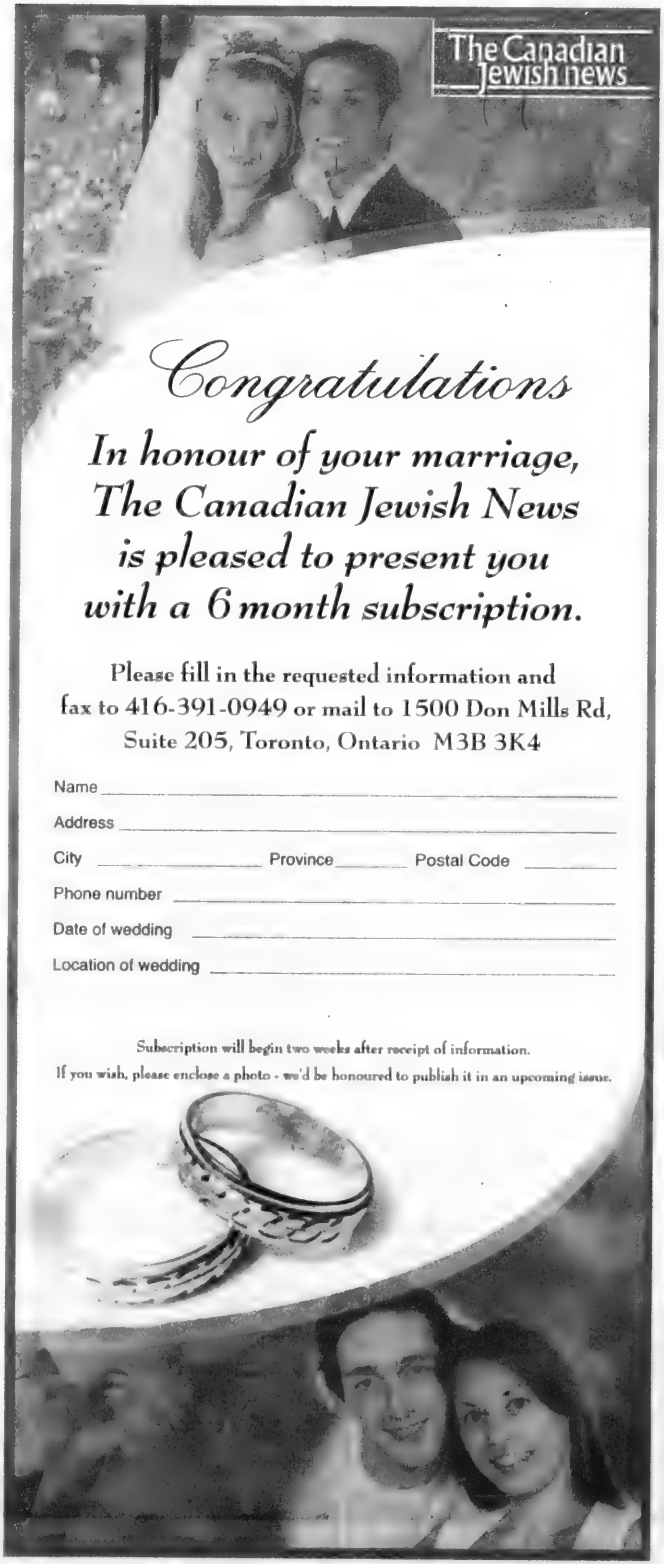

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If you wish, please enclose a photo - we'd be honoured to publish it in an upcoming issue.

Try something new: pita with shakshuka

Soldiers on their way to their bases all over Israel were delighted recently to find that the sandwich bars manned by the Association for the welfare of IDF soldiers were handing out a pita with shakshuka (see recipe below) instead of the usual sandwich.

SHAKSHUKA

2 lb. fresh tomatoes, unpeeled and cut in quarters, or one 28-oz. can tomatoes
6 cloves garlic, roughly diced
2 tsp. salt, or to taste
1 tsp. sweet paprika
2 tsp. tomato paste
¼ cup vegetable oil
6 large eggs

Place the tomatoes, garlic, salt, paprika, tomato paste and vegetable oil in a small saucepan. Bring to a simmer and cook, uncovered, over low heat until thick, for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Ladle the tomato sauce into a greased 12-inch frying pan. Bring to a simmer and break the eggs over the tomatoes. Gently break the yolks with a fork. Cover and continue to cook for about 3 to 4 minutes, until the eggs are set. Bring the frying pan directly to the table. Set it on a trivet and spoon out the shakshuka. Makes six servings.

Israeli soldiers take a break to enjoy some pita and shakshuka.

Chinese, the kosher way

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Chinese cooking has always been a favourite of mine. I studied with Chinese cooking teachers and also learned from a Chinese exchange student we hosted. I taught classes in Chinese cooking for many years and consider myself to be an excellent Chinese cook.

But there is no one who can do it the way my late friend and one-time neighbour Sadell Sloan could.

She was a fabulous Chinese cook who put together the most amazing dinners. She often made 10-course Chinese meals for our dinner club, and when she donated one of these dinners for a synagogue fundraising auction, it sold for an outrageous sum.

Sadell and I would often sit outside chatting on a Friday morning and, on the spur of the moment, decide to make a Chinese Shabbat dinner. She had a duck in her freezer, I had ribs. She'd make the duck and steamed buns, I'd make the ribs. And off we'd go. Lucky were the guests who were invited to those Shabbat dinners.

The wise Jewish cook will experiment with Chinese cooking one dish at a time rather than immediately preparing an elaborate dinner. If you're new to Chinese cooking, serve one dish as part of a more traditional dinner. As you become more familiar and comfortable with the cuisine, add more dishes until you have a complete meal.

SADELL'S SPARE RIBS

For her birthday, my daughter Amy requested a dinner consisting of nothing but these ribs – mounds of them! Hoisin and five-spice powder are available in most large supermarkets.

5 tbsp. hoisin sauce
3 tbsp. soy sauce
¼ tsp. five-spice powder
2 tbsp. sherry or dry white wine
1 tbsp. sugar
¼ tsp. garlic powder
4 lb. flanken ribs
1 16-oz. jar honey

Mix hoisin sauce, soy sauce, five-spice powder, sherry or wine, sugar and garlic powder together and marinate the ribs in this sauce for at least one hour and preferably overnight.

Place a rack (cake cooling rack) over a roasting pan. Place 1½ to 2 cups water in the bottom of the pan. Remove ribs from marinade and place on rack over the roasting pan. Roast ribs for 50 minutes at 350. Don't let the ribs touch the water. After about 25 minutes, baste the ribs with half the marinade. After 50 minutes, remove roaster from oven, dip the ribs in honey and replace on the rack. Turn oven up to 450 and bake another 10-15 minutes, basting with the remainder of the marinade. Makes 4-6 servings.

SPICY CHILLED CHINESE NOODLES

This dish can be made the day before and refrigerated until ready to serve.

16 oz. spaghetti
1½ tbsp. sesame oil
4-6 scallions, green part only, in ¼-in. pieces
2 tbsp. toasted sesame seeds

Sauce:
¼ cup soy sauce
¼ cup beef or chicken broth
2 tbsp. tehina
3 tbsp. white vinegar
2 tbsp. oriental sesame oil
1 tbsp. sugar
1 tsp. grated ginger
hot pepper sauce to taste
green onions for garnish

Cook spaghetti until just tender. Drain well and sprinkle with 1½ tsp. of the sesame oil. Place spaghetti in serving bowl and add the scallions. In a food processor combine the sauce ingredients and mix until smooth. Pour over the spaghetti and top with sesame seeds when ready to serve. Garnish with chopped green onions (green part only).

Note: To toast sesame seeds, place in a frying pan and shake over heat for a minute or two until golden brown. Watch carefully because they can burn quickly. Makes 6 servings.

LEMON CHICKEN

When I taught Chinese cooking, this was one of my students' favourite recipes.

Chicken:
6 boneless chicken breasts
½ cup cornstarch
½ tsp. pepper or to taste
¼ cup water
4 egg yolks, slightly beaten
3 cups oil
4 green onions, sliced

Lemon Sauce:
1½ cups water
½ cup lemon juice, preferably fresh
3½ tbsp. packed brown sugar
3 tbsp. cornstarch
3 tbsp. honey
2 tsp. chicken bouillon powder
1 tsp. grated, pared fresh ginger root

Pound chicken breasts lightly to flatten them. Combine cornstarch and pepper in a small bowl. Gradually blend in water and egg yolks.

Pour oil into wok and heat over high heat until oil reaches 375. Dip chicken breasts, one at a time, into cornstarch-egg yolk mixture. Fry breasts, two or three at a time, in hot oil until golden, about 5 minutes.

Drain breasts on absorbent paper. Keep warm while cooking remaining chicken. Cut each breast into three or four pieces and arrange on serving plate. Sprinkle with green onion slices.

Combine all sauce ingredients in a medium saucepan and mix thoroughly. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until sauce boils and thickens, about five minutes. Pour over chicken and serve. (Makes 6 servings)

Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

Mazel tov to Sheila & Keith Alexander on their 50th wedding anniversary Feb. 12. Wishing you good health and happiness. Love, your children and grandchildren.

Mitch & Rosanne Beube of Bracebridge are thrilled to announce the adoption of their daughter, Nava Ai Miao, on Jan. 16 from Fuling Orphanage in China.

Mazel tov to Emmy Dotan & Elliot Shiffman on their engagement. With love from the Dotan and Shiffman families.

Susan & Murray Klein of Toronto and Revie & Paul Walman of Kitchener are pleased to announce the engagement of their children David and Lisa.

Mazel tov to Peria Bitton & Rick Rotman who were married on Nov. 13. Delighted parents are Marc & Suzanne Bitton and Edward & Barbara Rotman.

Mazel tov to Shayle & Noa on your engagement, from parents Steve & Vickie Rothman, Shlomo & Sima Teva and grandparents.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON M3B 3K4.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, Feb. 27, is the deadline for the March 9 issue and Monday, March 6, is the deadline for the March 16 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, Feb. 23

OSHRA KOREN

Explore "Eliyahu and Elisha: Prophets, Prophecy and Promise" with **Oshra Koren**, head of MaTaN Ra'anana. 9:15 a.m.-noon at 11 Forest Wood. $18. For information and registration, call Mekorot 416-877-2050.

ISRAEL'S IMAGE ABROAD

David Baker, senior foreign press co-ordinator in the Israeli prime minister's office, speaks about Israel's international image and public relations situation. 8 p.m. at Beth Shalom Synagogue. $5. 416-783-6103.

Saturday, Feb. 25

SATURDAY NIGHT JAZZ

Join the Don Glaser Trio for "Motzaei Shabbat Jazz," at the Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St., for an evening of music and food in support of Or Chaim and Ulpanat Orot high schools. 8 p.m. $45, $84/couple. To reserve, call 416-630-6772, ext. 34.

PRAYER IN CRISIS

Oshra Koren and **Rabbi Yair Kahn** discuss "Tfillah in the Wake of Crisis: Religious Zionists Reckon With God After Disengagement," 8:30 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. $10. 416-633-5770.

Sunday, Feb. 26

RABBI CHANOCH TELLER

Rabbi Chanoch Teller speaks on "Happiness" following 8 a.m. Shacharit services at B'Nai Torah Congregation. Rabbi Teller's books will be available. For information, call **Gedalia Zweig**, 905-886-6305.

LEGION BREAKFAST

The Wingate Branch Royal Canadian Legion holds a members breakfast meeting. 9:15 a.m. at 788 Marlee Ave. 416-782-5024.

AL QAEDA TO AVIAN FLU

Julian Fantino, commissioner of Emergency Management, Province of Ontario, speaks on "From Al Qaeda to Avian Flu: Is Ontario Ready For The Next Threat?" 7:30 p.m. Shaar Shalom Synagogue. 905-889-4975.

HADASSAH-WIZO BRUNCH

Toronto Hadassah-WIZO's brunch and cooking demonstration with **Bonnie Stern**. 9:30 a.m. at Adath Israel Synagogue. $36. To reserve, call 416-630-8373.

BREAKFAST CLUB

CBC critic **Kevin Courrier** speaks on "The Art of Film Criticism," at the Habonim Breakfast Club, 5 Glen Park Ave. 10 a.m. $6.

SINGLES BRUNCH

Adath Israel Dynamic Singles in conjunction with the Intersynagogue Singles host brunch for singles 35+ at 11:30 a.m. $15 prepaid, $20 at door. RSVP to **Maureen** at 416-635-5340.

ROSH CHODESH GROUP

The Beach Synagogue Rosh Chodesh Group meets at 7 p.m. to discuss Judaism and Jewish life. 109 Kenilworth Ave. 416-694-7942.

Monday, Feb. 27

BOOK AND FILM CLUB

Beth Tzedec Library's Contemporary Jewish Book and Film Club presents **Harriet Morris** analyzing *The Dark Room* by **Rachel Seiffert**. 1:30 p.m. $55 for series, $14 per session. Dessert served. 416-781-3511 or library@beth-tzedec.org.

SINGLES LECTURE

Adath Israel Synagogue invites singles to join **Kenneth Sherman** and examine "The Jewish Response to Human Cruelty." 7:30 p.m. Continues on March 6. 416-635-5340.

FAILED MESSIAHS

Prof. Eric Lawee, of York University, talks about "Jewish Failed Messiahs and Their Followers." At Beth Tzedec Congregation. 8 p.m. 416-781-3511.

Continued on page 29

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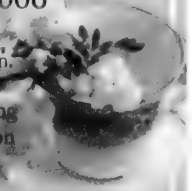

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What's New

Continued from page 28

SPEED-DATING
Aish HaTorah offers speed-dating for men 28-36 and women 26-32. 8 p.m. To register, call **Aliza** at 905-764-1818, ext. 316.

Tuesday, Feb. 28

ADDICTION AROUND US
Temple Kol Ami presents "Addiction in the Jewish Community: It's Not a Secret Anymore," with **Marla Goldman**, executive director of JACS. 7:30 p.m. 8777 Dufferin St. Free. 905-709-2620.

SAR-EL INFO SESSION
Find out about Sar-El, an opportunity to volunteer on an Israeli supply/maintenance base. 7:30 p.m. 788 Marlee Ave. 416-781-6089 or visit ww.serve.com/CVI.

JWI MEETING
Jewish Women International, Nagillah and Aquarius chapters, welcomes **Michael Brodsky**, an environmental microbiologist, speaking on "Sanitation in the Kitchen." 7:30 p.m. at 866 Sheppard Ave. W. Guests $3. RSVP **Fran**, 416-638-2716.

CHUG HATANACH
Rabbi Philip Scheim leads the study group in a discussion of *The Book of Proverbs*, chapter 8. Beth David Congregation at 8 p.m.

CELEBRATE ROSH CHODESH
Z'havah, a group for women in their 30s and 40s, celebrates Rosh Chodesh, a time of women's renewal and learning. 8 p.m. at Beth David Synagogue. Non-sisterhood members $5. For info, z-havah@bethdavid.com.

Wednesday, March 1

THE ISRAELI ELECTIONS
Beth Tzedec Congregation presents **Prof. Renan Levine**, of the University of Toronto, on "The Israeli Elections: What to Expect?" 7:30 p.m. 416-781-3511.

Other news

HALACHAH AND SCIENCE
Joseph Bodenheimer, president of Jerusalem College of Technology, speaks at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Feb. 25 and 26. On Saturday, Feb 25, at 11:15 a.m., his topic is "The Curious Nature of Miracles" and at 4:30 p.m., "When Science and Technology Meet Halachah." On Sunday, Feb. 26, at 8:30 p.m., his topic is "What Did Chazal Know About Science?" 416-789-3213

THE RABBI IS IN
Beth Tzedec Congregation welcomes **Rabbi Dr. Harvey Meirovich**, of the Schechter Rabbinical Seminary, Jerusalem, as scholar-in-residence from Feb. 25 to 28. On Shabbat, Feb. 25, his pulpit sermon is "History as Teacher: Reflections on Jewish Survival"; after Minchah, at 5:15 p.m., he speaks on "Mythic Lessons in the Siddur." Meirovich will be in the synagogue library to discuss and learn Feb. 26, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., on Feb. 27, 4-7 p.m., and on Feb. 28, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 416-781-3511.

BETH HAMINYAN SHABBATON
Elliott Malamet is scholar-in-residence at Beth Haminyan, Feb. 24 and 25. Kabalat Shabbat service begins at 5:45 p.m., followed by dinner and a lecture on Jewish ethics. Services on Saturday begin at 9:30 p.m., followed by lunch and a lecture on "The Jewish Philosophy of Prayer." To reserve for meals, call **Elaine Posluns** at 416-653-8861.

GIFTED EDUCATION
Tikun Chaim, UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education, presents a forum on "Gifted Education: Past, Present and Future," facilitated by **Joanne Foster**. Thursday, March 2, 7:30-9:30 p.m. at Community Hebrew Academy, 200 Wilmington Ave. For information, contact **Debbie Gladstone**, 416-631-5835.

SHABBAT ACROSS CANADA
Or Hadash Synagogue of Newmarket joins synagogues across North America on Friday, March 3, as they celebrate Shabbat. Services 7 p.m., followed by a traditional Shabbat dinner. Call 905-898-2220 to reserve or visit www.orhadash.org.

CHURCH AND STATE
David Novak, chair of Jewish studies at the University of Toronto, is scholar-in-residence at Shaar Shalom Congregation March 3-4. Following dinner on Friday night, he speaks on "Church-State Relations in Canada." On Shabbat morning, his pulpit sermon is "Can Jewish Law Be Unethical?" Reserve for Friday night dinner. $30; children under 12, $15. Call 905-889-4975.

HESCHEL ARTS FESTIVAL
The Toronto Heschel School Arts Festival takes place Sunday, March 5, 11 a.m.-5 p.m., at Adath Israel Synagogue. Free. Call 416-635-5501, ext. 400, or e-mail artsfestival@torontoheschel.com.

BIKUR CHOLIM LUNCHEON
Bikur Cholim of Toronto honours **Yitty Weber** and **Jon Barrett** at its spring luncheon, Monday, March 6, noon at the Sephardic Kehillah Centre. To reserve, call 416-783-7983.

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT
Hillel presents "Reputation Management," with **Warren Kinsella**, journalist and political adviser, **Howard English**, of UJA Federation, and **Hershel Ezrin**, of the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy. Tuesday, March 7, 7 p.m. at the Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. $5.

JF&CS GROUPS
Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

When You're About To Separate – What to Tell the Kids: A workshop for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation. Tuesday, Feb. 28, at the Promenade Mall, #313, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

FOR SENIORS

Association of Jewish Seniors meets on Thursday, Feb. 23, at 1:30 p.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. **David Phillips**, senior climatologist for Environment Canada, speaks on the topic "Confessions of a Weather Weenie." For information, call **Tammy Parker**, 416-635-2860.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday Dance, March 5. Casino Rama, Wednesday, March 8, 22. Mah-jong group starting. For information, call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. Feb. 23, discussion. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

WAGMAN CENTRE
55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.
Lunch and Learn, Tuesday, Feb. 28, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. with storyteller **Marilyn Peringer**. Lunch $5, guests $7. Reserve at ext. 2267 or 2275.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE
1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.
"Crisis in Jewish Identity? Exploring Who We Are." Tuesday, Feb. 28, 10-11:30 a.m.
"Inter-generational Purim and Tikkun Olam," Wednesday, March 1, 1- 2:30 p.m.
"Making Life Easier at Home," Thursday, March 2, 1-2 p.m.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.
Motor-coach trip to Washington, March 26-29. Call ext. 259 for info.
Shalom Singers performing choir looking for new members. Rehearsals Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m.
Mah-jong classes, Wednesdays, starting April 26, 1-3 p.m.
Bridge taught by **Shawn Mahood** Starts Tuesdays. March 28, beginners, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Intermediate, 2:30-5 p.m. For info, call Janet at ext. 259.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.
Intermediate Yiddish I, an eight-week course, Mondays, March 6-April 10, 7:30-9 p.m. $154, non-members $186 + GST and $10 materials.
The Yiddish Song, a four-week seminar, Mondays, March 6-April 24, 7-8 p.m. $80, non-members $93 + GST and $10 materials.
Kafka and Son, March 7-18 at the Al Green Theatre. Tickets $15-25, 416-504-7529 or www.artsbox office.ca.

TZEDAKAH CARNIVAL: Girls from National Conference of Synagogue Youth (NCSY), south chapter bat mitzvah class, ran a Tzedakah Carnival at the Village Shul recently. The carnival raised more than $1,000, which will be divided between One Family Fund in Israel and the Zareinu Education Centre in Toronto. From left are Brooke Goldenberg, Erin Joffe, Elana Kimel, Tatum Shiff, Lauren Schmeltzer, Leore Davidovitz and Dalya Cohen.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 18

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Weinberg, Maurice B.	Feb 7/06	31 Shenstone Rd
Burston, Irene	Feb 8/06	28 Hollywood Ave
Fox, Rosa	Feb 8/06	Private
Bellin, Martin	Feb 8/06	980 Elgin Mills Rd
Croitoru, Herscu	Feb 8/06	Private
Javasky, Ben	Feb 8/06	15 Gladiola Crt
Rankin, Annette	Feb 8/06	Private
Gold, Max	Feb 8/06	541 Finch Ave W
Shur, Milly	Feb 8/06	7805 Bayview Ave
Baum, Anna	Feb 8/06	Private
Dillon, Darcy Ethan	Feb 9/06	Private
Weis, Joseph Jack	Feb 8/06	8 Baintree Court W
Sussman, Anne	Feb 9/06	Private
Goldstein, Betty	Feb 9/06	3560 Bathurst St
Lukofsky, Ruth	Feb 9/06	73 Wenderly Dr
Baum, Anna	Feb 8/06	Private
Shneer, Benjamin	Feb 10/06	65 Maxwell Ave
Skrydlo, Abram	Feb 10/06	487 Coldstream Ave
Vaisberg, Alexander	Feb 11/06	5 Fisherville Rd
Last, Anne	Feb 11/06	550 Cummer Ave
Varadi, Marcel	Feb 10/06	100 Antibes Dr
Kaplan, Charlotte	Feb 11/06	353 Spring Gate Bl
Capelluto, Violetta	Feb 10/06	30 Greenfield Ave
Abrams, Ralph	Feb 11/06	18 Henricks Rd
Weinroth, Max	Feb 11/06	100 Antibes Dr
Meiekhova, Dasha	Feb 12/06	22 Berwick Cres
Markowitz, Manuel Isadore	Feb 12/06	Private
Wellman, Mark Mendel	Feb 12/06	27 Palm Dr
Shlagbaum, Bronia	Feb 14/06	2 Covington Rd

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Eva Salinas	Feb 4/06	58 Letchworth Cr
Rose Epstein	Feb 3/06	4300 Bathurst St
Les Marshak	Feb 5/06	130 Carlton St
Charney Reitapple	Feb 5/06	105 Brookview Dr
Allan Sone	Feb 6/06	333 Clark Ave W
Shirley Bernstein	Feb 6/06	8501 Bayview Ave
Lenore Dubros	Feb 6/06	55 Skymark Dr
George Resnick	Feb 5/06	18 Hollywood Ave
Hilda Livingston	Feb 5/06	4300 Highway 7 E
Maria Moscoe	Feb 5/06	189 Shaw St
Magda Collins	Feb 7/06	89 Skymark Dr
Benjamin Gofine	Feb 8/06	400 Walmer Rd
Rose Berkan	Feb 9/06	34 Clifton Ave
Ethna Plashkes	Feb 7/06	10 Old York Mills Rd
David Green	Feb 8/06	8 Covington Rd
Ralph Goldsman	Feb 10/06	5 Kenneth Ave
Frank Applebaum	Feb 11/06	53 Palmerston Ave
Dorothy Davis	Feb 10/06	260 Heath St
Percy Lindzon	Feb 11/06	27 Vesta Dr
Daniel Bohnen	Feb 11/06	60 Rosepark Dr

HEDREW BASIC

Sophie Athias	Feb 11/06	50 Bedle Avenue

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Coast to Coast

Canadians to help with Jerusalem facelift

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

Canadians, both Jewish and non-Jewish, are undertaking a $2-million project to help revitalize Jerusalem's city centre, which has been in serious decline for years and especially since the start of the intifadah.

The Royal Bank of Canada will host the campaign's kickoff in Toronto March 7, under the chairmanship of its vice-president for governmental affairs, Charles Coffey, an honorary member of the board of the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada, the organization overseeing the campaign.

It's the biggest project undertaken by the foundation in Canada in at least 10 years, said Monica Berger, the Montreal-based national executive director and wife of David Berger, former Canadian ambassador to Israel.

Former Israeli finance minister Dan Meridor, now international chair of the Jerusalem Foundation, will be guest speaker at the invitation-only launch. Ya'acov (Cobie) Brosh, the Israeli consul general in Toronto, will also speak.

David Azrieli, president of Montreal-based Canpro Investments, a major real estate developer in Israel and the new president of the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada, will finance a major part of the project, said Steve Solomon, director of the Canadian desk of the foundation at its Jerusalem headquarters.

Solomon said a series of events over the coming year will be held in Canada emphasizing "the centrality of Jerusalem to the world's three major monotheistic religious groups.

"Funds raised from these events will be utilized not only to revitalize the city centre, but also to fund important services and activities which will benefit all the residents of this unique city."

On March 8, Meridor will be in Ottawa to speak to supporters there.

"Over the past decade, many of the quality businesses formerly located in the heart of Jerusalem have either been driven out of business or relocated to more secure indoor locations, turning the city centre into a commercial ghost town," Solomon said. The Ben Yehuda pedestrian mall has been particularly hard hit.

The foundation is working in partnership with the city, which has drawn up plans for a redevelopment of the downtown core.

Renowned architect Moshe Safdie, an honorary member of the foundation's Canadian board, is expected to volunteer his expertise to the project as well.

Canadian funds will be directed to the rejuvenation of Zion Square, a busy gathering place for residents and tourists, as well as the site of large political rallies. Among the physical enhancements will be the installation of a contemporary piece of art by artist Ron Arad. The funds will also go to community outreach programs that serve the mainly young inhabitants of the area.

Zahal Square, which connects the Old City, city hall and the Mammilla neighbourhood, has already been redesigned with contributions from the Jerusalem Foundation's American branch. Historic Davidka Square and surroundings has also been revamped.

The master plan also calls for the creation of new town squares and incentives to encourage more students and young people to live in the area, such as rental subsidies.

The Bezalel Academy of Art is to be relocated from Mount Scopus to the city centre, which it is hoped will also promote more cultural activity.

Three major intersections along Jaffa Road, from the city entrance in the west to Zahal Square in the east, will be the sites of attractive, modern squares. A light-railway transportation system is also being constructed, and eventually most traffic will be redirected from the city core.

A suspension bridge designed by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava will extend over the entrance to the city becoming the modern "Gate to Jerusalem."

In addition, much of the city's underground infrastructure, some of its dating back to the British Mandate, has been replaced.

The next campaign event is in Montreal April 4, when Manny Batshaw, who was president of the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada for many years, will be honoured.

Coast to Coast

Arabs, Muslims and Jews dialogue in Hamilton

By ABIGAIL CUKIER
Special to the News

HAMILTON – Arab, Muslim and Jewish leaders in Hamilton want to let the community know respectful dialogue and understanding is possible between the three groups.

Although they are just starting to get their message out, they have already felt the impact of their efforts.

Ali Cheaib, who came to Canada 18 years ago from southern Lebanon, is president of the Hamilton Council of Canadian Arabs.

"We are not distancing ourselves from Arab-Israeli issues, but we are trying to find a way to talk and not confront each other," he said. "Instead of looking at a person as a Jew or an Arab, we are getting behind the label. We put a wall up – we are taking that wall down.

"I see myself becoming more mature, being able to open up to a community that I had certain preconceived notions about. I can see these melting away.

"I hope the same can be said about my Jewish friends."

The Committee for Hamilton Arab, Muslim and Jewish Dialogue was formed in September after a Hamilton Police Board's forum about the police chief's controversial trip to Israel. When vicious invective between Palestinian and Israeli supporters brought the meeting to an abrupt end, Cheaib's eyes met Lorne Finkelstein's across the room.

"We were both in dismay. I contacted him the next day and we agreed this can't go on," said Finkelstein. "This didn't reflect the way we behave in Hamilton from either side. It didn't represent the majority."

The two men knew each other through their positions on the Strengthening Hamilton Community Initiative, a group aimed at promoting equality and ending discrimination in Hamilton.

Finkelstein admitted the relationship was "testy at first.

Committee for Hamilton Arab, Muslim and Jewish Dialogue members, from left, are Gerry Fisher, Hussein Hamdani, Javid Mirza, Lorne Finkelstein, Ali Cheaib, and Khaled Balika. [Wendy Schneider photo]

"Then we decided we have no control over Middle East events and, while we have passions about events in the Middle East, we shouldn't bring those grievances to Hamilton. There is no room for invective, inciteful dialogue."

The two men spent two hours having coffee one Sunday afternoon. Cheaib spoke about living in Lebanon during the 1982 Israeli incursion and Finkelstein shared stories of anti-Semitism in Hamilton.

The committee they started includes Javid Mirza, president of the Muslim Association of Hamilton, Khaled Balika, vice-president of the Muslim Association of Hamilton, Hussein Hamdani, founder and chair of the Ihya Foundation, and Gerry Fisher, executive director of the Ul... Federation of Hamilton.

The group has met five times, mostly to try to get to know one another. Members don't discuss the Middle East and are dismayed at the media's tendency to turn to inciteful groups for sources.

"It's a never-ending game. With both sides competing for public opinion, we are going down a path that doesn't get us anywhere," Cheaib said. "Why not get people who really want to solve problems to sit down and talk. We want to have an understanding of each other's fears and sensitivities and see that these get respected."

Last week, committee members organized a meeting of the executives of their respective organizations.

Each president shared his experiences living in Hamilton.

Morteza Jafarpour, a Muslim, and the executive director of Settlement and Integration Services Organization (SISO), shared his memories of growing up in Iran, where his best friend was a Jew and his college roommate was Armenian. He asked, "What happened to those days?"

The dialogue committee will continue meeting monthly and the joint executives will meet every three months. They agreed they will continue to work to get to know each other and discuss sensitive issues together.

"Nobody had expectations that we would reach an accord, nothing was asked except to meet again," Finkelstein said. "This is a first for Hamilton. We think it's a first for Canada. We're not aware of it being done elsewhere."

Other ideas include forming a youth choir of Jewish, Arab and Muslim students who will perform songs of peace. Glen Mallory, conductor of the Hamilton Philharmonic Youth Orchestra, has committed his orchestra's accompaniment.

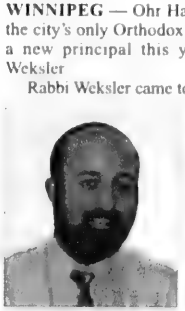
"We want to serve to alleviate these mis... conceptions about people and communicate this to the community at large. We don't espouse to solving the problem, but we are hopeful," Cheaib said. "We have accomplished a lot as a group and we see a light at the end of the tunnel."

New principal shares his goals for Winnipeg's only Orthodox school

By REBECA KUROPATWA
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — Ohr Hatorah Day School, the city's only Orthodox Jewish school, has a new principal this year, Rabbi David Weksler

Rabbi Weksler came to Winnipeg with his family in August 2005 as an educational shaliach (emissary).



Rabbi David Weksler

He says he says he has always wanted to do *shlichoot*.

"My whole family has done *shlichoot*," he said in an interview. "It is important to do. *Chootz l'Aretz* [outside of Israel] it is harder for Jews to keep up an Orthodox education."

Before leaving Israel, the rabbi was head of a yeshiva for boys in B'nai Brak. He has come to Canada with his wife, Michal, and their four daughters. His wife was expecting their son, Yedidiah, who was born here after their arrival

"The Jewish Community here in Winnipeg is, although small, very warm, receptive, welcoming and interested in enriching their Jewish life and education," Rabbi Weksler says. "It is very difficult to be a practising Orthodox Jew outside of Israel. Yet, the community here is undergoing an awakening of interest in strengthening the Jewish community's identity and involvement."

Ohr Hatorah Day School, which was originally called Torah Academy, started up in the late 1970s, Rabbi Weksler explains. "At its height, this school had approximately 150 students, with the highest grade being Grade 8.

"In the 1988-89 school year, Torah Academy was changed to Ohr Hatorah Day School. And, to all intents and purposes, it was a new school. It was the same building, but a new school – with a new rabbi, new teachers and everything. Today's Ohr Hatorah started up in 1998."

> *'Better teaching with smaller class sizes'*

The school currently has 45 students in total, with about 15 in each of the nursery and kindergarten classes and five to seven in each of the Grade 1 to Grade 8 classes. "This is the first year that Ohr Hatorah has added the Grade 8 class," Rabbi Weksler says.

"What is nice about having a smaller school is that you can provide better teaching with smaller class sizes."

Still, one of his goals is "to build up the school in size and in spiritual strength."

Describing Ohr Hatorah's curriculum, Rabbi Weksler says that "the school provides the kids with general studies that are on the same level as that stipulated by the Manitoba School Board. There are also improved Judaic studies. It is at a high level – similar to that in Israel."

A lot of changes were made this year, he says. "Everything is new: there is a new curriculum, and almost all new teachers."

One new concept he has instituted for the students is daily "communication and exploration using the computers, technology and the Internet. They connect with students in Israel every day, discussing all facets of Jewish studies.

"My hope," Rabbi Weksler says, "is to strengthen and stabilize the Jewish community's level of spirituality so that kids can feel very at home with their Jewish identity."

His philosophy of education is based on the principle "that there are three pillars or legs... required for effective Jewish learning, and one without the others is insufficient." He refers to them as *kohtaret* (headlines). The headlines are the study of "Torah, Eretz Yisrael, and Am Yisrael."

His goal is to instil in the students and community "an understanding of all aspects of Jewish life, a love for Torah, deep learning and a good understanding of the halachot [Jewish laws]."

The rabbi says he is very serious about "providing honest and concrete positive change – not to do things just for show. It should be lasting." He also hopes to "make a strong association with the Jewish community here and the one in Israel. There should be a strong connection. And, hopefully, they will want to come to Eretz Yisrael."

He sees a lot of positive signs, he says. "More parents are wanting to get involved, bringing in more kids and more overall involvement."

'Russia will play its role with all the others'

Continued from page 1

support in terms of the world agenda to keep afloat such issues as the fight against terrorism and all those things that accompany it in the Middle East and other regions of the world.

CJN: *Some are arguing that Russia is not economically strong enough a world player to oversee the G-8.*

G.M.: From an economic standpoint, I don't believe there are any problems with Russia being in the chair of the G8. Last year, there was an important conference n Ottawa devoted to the future of world energy, with outstanding specialists. The consensus among participants was that in the years to come – because of the speedy rise of China and India and American gluttony in terms of oil and gas – they must do something about that. Russia is one of the main stable sources of energy, unlike some countries in the Middle East, for example, like Iran or some others, on whom everybody depends now.

The very fact that there was unanimous support in making energy security the main point of the G-8 summit is a manifestation that everybody understands the role of the Russian world economy. It's probably more crucial than the role of France at the moment, or Germany – no disrespect meant to all those fine countries. If suddenly there would be a drastic slowdown in our production of gas and oil, I don't know how many countries in Europe wouldn't feel that.

CJN: *After its election to power in the Palestinian Authority, Russian President Vladimir Putin called on Hamas to renounce terrorism.*

G.M.: That's our official position as chair of the G-8 and as part of the leadership quartet – Russia, the United States, European Union and the United Nations. So we took the leadership and drafted a statement that demanded that Hamas renounce violence and renounce terrorism and recognize Israel. It's our official position.

CJN: *But at the same time, Russia is arguing that the international community must live up to financial commitments to aid the Palestinian Authority and has not labelled Hamas a terrorist organization.*

G.M.: In Hamas, there are different wings – an armed wing and a political wing. The political wing was allowed by the U.S., by the European Union, by Israel and by everybody else to participate in democratic elections in Palestine. And they won. So, it's the fruits of the policy of the democratization of the Middle East, which is being promoted by the U.S. and other countries. In democracies, you don't always make the wisest choice. But once the choice is made, you can either denounce the people and turn them all into terrorists, or you deal with the problem.

CJN: *Do you see Hamas' election as a vote against the corruption that existed?*

G.M.: It's a usual phenomenon in the contemporary world that elections are more often a criticism of something than very strong support of the alternative. It's a happy exception when you have a brand new alternative that is so appealing that everybody votes for it. Usually, it's discontent with current policies. In this case, yes, I think they were saying "no" to corruption. Now the problem is: do we denounce the people who voted for something by freezing them out? By punishing the people? Or by influencing them further, to go beyond the rejection of something into something positive?

CJN: *How do you see Russia's role in all this?*

G.M.: Russia will play its role with all the others. We have an influential Muslim community of 20 million with ties to the Arab world, and we hope, through them, we can influence forces of moderation that support the peace plan formulated by the quartet and supported by Israel and Mr. (Mahmoud) Abbas. We will support Mr. Abbas.

He said he will work with whoever is in government and steadfastly promote the peace plan whose goal is the creation of a peaceful and independent Palestine living peacefully with Israel. Our game plan it to promote him and influence Palestinians through dialogue to renounce terrorism and to recognize Israel officially. Will it be a long and a tough road, an uphill struggle? By all means.

CJN: *Do you think Hamas is capable of changing?*

G.M.: We must retain law and order – whatever that means in Palestine – and try to influence them to the best of our abilities. With Mr. Abbas being the chief leader of the Palestinians and supporters of Fatah still being very influential, I think we can put the peace process back on track. But if we just renounce the results of the elections and treat every Palestinian like a terrorist, we're heading into a terrible period of renewed violence in the Middle East and everybody will suffer.

CJN: *Nobody seemed more surprised than Hamas by its victory.*

G.M.: Which is probably a good thing, because they probably felt cozier and more comfortable in radical opposition. They had no responsibility but to promote all this suicidal bombing and violent struggle.

CJN: *Are concerns over Iran's nuclear capability well-founded?*

G.M.: There's no hard evidence today. It's like Iraq. I have a distinct sense of déja vu, unfortunately. There are some question marks, which the International Atomic Energy Agency has to answer. We had a meeting of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council in London, and it was agreed we would await its report. If Iran is in violation of international obligations, we will send the case to the Security Council and discuss it.

But I'm against undue dramatization. I remember very vividly how we argued (with U.S. President George W. Bush) in 2002 when he came to St. Petersburg. We gave him our intelligence information, shared our estimates with him, told him there was no evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, that it was an empty pretext. We also showed him that Al Qaeda and others would take advantage of his invasion, which they actually did. I don't want this tragedy repeated in Iran. So it's a very simple case. If there are major violations, let the specialists determine it. We know the dangers of radicals prevailing in Iran and creating nuclear weapons on our border. Let's wait for the report that's coming in March. It's (less than) two months away, and I don't think in two months, Iran will become a nuclear state. Israel is a nuclear state. But because we have a different relationship with Israel President Putin said survival of the State of Israel is in the national interest of Russia – we ignore that fact.

CJN: *Surely Israel and Iran having the nuclear bomb are not comparable.*

G.M.: Exactly. But if working from certain legalistic assumptions that violations, that certain codes of conduct by a state, are sufficient reason for moving against it in force by the international community, there must be some rules. It's like traffic rules. "This guy is speeding, but I like the colour of his eyes, so I don't give him a ticket." It can't be done this way.

I have reason to believe that Israel will react resolutely (if Iran has the bomb), but my gut feeling is if it happens, it will cause a very drastic deterioration of the situation. People mistakenly believe that dramatizing the Iranian situation is safer than dramatizing the North Korean situation. I disagree. By dramatizing things, you only play into the hands of the radicals. Radicals, they thrive on drama.

CJN: *Why did President Putin reportedly state that the breakup of the Soviet Union was a disaster?*

G.M.: He didn't say it was a disaster. Disaster means he regrets the breakup. What he did say was that the majority of the Russian population, by international poll, is not very supportive of what Mr. (Boris) Yeltsin did. The social safety net was gone. In our case, the whole system collapsed. This poor authoritarian state – which of course was a bad thing – was taking care of education, child care. Everything was free.

What Mr. Putin said was that it was a great historic drama. One thing is irrefutable: he brought us freedom. But give a child total freedom, give him a gun and go on vacation. There are no deep roots for democracy in Russian society, which means there will be a painful period of transition. Crimes committed by the Soviet state are a tough legacy, and everything is under magnified glass. We have to discuss things the way they are, not put a spin on it. I think Mr. Putin is managing quite well.

CJN: *How is the Jewish community of Russia doing?*

G.M.: It's an entirely different situation than what we had during the Soviet Union when all religions were crushed. This revival of Judaism – there are many rich and important people saying, "We are Jews and we are proud of it" – it's a very good thing, but also, in an unprepared society, it creates certain backlashes.

We have marginal elements who violate cemeteries, churches. In the Soviet Union, it was unthinkable to read *Mein Kampf*. You would go to prison immediately. Now, because people expect us to be more democratic – and justly so – you can buy *Mein Kampf*, and only now is our parliament discussing a ban on certain books inciting anti-Semitism. That's why it was so important, in conjunction with the Holocaust Centre, to have events commemorating the 60th anniversary of D-Day.

CJN: *What is the state of bilateral relation with Israel?*

G.M.: Much better and closer than ever before. During the Cold War, we oriented all our resources towards Arab countries. So it was quite revolutionary for Mr. Putin to say that the survival and well-being of the State of Israel are in the national interest of Russia.

Mosque vandalism denounced

MONTREAL — Jewish groups condemned the recent acts of vandalism at two mosques in Laval.

Police said rocks were thrown through the windows of the Islamic Cultural Centre and the Al-Hissane Islamic Centre, which are less than a kilometre apart, early in the morning of Feb. 8.

"As Jews, we understand the pain that these types of incidents cause and abhor such desecrations," said Canadian Jewish Congress regional president Jeffrey Boro. "Whenever such events take place, we must stand in solidarity with the victims."

B'nai Brith Canada also raised concern about the Feb. 10 stabbing of an imam at a metro station.

Legal counsel Steven Slimovitch said: "The desecration of religious institutions by vandals and the subsequent attack of a member on a visible religious minority on our public transit system merit a full and an in-depth investigation by the Montreal police."

The police have not concluded that the attack was racially motivated.

The incidents prompted an appeal for respect among different communities from Raymonde Folco, MP for Laval-Les Iles and chair of the Quebec Liberal caucus.

"I appeal to all of you to show the greatest sense of respect, restraint and responsibility to avoid anything that might offend the beliefs of others," she said.

Folco added, in an apparent reference to the furor over Danish editorial cartoons of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, that freedom of expression "must be exercised with caution.

"The right to freedom of expression cannot involve the right to offend the religious beliefs of others. A balance must be found between freedom of the press and respect for religious icons."

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Withholding PA funds resolves legal quandary

By RAFAEL D. FRANKEL
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — In its decision earlier this week to withhold the further transfer of funds to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority, the cabinet resolved a legal question that was pending since Hamas' electoral victory last month.

At that time, Israel was placed in a legal quandary that saw the government forced to decide between illegally funding a terrorist organization or breaching previous agreements signed with the Palestinian Liberation Organization, which mandated the monthly transfer of tax revenue Israel collects on behalf of the PA.

While the 1994 Paris Protocol established a customs union between Israel and the PA, it also arranged for the PA to be able to collect tax revenue as would any normal government. However, since the PA did not have the necessary infrastructure or expertise to collect its own taxes, the protocol established a "revenue clearance mechanism." Under that scheme, Israel collected all duties on behalf of the PA and was obliged to transfer the money to it the following month.

Aside from an extended period during the second intifadah, Israel has until now transferred that money to the PA according to the agreement.

While halting the transfer of funds is technically a breach of the accords, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mark Regev said that by declaring their intentions to ignore some of the PA's signed agreements with Israel, it was Hamas that legally ended the arrangement.

"The transfer of money is a bilateral agreement," Regev said. "The incoming Hamas government said all these agreements are null and void. So they can't say that all the agreements are null and void, but this one point you have to keep unilaterally."

Regev pointed out that Israel is not confiscating the money, but rather holding it in escrow in an interest-bearing account until the day comes when Hamas meets the three conditions Israel has set out for negotiations, or a new party assumes power in the PLC.

The tax agreement between Israel and the PA includes all forms of duties.

Palestinian import and export tariffs are collected by Israel at the point of entry and exit for goods, while businesses employing Palestinian labourers pay their employee income taxes to the PA tax-revenue fund.

The decision for Israel to collect the PA tax revenue was made for a number of logistical reasons, chief among them that the PA did not feel it could trust its own tax collectors, said Eran Shayshon, an analyst for the Re'ut think-tank in Tel Aviv. Israel also wanted the PA to remain, in many respects, a non-government, and it thus retained many governmental duties relating to the Palestinians for itself, he said.

Though ending the transfer of funds to the PA was a big step, the cabinet decided to employ only a small part of the economic leverage Israel has over the Palestinians.

In addition to the tax arrangements, the Paris Protocols created a customs union between Israel and the PA that harmonizes the tax structure between the two, but more importantly, allows for goods to move from Israel to PA areas and vice versa without being taxed.

While withholding the tax revenue from the PA may make governing more difficult for Hamas in the short run, it is ultimately expected to be able to replace that revenue with funding from Arab countries. On the other hand, were Israel to dissolve the customs union and begin to levy taxes on everyday items Palestinians buy from Israel, as well as on the produce Palestinians sell to Israelis, the economic consequences for the Palestinians could be severe, said Jonathan Lipow, chief economist of Forum FIE, a financial consulting group in Ra'anana. However, such taxes would also adversely affect the Israeli economy, Lipow said, and thus any such move should be carefully considered.

International support needed

Continued from page 1

ending Israel's transfer of funds to the PA, asking the international community to do the same, preventing the transfer of security-related equipment to the PA, restricting movement of Hamas members going from Gaza to the West Bank and tightening the security checks at the Gaza crossings.

Eiland said his problem was one of timing, not substance. Israel, he said, was making a mistake in implementing these decisions now, following Saturday's PLC swearing-in ceremony, and not waiting until the formation of a Hamas government before taking these steps.

The Quartet – the United States, the European Union, Russia and the United Nations – has made clear that it would not alter its relations with the PA until a Hamas government was formed. Its "D-Day" for changing its ties with the PA, therefore, is different from Israel's, which made the PLC ceremony Saturday the date and event that marked the beginning of a new era.

Eiland argued that if Israel wanted the freedom of movement to take even harsher measures against a Hamas-led PA in the future, it would need international support and understanding now. He said this support and understanding could very well dwindle were Israel to take measures against the PA now, and not give Hamas time to either reject or accept the three conditions Israel and the international community set for Hamas. These three conditions are disarming and disavowing terrorism, recognizing Israel, and accepting all previous agreements with it.

Indeed, by moving D-Day up, Israel made an about-face policy switch, since immediately after the PLC elections on Jan. 25, the country's position as relayed to western diplomatic officials was that Jerusalem would take a wait-and-see attitude until after a Hamas government was formed.

However, after Olmert came under sharp criticism from both Likud leader Binyamin Netanyahu and Labor leader Amir Peretz for his decision last week to transfer tax and customs revenues for the month of January to the PA, Israel moved up its D-Day to the date when the PLC was sworn in, not when a Hamas government was formed.

Eiland warned the cabinet that by taking sanctions now Israel may be shooting itself in the foot and damaging long-term international support for Israel's position vis-a-vis Hamas. If this, in fact, turns out to be the case, then Sunday's decision could go down as an example of Olmert sacrificing a valuable strategic asset – an international consensus against Hamas – for short-term political gain.

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Authors & Poets

The CJN is pleased to announce its

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We invite our readers to submit unpublished, original works of fiction or poetry that explore Jewish themes. Stories should not exceed 2,000 words.

We must receive your submissions no later than Friday, March 10. E-mail submissions are preferred, but works can also be sent by mail or brought to our office. E-mail: **info@cjnews.com.** Mail: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4.

Please note: submissions will *not* be returned. Only writers whose work is chosen for publication will be contacted.

CJN Purim Art Contest

It's time again for our annual **Purim Art Contest.**

Who can enter: Children in grades 1 to 6 inclusive are eligible. The children of *CJN* employees are not eligible.

Prizes: The judges will choose one drawing from two different students in each grade. These "winning" drawings will be published in *The CJN*'s 2006 Purim Poster. In addition, each of the 12 children whose drawings have been selected will receive a cheque for $25.

How to enter: You may submit as many drawings as you want. However, they should not be too small nor too large. Please paint or draw bright, bold, colourful pictures. You may use markers, crayons, paint or pencils. Please send us your name, address, phone number, age and grade along with your drawings.

You may mail or deliver your drawings to: CJN Community Contests, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, Toronto, Ont., M3B 3K4. If you want us to return the pictures to you, please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Otherwise, we will be unable to do so.

The contest closes at 3 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, 2006. We will undoubtedly receive many wonderful submissions from children all across the country. But only 12 of the drawings will be chosen as the "winners." The judges will base their decisions on a number of factors such as: the use of colour, the imaginative quality of the drawing and the way it tells an aspect of the story of Purim. The judges' decisions will be final. The chances of winning depend upon the number and quality of submissions received.

How the winner will be announced: The children whose pictures are chosen will be notified by telephone before the start of Shabbat on Friday, March 3, 2006.

When the prizes will be awarded: The "winning" pictures will be published in *The CJN* of March 16, 2006. Have fun and good luck.

Any litigation respecting the conduct and awarding of a prize in this contest may be submitted to the Régie des alcools, des courses et des jeux du Québec

Israel & the Jewish World

European Jewish leaders share challenges they face at home

By DINAH A. SPRITZER
JTA

PRAGUE — Hans Vuijsje, general director of the Jewish Social Work Foundation in the Netherlands, is worried about the nursing home he runs.

"We don't have enough Jews, so we fill the home with non-Jews," he said. "It's a matter of money… So how do we keep the nursing home Jewish with a declining Jewish population?"

Vuijsje was sounding off to an audience of 34 other European Jewish leaders of communities and organizations who spent three days recently contemplating the obstacles they face, from the high cost of kosher food in eastern Europe to the record number of French Jews making aliyah.

The First Forum of Directors, put on by the European Council of Jewish Communities and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, was intended to improve participants' fundraising and management skills. The forum also provided a snapshot of difficulties faced by beleaguered executives who were thrilled to hear they were not alone.

Daniel Koverman, leader of the 1,000-member Malmo community in Sweden, noted a challenge many European Jewish leaders face. "More than 65 per cent of our members are over 65 and the younger ones are disappearing to Stockholm, Gotenberg or Israel. For every Jewish birth, we have 30 deaths per year," he said.

Koverman's lament resounded with Petr Papousek, who heads a community of only 150 in Olomouc, Czech Republic. "There are at least 10 young Jews in Olomouc that are not members of the community," he said.

Alex Sivan, executive director of Fedrom, the Romanian umbrella organization that includes about 10,000 Jews, offered some inspiration. "We opened computer classes because young people in Romania can't afford the computers. The average monthly is wage is $95 (US). Let me tell you, we have attracted lots of young people."

The intermarriage rate in Europe is on average 50 per cent to 70 per cent, and much higher in eastern Europe.

A divisive issue among European Jewry is how to accommodate, or exclude, mixed families.

Lina Filiba, executive vice-president of the Jewish Community of Istanbul, provoked a stir among forum attendees when she said that her community actively seeks to involve non-Jewish spouses in community life by offering "neutral programs that they can feel comfortable participating in."

In Helsinki, couples that include a non-Jewish mother can get their children into a Jewish school and the community as long as they sign a document that promises the children will convert at the same time as having a bar or bat mitzah. But in Italy, such conversions were banned a few years ago, leaving some families with Jewish and non-Jewish siblings.

Andrej Zozula, executive director of the Polish Union of Religious Communities, said in Poland "finding anyone who is not in a mixed marriage" is a problem.

Tomas Kraus, executive director of the Czech Federation of Jewish Communities, noted an increasing number of conflicts that were dividing European communities, some having to do with orthodoxy, some with the rise of Chabad. "We as institutions have to take a some kind of stance on this challenge," he said.

Kraus outlined challenges that were particularly resonant for Jews in eastern Europe, such as who would care for all their cemeteries and synagogues. "Do we invest in stones or in people?" he asked.

Poland's Zozula spoke of the difficult task of caring for 1,300 Jewish cemeteries.

Romania's Sivan said that every year he gets "a bunch of people in their 70s walking into the community for the first time, quietly admitting that they are Jewish, so they can be buried in a Jewish cemetery."

CJC, AFN travel to Israel for mission

First Nations leaders from across Canada will learn how their Israeli counterparts preserve their historic languages and culture as part of the first joint Canadian Jewish Congress-Assembly of First Nations (AFN) visit to Israel.

The largest-ever mission to Israel by a North American First Nations group arrived in Israel late last week for a six-day educational mission co-chaired by CJC national president Ed Morgan and AFN national chief Phil Fontaine.

First Nation chiefs, women and experts in the fields of business, law and academics were to learn best practices in agriculture, aquaculture and the preservation of minority languages from Israeli experts.

While in Israel, the group was to visit numerous sites of cultural, religious and historical significance, including the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial museum in Jerusalem. They were to meet with Canada's ambassador to Israel, Donald Sinclair, and have the opportunity to explore kibbutz life.

Participants on the first joint Canadian Jewish Congress-Assembly of First Nations (AFN) visit to Israel are seen at the summit of Massada. From left are, top row: Frank Meawasige, Cora Voyageur, Donna Wuttenee, Bev Jacobs, Kathleen McHugh, Fred Kelly and Rick O'Brien; second row: Chief Kelly Bird, Chief Tina Levesque, Orly Morgan, CJC national president Ed Morgan, AFN legal cousel Jack London, and Dave Porter; third row: Chief Second Peter Barlow, Kathleen Mahoney, national Chief Phil Fontaine, Brenda Lee Gedeon, Belva London, Sharlene Kelly; front row: CJC chief executive officer Bernie M. Farber, Anna Morgan and Rona Melnik. [CJC photo]

Israeli folk singer Damari mourned

By TALYA HALKIN
Jerusalem Post

TEL AVIV — Thousands turned out to pay respects to the late Israeli folk singer Shoshana Damari last week. "How do we depart from someone who was in our lives for so many years?" asked actress Gila Almagor at a funeral ceremony at the Cameri Theater in Tel Aviv.

Shoshana Damari
[Israel Sun photo]

"In a country without a king, we had a queen. We chose you and we crowned you, you were the queen of song."

The fabled singer died on Feb. 14 at Tel Aviv's Sourasky Medical Center after a severe bout of pneumonia.

"She was an extraordinary and wondrous woman," said singer and composer Hanan Yovel after her death.

Born in Damar, Yemen, Damari came to Israel as a two-year-old in 1925. As a child she began performing at weddings with her mother and in her early teens she starred in radio skits and theatrical performances.

In 1945, Natan Alterman composed the song *Kalaniyot* (*Anemones*) for Damari – it became her signature hit. Damari's first record was released in 1948. Over the following decades, her strong alto voice represented the voice of a land in the process of renewal, full of optimism and hope.

In the early years of the state, Damari – in addition to being renowned for her beauty – first brought the flavour of Middle Eastern music, complete with her guttural Yemenite pronunciation, to mainstream Israeli culture.

Together with Yaffa Yarkoni, Damari was also considered to be the quintessential singer for soldiers, for whom she performed in times of both war and peace during the 1960s and 70s.

In the mid-80s, Damari returned to the limelight singing a duet with Boaz Sharabi. She was awarded the Israel Prize in 1988 for her contribution to Israeli vocal music, and in the same year released the album and eponymous single *Or* (*Light*), which offered a theme of hope during the difficult period of the late 80s. Damari continued to appear occasionally on stage, most recently collaborating on several songs with the singer and composer Idan Reichel.

Yovel said that Damari's talent involved performing the hundreds of songs written for her by the country's greatest poets and songwriters, including Natan Alterman and Moshe Vilensky, so that they seemed to have been her own.

"Without writing music, she left a mark on Israeli music history – like Sinatra, with whom certain American hits are identified," Yovel said

"Israel's artists lost a good friend, a winner of the Israel Prize and the queen of Israeli song," said the chair of the Israeli Union of Performing Artists (IUPA), Yankale Mendel. "She was a mother for us all, giving us love and sharing her humour, and it is a great loss."

Mendel revealed that Damari was also a talented artist, and that he had recently been in contact with her about an exhibition of her works, a project he hopes will still go through in the future.

"Damari's early recordings [from the early years of the state and the pre-state period] are a piece of Israeli history," said Gilad Ben-Shach, a musical editor for Israel Radio.

"She was a real diva," Ben-Shach added. "She gave expression to what was taking place here, and was a symbol of the rebirth of Hebrew music."

Culture and Education Minister Meir Shitrit observed that "Shoshana Damari's death marks the end of a long period in the cultural history of Israel."

With files from JTA.

Israel Briefs

Omri Sharon sentenced

The son of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon was sentenced to nine months in prison for campaign funding violations in his father's 1999 race for the Likud party leadership. Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court sentenced Omri Sharon to another nine months of suspended imprisonment and fined him some $65,000. Because of the condition of the prime minister, who has been in a coma since a Jan. 4 stroke, the start of Omri Sharon's prison term was postponed by six months to Aug. 31. His attorney said Omri Sharon would appeal the sentence.

Germany 'stands with Israel'

Germany's foreign minister said his country would stand with Israel in dealing with Iran. "In Israel, they know from the remarks I've made during the last few days that I, indeed, we, stand shoulder to shoulder with Israel," Frank-Walter Steinmeier said in an interview. Steinmeier said Germany could not accept an Iran with nuclear weapons and said negotiations to push the Islamic republic back from the brink were at an impasse. He refused to rule out German involvement in any military action against Iran.

Conscript service cut

Israel is gradually reducing the duration of mandatory military service. Under a plan unveiled last week, male soldiers drafted last summer will spend 28 months in uniform, rather than three years. Further reductions will bring the final service term for men down to two years by 2010. Soldiers who need extra training time for specialized posts will receive professional salaries. More limited cuts are expected for female conscripts, who generally serve a maximum of 24 months.

Israel to honour cherry tomato's inventor

The Israeli inventor of the cherry tomato will receive a state prize. The 2006 Israel Prize for Agriculture Research will go to Nahum Keidar, who developed the bite-sized fruit now enjoyed worldwide, the Education Ministry announced this week. Keidar, a professor at the Weizmann Institute of Science, originally intended cherry tomatoes to be a snack.

640,000 trees planted

The Jewish National Fund marked Tu b'Shvat last week by planting hundreds of thousands of trees throughout Israel. The JNF said its volunteers, led by acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, planted 640,000 trees at public parks and nature reserves. All of the saplings were from indigenous species including carob, pistachio, oak, cyprus, pine, cedar, olive, fig, pomegranate and grapevines. Seventy per cent of the saplings were planted in the Negev Desert.

Hamas chooses PM

Hamas has chosen Ismail Haniyeh to be the next Palestinian Authority prime minister. Haniyeh is seen as a relative moderate within the terrorist group. He headed the group's list in parliamentary elections last month in which Hamas scored a surprise triumph.

From JTA

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Eye of the Storm: And now, for the 'Supreme Leader'

By AMIR TAHERI
Jerusalem Post

Commentary

While the world is focused on the clock of Iran's nuclear program, the other clock, that of the nation's domestic politics, is all but ignored by most commentators.

Both clocks have their alarms set. That of the nuclear clock is expected to ring within the next three to five years, unless something is done to interrupt the military aspects of the program. The alarm of the domestic politics clock, however, could be set off within the next few months as the power struggle in Tehran enters a new and more intense phase.

The event to watch is the forthcoming election of a new Assembly of Experts, a body of mullahs whose task is to elect the "Custodian-Theologian" – more commonly known as the "Supreme Guide," who has virtually unlimited powers under the Khomeinist constitution.

The election, to be completed in April, will not be open to all citizens. As always in the case of elections in the Islamic Republic all candidates must be approved by the authorities. And once the results are in, the Council of the Guardians of the Constitution, a body of 12 mullahs, can cancel part or all of them. In other words these elections resemble primaries held inside the same political party.

Ali Khamenei

The dominant group in the current Assembly of Experts consists of mullahs with business interests and old ties to the incumbent "Supreme Guide," Ali Khamenei and the former presidents Ali-Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani and Muhammad Khatami.

The interest of the coming election is whether or not there will be a change of majority in the assembly. Such a change would be the logical continuation of the presidential election which swept a new generation of radical revolutionaries to power under Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. And if change does happen, there is no guarantee that the new ruling elite would not want one of its own to become "Supreme Guide."

The common assumption in Tehran is that Khamenei, the current Supreme Guide, will be confirmed in his position at least for the time being. But, when it comes to Iranian politics, common assumptions often prove wrong. In last summer's presidential election, for example, many had expected Rafsanjani to sweep to victory. The more knowledgeable had speculated that Mohsen Qalibaf, a retired police chief and the favoured candidate of Khamenei, would win. As it turned out, Ahmadinejad won in a landslide.

During the presidential election, Khamenei was astute enough to adjust his tactics. Having backed Qalibaf in the first round he switched to Ahmadinejad in the second. Ahmadinejad, however, feels he owes nothing to Khamenei. By putting the focus on the "Hidden Imam" Mahdi as the sole source of power in the Islamic Republic, Ahmadinejad has tried to marginalize the "Supreme Guide." In many of his speeches he puts the Mahdi ahead of all prophets and claims that he has "a private personal channel" to the "Hidden Imam."

Theoretically, only the most learned of the Shi'ite clerics are supposed to be considered for the position of "Supreme Guide." In practice, however, not a single senior ayatollah is showing any interest in the job. In fact, the overwhelming majority of Shi'ite clerics in Iran now believe that their participation in government was a mistake, and that Khomeini had been more of an ambitious politician than a proper religious leader. Some senior mullahs want the post of the "Supreme Guide" abolished and its political responsibilities transferred to the president of the republic. The religious aspects of the post would then become the responsibility of a five-man council of theologians.

Both Rafsanjani and Khatami had supported that formula, albeit indirectly. And some analysts believe that, had Rafsanjani won, he would have pressed for the merger of the two top posts of the regime.

The new ruling elite, symbolized by Ahmadinejad, however, appears determined to maintain the post of "Supreme Guide" while divesting it of some of its political and administrative powers. In that context the new elite's ideological guru, Ayatollah Muhammad-Taqi Mesbah-Yazdi could emerge as the leading candidate for "Supreme Guide", if and when Khamenei is forced out.

Ayatollah Muhammad-Taqi Mesbah-Yazdi

The contrast between the two men could not be greater. While Khamenei was unable to complete his theological studies before the revolution because of frequent spells in the Shah's prisons, Mesbah-Yazdi steered clear of politics and received the most sophisticated education that the Shi'ite clergy could offer. Those who know him claim that he is one of the leading experts in Shi'ite philosophy. But they also insist that he is a hardliner on social and cultural issues and has a feeling of profound contempt for the modern civilization led by the Western democracies.

Because he didn't get a chance to train as a mullah, Khamenei became a politician. After the revolution he first worked as an aide at Khomeini's office in charge of distributing cash to needy mullahs throughout the country. He then became head of the office for military procurement and, later, Deputy Defence Minister under the Lebanese-Iranian militant Mostafa Chamran. In 1989, he caused a surprise when the Assembly of Experts declared him to be "Interim Supreme Guide," days after Khomeini's death. The next assembly turned his "interim" position into a permanent one.

Mesbah-Yazdi, however, has virtually no political experience and, if elected "Supreme Guide," might be content with providing Ahmadinejad with clerical cover only and allowing him to run the show.

Although Mesbah-Yazdi has shunned the limelight, he has been at the centre of most debates within the Khomeinist establishment for the past six or seven years, arousing often violent passions both for and against. The reason is that he is totally against both taqiyah (obfuscation) and kitman (dissimulation) which have been perfected into veritable arts by the mullahs over the centuries. Thus he often says aloud what most mullahs think in silence.

A disciple of the late Iranian philosopher Ahamd Fardid, Mesbah-Yazdi is full of contradictions. On the one hand he talks of "the direct link between believers and the Hidden Imam." On the other he claims that most believers lack the wisdom to distinguish right from wrong, and thus need to be led and looked after like children. He speaks of his dream of a universal Islamic state which would lead the way out of the "deadly maze of greed and corruption created by the West." And yet he insists that non-Shi'ite Muslims are "deviants" and, as such, cannot participate in the conquest of the world for "true Islam."

Whatever its outcome, the election could have a major impact on the course of Iranian politics over the next few years.

If the new radical elite do not win a majority, the old guard, led by Rafsanjani, could forge an alliance with Khamenei and oust the new guard, led by Mesbah-Yazdi and Ahmadinejad in the next parliamentary election in two years. If, on the other hand, the new guard captures control of the Assembly of Experts, it may well launch a major reform of the Islamic Republic's political structures with the aim of "full mobilization for the coming clash of civilizations," as foreseen by Ahmadinejad and Mesbah-Yazdi.

As for the nuclear clock neither the old nor the new guard wish to stop it. But it requires little imagination to see that a nuclear bomb in the hands of messianic luminaries like Ahmadinejad and Mesbah-Yazdi would be more frightening than in the hands of mullahs like Rafsanjani and Khatami with business interests and contacts in the West.

Hamas high on agenda as Rice heads to Mideast

By NATHAN GUTTMAN
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice embarked Monday on a five-day Middle East visit aimed at ensuring Arab countries don't provide financial aid to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority and strengthening the international front against Hamas.

After an initial decision not to provide direct funds to the Hamas government and to review existing aid programs to the Palestinians, the United States is now moving forward with closing possible loopholes that would enable international money to get into Hamas' hands.

On Friday, the State Department announced the United States is demanding the PA return $50 million it received during the past year to fund infrastructure projects in Gaza following Israel's pullout. According to State Department spokesperson Sean McCormack, the PA agreed to give back the funds, which will undergo review by the United States.

In addition to blocking any U.S. funds from reaching the PA, the United States is also intensifying its efforts to ensure other countries don't fill the financial gap left by the United States.

Condoleezza Rice

The increased U.S. pressure to cut funding to the PA does not include funds for humanitarian aid projects, which the administration wants continued.

While in the past month the United States lobbied Arab countries to maintain assistance to the Mahmoud Abbas-led cabinet, it's now urging these countries to stop all non-humanitarian funding, since it will be used to support a Hamas government.

The United States is aware that stopping foreign aid might mean the PA can't pay public sector salaries, but it sees this as a needed step to pressure Hamas. "The Palestinian need for resources is a lot, by most estimates $1.9 billion (US) a year," Rice said Friday. "It will be interesting to see if that can be gotten from states that are not committed to the peace process."

Rice will stress in her meetings in Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt that Arab countries should join the international community in stopping direct cash flow to the PA until Hamas recognizes Israel and stops terror.

"I would hope that any state that is considering funding Hamas, a Hamas-led government, would think about the implications of that for the Middle East," Rice said Friday to a some Arab journalists in Washington.

Rice will also underline in her conversations that once Hamas forms the PA cabinet, any passing of direct funds to the PA could be seen as breaking the U.S.-led global war against funding terror, which was designed originally to stop the funding of Al Qaeda.

The main problem facing the United States on this issue is Iran, which does not adhere to these global rules.

While the United States is now focussed on stopping the cash flow to the PA, it's also calling on countries to limit their ties with Hamas and to use these meetings only to stress the demands the organization has to accept before becoming a legitimate partner. The U.S. attempt to block all diplomatic ties with Hamas has failed, after Russia, Turkey and the Arab states invited Hamas leaders and held discussions with them.

On the issue of Iran's nuclear program, Rice used a meeting with Jewish leaders last week to make one of her toughest statements to date on the use of force. "No options are off the table, no one is ready for a nuclear Iran, the Iranians must understand that," she said, according to people attending the meeting at the State Department. "Accomplishing that goal is not in their interests. The United States and this president do not have a credibility issue when it comes to the use of force."

The reference, made at a private forum with eight Jewish organizational leaders, appeared to be to the U.S. decision in 2003 to invade Iraq, despite international opposition. Comparing Iraq to Iran is rare for administration officials, who are usually careful to say the cases are vastly different because Iran poses far more serious military challenges than Saddam Hussein's Iraq did.

With files from JTA

Israel & the Jewish World

30% of Gaza evacuees still homeless

By RAFAEL D. FRANKEL
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Six months after the Gaza disengagement, about 30 per cent of the approximately 8,000 people who were forcibly evicted from Gaza are still living in hotels and dozens are being housed in dorms and even tents, according to figures provided by the Committee of Gaza Settlements and by the Disengagement Authority.

But aside from those numbers, it is difficult to paint an overall picture of the evacuees' status, as the data issued by the two sides were widely divergent, with the settlements committee saying that the basic needs of thousands of people have not been met, while the government claimed to have offered reasonable solutions to nearly everyone.

The two sides were specifically at odds over their assessments of the two most substantive issues: the housing situation and the compensation packages that the government committed to provide the evacuees on their withdrawal from Gaza last summer.

There was some agreement on the progress toward finding permanent sites for the 21 Gaza communities to rebuild the towns they lost in August, but there was frustration from settlers in that they were not provided greater assistance in finding new jobs.

"The biggest problem is that [the government] didn't realize that we are not only 1,800 individual families, [but] communities that had established our own wonderful way of life," said Dror Vanunu, the international coordinator for the Gaza committee.

According to a report issued by the Gaza committee and information gathered by the *Jerusalem Post* from settler spokespersons, 1,027 families that were removed from Gaza now have at least a temporary home, 479 of which are in the caravan community in Nitzan. At least 408 families were not yet provided with temporary housing, the sources said. Of those, 63 families were living in tents and 90 were living in dormitories.

Meanwhile, 340 families found their own solutions and were already living in permanent houses, the committee said.

The Disengagement Authority painted a much different picture. Only 178 families were still without at least temporary homes, authority spokesperson Haim Altman said. The rest, who did have temporary housing, were located in caravans in Nitzan, Yad Binyamin and three different kibbutzim. In Mafki'im and Yad Hanna, families were already living on land they would use to build their future homes and towns, Altman said.

However, while some agreement existed regarding the housing situation, there was little if any common ground on the issue of the compensation packages that were promised to former Gaza settlers.

According to the Gaza committee, to date, around half of the evacuees received only NIS 50,000 (about $10,600 US) or a down payment on a house. Around 45 families (2.5 per cent) received all of the compensation money, which ranged from about $150,000 (US) to more than $300,000 (US), according to the formula developed by the government, and another 45 families received 75 per cent of their package. About 810 families (45 per cent) had not yet received any money at all from the government, the committee said.

"Everyone is responsible for this. The evacuation of Gush [Katif] was well planned – there were 20 months," Vanunu said. "It wasn't a tsunami or [Hurricane] Katrina. All the ministries, SELA [the Disengagement Authority], [and Prime Minister Ariel] Sharon himself" share blame for the situation.

The numbers were strongly disputed by Altman, who cited figures provided to him by the Prime Minister's Office that said 889 families (49 per cent) received the full compensation package, 235 (13 per cent) families received 75 per cent of the package and 445 families (25 per cent) received a down payment between NIS 50,000 and NIS 300,000. To date, Altman said, the government had dispersed more than NIS 1 billion in compensation money to the Gaza evacuees.

In response to Vanunu's charge that the government was not prepared for dealing with the evacuees, a Disengagement Authority official said the agency's hands were tied "because the vast majority of the evacuees began to talk to us only after the holidays, after the evacuation. The minute they began to talk, the processes of relocation and compensation accelerated.

"The name of the game was co-operation, and the minute the co-operation began, things began to move on better," the official added.

In regard to finding permanent homes and land for the Gaza evacuees to build communities, the sides were nearly on the same page.

According to Vanunu, three Gush Katif towns have reached agreements with the government on land that will be theirs in perpetuity. Most of the families of Ganei Tal will build homes in Hafetz Haim, Netzarim will move to Yevul in the Negev and Atzmona will relocate to Shomria in the Lachish area.

Vanunu added that many other former Gaza communities were nearing decisions and would likely have agreements with the government in place by Pesach.

Altman offered a slightly different version of the progress, saying that only the people formerly of Kfar Darom had not chosen a new site to build. He also said the communities now were modified versions of their former selves, with families from some communities mixing together to form different groups with which to build anew.

"They have changed, and we have gone with the [new] groups and we have created a variety of solutions according to their will," he said.

How long it would take to build the new communities remained a mystery, both sides said. "The building process could take 10 years or two years. It depends how much help we're given from the government and the Jewish Agency," Vanunu said.

A scene from the evacuation of the community of Gadid in the Gaza Strip last August. [Israpet photo]

According to an understanding with the government, the settlers are responsible for building their own homes in the new communities, while the state would build the infrastructure. When asked how much money the government would allocate to developing the new towns, and when it would place it in the budget, Altman said the Housing Ministry was responsible and not the Disengagement Authority.

As of press time, no one at the Housing Ministry was available for comment.

Unemployment remains rampant for Gaza evacuees, with around 1,600 people out of the 2,100 who lost their jobs as a result of the disengagement still without work, according to Gaza committee member Alon Hoisman. Many were farmers who had not yet found new land on which to begin growing crops again. That problem is particularly acute now, as the unemployment benefits many of the people are receiving are due to run out in the coming days.

According to Hoisman, most of the 500 who had found work did so in the last two months. The vast majority found work by themselves or with the help of a volunteer program and the website for the former Gaza residents, www.4katif.org.il, as opposed to assistance from the government, Hoisman said.

According to Altman, finding work for the Gaza settlers was also not the Disengagement Authority's responsibility. That lay with the Labor Ministry, he said, which was also unavailable for comment at press time.

Despite the many problems settlers have faced in the last half year, the feeling is that the government had become more helpful recently, Vanunu said.

"We feel that things are moving a little bit better, but we are still far, far, far away from solving the problem," Vanunu said.

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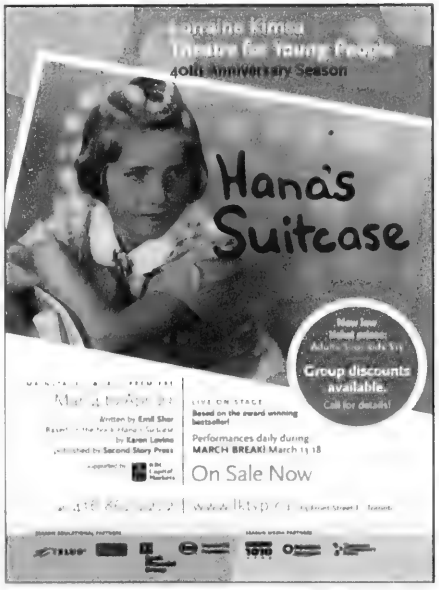

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TEATRON Theatre

Arts & Travel

Holocaust story makes theatre debut

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Fully aware that presenting the horrors of the Holocaust through literature, film and theatre has been tackled many times before, Emil Sher felt *Hana's Suitcase* was different and became determined to bring it to the stage.

After discovering a children's story about a group of Japanese students who were captivated by the story of a little girl who perished in the Holocaust, Sher, a prolific playwright, began transforming parts of the book into scenes of a play in his head.

"So many images rose to the surface," he said, adding that as a father of two young children, he is always looking for good stories to share with them.

Hana's Suitcase, originally a CBC radio documentary produced by Karen Levine, who later turned it into an award-winning and bestselling children's book in 2002, is a true story about a young Holocaust victim, Hana Brady, and the connection that was made with a group of Japanese students more than five decades later.

Levine produced the documentary after she read an article about a Japanese woman named Fumiko Ishioka, the director of the Tokyo Holocaust Education Resource Centre, who taught Japanese youth about the Holocaust.

Ishioka visited the Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum in Poland in 1999 and asked the museum to lend her artifacts that once belonged to children who died during the Holocaust.

She did this in the hope that having something tangible would help the members of Small Wings – a group of elementary and high school students who met regularly at the Holocaust centre in Tokyo – relate to the tragedy and the children who perished.

When a beaten, brown leather suitcase, bearing nothing but a name and a birth date, arrived at the centre, the Small Wings group was determined to find out everything they could about the girl who once owned it.

After months of research, Ishioka discovered that Hana's brother, George Brady, the only surviving member of her immediate family, was living in Toronto.

Pictured in *Hana's Suitcase* are, clockwise, Richard Lee (Akira), Siu Ta (Maiko) and Jessica Greenberg (Hana). [Daniel Alexander photo]

Through letters from Hana's brother, Ishioka and her students learned what Hana was like as a child and about her dream to become a teacher, before she was gassed to death in Auschwitz in 1944.

"In many plays about the Holocaust, we expect to hear a story about someone who is Jewish," Sher said.

"What makes this story so compelling is that a Japanese woman and children are so keen on finding out about Hana. This is a culture that is very removed from Judaism, but their determination and passion to exhume the story is very powerful."

Once Sher got permission from Levine to recreate the story on stage, he wrote the play with Nancy Guertin and Stephen Colella.

Allen MacInnis, the artistic director at the Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People, helped turn Sher's visions into powerful scenes.

"There is a certain vocabulary to theatre and it is important to play to a genre's strengths. One of the things we're able to do effectively on stage, that is much harder to do on film and in television, is have two time frames unfolding simultaneously," Sher said.

He noted that he was able to present two settings, modern-day Tokyo and Czechoslovakia in the '30s and '40s, in one scene.

The play is divided into two acts. The first act is meant to teach the audience about who Hana was as Akira and Maiko, two members of Small Wings, learn more about her, Sher said, and the second act shows how her life unfolded before she was gassed at the age of 13.

Sher described another technique he used in an attempt to connect the audience with the story.

He incorporated what he called "Holocaust figures," who wear masks so that they could be faceless. He purposely wanted the figures to have no identity so that people could relate to them and think, "That could have been me."

He said that trying to keep this play appropriate for children weighed heavily on the minds of everyone involved.

"We didn't want to sugar-coat it, but we also didn't want to make the play too dark or despairing," Sher said.

"Parents will probably have a harder time with this because they will be bringing a different perspective."

He hopes that different reactions to the play may help create a dialogue between younger and older generations.

"I hope the play will cause the audience to reflect and that somehow the play will resonate with them. Reflection is the best we can hope for."

The stage première of *Hana's Suitcase* takes place at the Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People on March 4 and the show runs until April 23. Tickets are $20 for adults and $15 for kids. For more information, visit www.lktyp.ca.

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Arts & Travel

The Tenth Man combines Kabbalah with 'good old Yiddishkeit'

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Shira Schwartz as the possessed Evelyn, Mark Albert as Arthur and Arnie Zweig as The Cabalist in Teatron's upcoming production of *The Tenth Man*.

Teatron Theatre's production of Paddy Chayefsky's *The Tenth Man*, on stage at Leah Posluns Theatre from March 8 to 12, is a classic with some slight updates, says director Ari Weisberg.

"We didn't touch the story – it's timeless. It's a lovely, warm play about a group of ordinary Jewish people. We can all relate to them. It deals with real people and real dilemmas, but it has a twist of the supernatural," Weisberg said.

"We all know the people in the play. They are the older generation who came to this side of the world from traditional homes, got swept away by modern life in America and now, after retirement, seek security in the familiarity of the tradition they left behind.

"They have plenty of time on their hands and will go to visit each other's cemetery plots just to 'kill a day.' They jokingly contradict each other on practically anything, but their love for each other is the tightest of bonds," said Weisberg, Teatron founder and artistic director.

The play opens in an inner-city synagogue, when the group of friends meet for their regular minyan. One member of the group is an atheist who comes to keep warm, and another is brought in from the street to make up the quorum.

Things change, Weisberg said, when one of the men brings his granddaughter, who he believes is possessed by a dybbuk.

"While the men try to arrange for an exorcism, their own true beliefs, life stories and problems come to the forefront, culminating in a surprising ending," said Weisberg.

"[It's] a warm and timely look at the past and the future, combining an encounter with the mysteries of Kabbalah as well as the solid humour of plain, good old Yiddishkeit."

> 'With 13 actors, it's the biggest cast we've ever had'

When the play originally ran on Broadway in the 1950s, Weisberg said, everything then was in English.

"They used 'prayer shawl' instead of 'tallit,' and 'phylacteries' instead of 'tfillin.' With permission from the publishers, we also added some Hebrew here and there to make it more geared to our audience.

"Chayefsky was reaching a different audience then. Even today, there are Yiddish words used on Broadway. In those days, however, people were not familiar with the terms."

The cast, which has been in rehearsal since Jan. 16, is a large one, Weisberg said. "With 13 actors, it's the biggest cast we've ever had. In this day and age, unless it's a musical, there is typically four or five people in a cast.

"This was a big undertaking. There is an elaborate set, and even though it's not a musical, there is some song and dance."

A lot of people know the play, and "a lot of people know Chayefsky. He was a prolific writer and a concerned Jew."

A preview of *The Tenth Man* will be staged March 8 at 1 p.m., and opening night is March 8 at 8 p.m. There is also a performance March 11 at 8:30 p.m., and performances March 12 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Tickets for the preview are $15; for the mid-week and matinee performance, $26, and for Saturday night, $30. Seniors/students discounts available. For tickets, call 416-855-6651.

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Arts & Travel

Television's Rhoda is Golda in play

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

If you look up Zionist in the dictionary, you should find the names Theodor Herzl, David Ben-Gurion, Golda Meir and Valerie Harper.

Yes, Valerie Harper, the non-Jewish actress who starred as that beloved New York Jew Rhoda Morgenstern on the TV series *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and later on her own series *Rhoda*.

The Los Angeles-based Harper, whose mother hails from Lloydminster, Alta., seems to have made a career of portraying Jewish women, as in her riveting performance as Holocaust survivor Hannah Epstein in the 1985 TV movie *The Execution*.

The 65-year-old Harper's passion for Israel and the Jewish people is evident when she speaks about her latest project, *Golda's Balcony*, written by playwright William Gibson and coming to Toronto's Elgin Theatre from May 23 to 28.

Golda's Balcony was the longest-running one-woman play in Broadway history. It starred Tovah Feldshuh, who took it on tour to Los Angeles, where Harper first saw it.

"I was thrilled that William Gibson wrote it – he wrote what I think is the perfect American work, *The Miracle Worker* and it was about one of my heroes, Golda Meir. I saw the play with Tovah, who is a great actress, in February. Then a call comes at the end of March asking if I would be willing to go out on tour, because Tovah wanted to be with her child during graduation year [from high school].

"We started rehearsing in September, I knew we would have four weeks rehearsal, which would not be enough, so I started becoming familiar with the text right away," Harper says.

The main action of the play centres around the 1973 Yom Kippur War, when Egypt and Syria jointly attacked Israel. Meir was 75 and Israel's prime minister at the time.

As the play unfolds, the character of Golda talks about where she came from – she was born in Kiev, raised in Milwaukee, Wisc., and left for Palestine at 23 – and examines events in her life that were cataclysmic, uplifting, funny and sad.

Golda runs 85 minutes without an intermission, and Harper plays 44 different characters, including Meir from childhood to death's door at 78.

The production has been making audiences both laugh and cry.

"It's a beautiful play, in that it examines that good exists, but there is evil right by it. Your good might create evil for somebody else. In saving your world, how many worlds are you entitled to destroy?" Harper asks.

Harper notes that during the Yom Kipper War, Meir had to contemplate how far to she would have to go to protect Israel, including the possible use of nuclear weapons.

Valerie Harper as Golda Meir. [Aaron Epstein photo]

"The rescue of Jews – that is Zionism at its heart. But suddenly Golda is in the munitions business. She was in a war-like stance to defend yourself from people who want you dead – like Hamas now. They have the destruction of Israel in their charter.

"This play was written awhile back, but it is still pertinent," she adds.

She is emphatic that Israel "is the Jewish homeland. Period. No matter what people say to the contrary."

Her admiration for the tenacity of Israel and the Jewish People is evident.

"You can't play at the table of nations without *terra firma*, and Jews, in effect, have kept a nation together without land. How in the world did they do it? It is a commitment to the culture, remembering, 'Next year in Jerusalem.'"

The play also takes the audience through Meir's U.S. fundraising tour of 1948, when she raised $50 million (US) for the new state – twice the amount that was needed.

Using Golda's words and midwestern accent, Harper recites one of her favourite passages from the play, "We are going to fight. We are not stepping into boxcars ever again. If everyone dies, we will fight with stones. If we have arms to fight with, we will use them. We intend to live, our neighbours intend us to die. There is not much room for compromise... There's no question that can't be settled if you grant us one right – to exist here."

For Harper, one thrilling moment on the current tour came in Cleveland when 50 Holocaust survivors came backstage after the show.

Looking in their faces was overwhelming, she says.

One old man with big blue eyes took her hand and said, "Bless you Ms. Harper and bless Mr. Gibson."

At that, Harper says, she began to cry, and with emotion in her voice, she remembers that she said to the man, "No, bless you."

On a lighter note, she says that "little old Jewish ladies grab my cheek and say, 'Sweetheart tell me the truth. I read you aren't Jewish, but aren't you?'

"And I say, 'In my heart I am, and if you go back far enough, we all are.'"

There are plans to take *Golda's Balcony* to London and Israel after the play ends its North American tour in June.

Once the whole tour is complete, Harper and her husband, actor and producer Tony Cacciotti, will be developing health-related television specials. The couple have a daughter, Cristina, 21, who is also an actress.

For tickets to *Golda's Balcony* at the Elgin Theatre, call Ticketmaster at 416-872-5555 or order online at www.ticketmaster.ca.

Gilbert and Sullivan transplanted to the Wild West

Some of North Toronto Players in a previous production of *HMS Starship Pinafore*.

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

Take the famed Gilbert and Sullivan operetta *The Mikado*, transplant it to the American Wild West, adapt some names, accents and music and what do you get?

An entertaining version of the classic production, says music director John Ricciardelli.

"Taking a classic and putting it in a modern setting is just a way of enhancing it," says Ricciardelli.

"Even if you've seen the traditional version many times, this version will be something you'd never expect. I think if we can make lovers of the original enjoy a new experience and create new fans, then we've done more than our job as performers."

The production, put on by the North Toronto Players, commemorates the community theatre group's 40th anniversary.

The cast is a mix of professionals and amateurs, as well as a permanent group of chorus members.

"I find this group particularly good," says Ricciardelli, who's been the music director of North Toronto Players for more than a decade.

"They're very enthusiastic and dedicated."

Characters from the original *Mikado*, such as Nanki-Poo and Kati-sha, are respectively singing cowboy Lanky Lou and Kitty Shaw in the Players' adaptation.

What's more, the singers have altered their accents to showcase a southern twang and Ricciardelli rewrote some of the orchestral pieces, incorporating Hollywood western sounds and the theme song from the hit TV show *Bonanza*.

"We get really creative with our staging and interpretations," says the show's director Michael Harms.

"But we really do try to do the story moment by moment, so it's not just silly. And it's a much more kinetic production than what people are probably used to seeing from community theatre."

When North Toronto Players started 40 years ago, they were a tiny group working out of a church basement.

Today, they boast 50 dedicated members.

"I treat everybody as though they are professionals," says Harms, who has done professional work for 20 years.

"I'm always pushing them to the best of their abilities."

Harms is enthusiastic about *The Mikado*'s dark humour, which he says makes the production entirely relevant to modern audiences, even though it was first produced in 1885.

"With *The Mikado*, there is so much dark humour," he relates.

"For instance, there's this whole sequence all about the difficulties of cutting one's own head off. That's something you could see on *Mad TV* or *Saturday Night Live*, so it doesn't really take any updating."

There is also Gilbert's timeless cynicism toward true love.

"Gilbert's take on relationships is quite cynical," Harms says.

"He doesn't really believe in love forever, and his heroines and heroes tend to be a bit smarter than that which is usual for an operetta."

Six performances of *The Mikado* will be presented at the Leah Posluns Theatre beginning Feb.24.

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World-class jazz pianist plays the Wolfond Centre

By BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI
Special to The CJN

According to Canadian immigration, Don Glaser is a world-class artist. When the California-born real-estate lawyer moved to Toronto three years ago, proving he was famous was the easiest way to get his family into the country.

"The immigration people loved my CD," says Glaser, a fast-fingered pianist. "I used to play in Paris and play at the top jazz clubs. We got reviews in Paris and a really nice one from Milan and that's what I showed the immigration woman."

A close look at Glaser's resumé will reveal that he is, in fact, a world-class musician. He's played in bands with Nat King Cole's drummer and Miles Davis' bass player, and cut a few 45s with jazz pianist Bobby Troup.

But he steadfastly maintains playing jazz isn't his day job. "How could it be?" he retorts.

"I was an academic student in high school, a top student," the Stanford graduate says matter-of-factly. "I had a chance to sign with Ella Fitzerald's agent. He said, 'I'd sign you now, but you'd have to quit school.' I was in college and opted not to sign."

To anyone else, passing up this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity seems ludicrous, but Glaser doesn't see what the fuss is all about. "I just wanted to have fun with it," he says.

Academics wasn't the only reason Glaser avoided a music career. His father, a part-time, but prolific violinist, discouraged a young Glaser from entering the music business.

"My father would say, 'You can't make a living at music and it's a tough life. Enjoy it, but don't do it as a profession.' I later heard from my friends that my parents were really worried that I was going to pursue music."

For someone who plays music part-time, though, Glaser managed to make a name for himself – he even came close to winning a Grammy. In 1981, the pianist and sometimes drummer teamed up with Jimmy Haskell, an arranger for Bette Midler, Simon and Garfunkel and a host of other big-name musicians, and released his first self-titled record. The disc did well – the single *Strawberry Jam* had moderate success on the radio – but it was his close encounter with music's most-coveted prize that really put Glaser's name on the map.

"We almost made it to the finals of the Grammy's," says Glaser. "We made it to the final 15."

Even though he wasn't nominated for the award, he was offered a plum contract with Concord Records, a new label that would eventually become the preeminent jazz label in North America. Unfortunately, Glaser turned down the offer and signed with Haskell, a decision Glaser still regrets to this day.

"Jimmy Haskell was a great arranger, but he started a record company, and when we completed the record he was interested in putting it out. He didn't have enough money, though, and [his label] went bankrupt. And once a record's out, it's out."

At least Glaser was left with a well-produced and well-received product. The Californian still has fond memories from those days, partly because his wife, Carol – a musician and clinical psychologist – gave birth to their first child soon after the record's release.

Since then, the Glasers have had three more kids – the youngest is 15 – and put out a second record in 1991 with Carol taking vocal duties on a few songs.

This musical union met almost 27 years ago, after Glaser's secretary, who was also Carol's friend, suggested she meet her boss.

"I've got this nice Jewish boss for you who's a lawyer," says Carol, recalling her friend's sales pitch. "I don't like lawyers, I said. They're too pedantic, and heck I'm going to be a doctor, so I don't need a lawyer."

When her friend mentioned this lawyer played jazz, Carol was sold. "I thought to myself, he's Jewish, he's a lawyer and he's playing jazz. Ha. So I went to hear him play the following week."

But Don and Carol's first meeting was almost foiled by a case of mistaken identity.

"I thought Carol was a reporter, writing a review of the show," says Glaser. "But it turned out she was just writing her dissertation."

The couple eventually married and lived in San Diego for 13 years, where Don argued cases in front of the state's supreme court, and opened a synagogue. Ten years ago, the Glasers moved to Teaneck, N.J., and in 2002, moved again, to Toronto.

"Toronto's a lot like San Diego, but without the weather," says Glaser, who occasionally plays around the city.

"People are kinder, sweeter, they say 'thank you' and 'please' and they're helpful and kind," says Carol.

And, Glaser adds, a city that appreciates a part-time world-class musician can't be bad.

Catch Don Glaser on Feb. 25, at the University of Toronto's Wolfond Centre at 8 p.m. The evening of music and food supports Or Chaim and Ulpanat Orot high schools. $45, $84/couple. To reserve, call 416-630-6772, ext. 34.

Don Glaser never gave up his day job, despite being a top jazz player.

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

PARADISE NOW – **BOX OFFICE BOMB?**

There's "nothing unusual about cinema portraying the psychodrama of real-life events torn from headlines," *Toronto Star* writer **Rosie DiManno** observed in a January review, noting that many films (such as *In Cold Blood*, *Monster* and *Silence of the Lambs*) traffic "in murder vérité and the particular pathology of killers without conscience."

DiManno was in the process of trashing *Karla*, Hollywood's obnoxious telling of the Bernardo-Homolka sex killings, but her comments might equally apply to another recent controversial film, the Palestinian-made *Paradise Now*, which glorifies wannabe and actual mass murderers who act from political motivations.

Paradise Now focuses on two Palestinian friends from Nablus who volunteer to bomb Israeli civilians in Tel Aviv, and chronicles the progress of these pilgrims on the twisted path to martyrdom. Premised on the notion that "suicide bomber" is a viable career choice, the film humanizes suicide bombers.

It's noteworthy that Britain banned *Paradise Now* from being shown at a festival last July shortly after the terror attacks on London's transit system. However, the film's reputation has been buoyed by a Golden Globe award and an Oscar nomination as best foreign film.

Given Hollywood's strong leftist sympathies, the film may yet come away with a coveted golden statue in a day and age when Hamas is victorious in the voting booth and western democracies bend over backward to appease bloodthirsty Arab mobs enraged at seeming trifles.

The troubling film posits "that suicide murder is legitimate when you feel you have exhausted all other means," writes **Yossi Zur** in an Internet letter. An Israeli, Zur is not a film critic; rather, his authority springs from his tragic loss of his teenaged son to a suicide bomber. He calls *Paradise Now* "extremely dangerous" because it also justifies the case of an Islamist murderer killing 100,000 people with a suitcase nuke or biological bomb. "Where does one draw the line?" he asks, pondering whether Americans would also embrace a film that humanizes the perpetrators of 9/11.

"Granting an award to this kind of movie gives the filmmakers a seal of approval to hide behind."

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is reportedly considering revising its description of the film to reflect that it came not from "Palestine" but from the territory of the Palestinian Authority. That correction is certainly welcome, but let's hope academy members refrain from bestowing an Oscar on this objectionable film.

* * *

Benefit Concert: Music for Max and Mia is a benefit concert to aid the family of **Dave Palmer**, a local musician who survived colon cancer but died from a misdiagnosed twisted bowel, leaving wife **Darcy**, three-year-old son **Max** and infant daughter **Mia**. Performers include **Kevin Breit**, **Sisters Euclid**, **Ian de Souza**, **Gary Taylor**, **Rob Gusevs**, **Laurie Schedler**, **Jennifer Christophersen**, **Katharine Rose**, **MacDougall** and **Terry Martel**.

Berkley Church, Queen Street East at Parliament. $30 per person, $50 per couple. Thursday, Feb. 23. Silent auction 6:30 p.m., music 7:30 until 11:30. Tickets available at the door or contact Terri at 416-653-4911 or terri@sympatico.ca.

* * *

Kafka Returns: Theatre Little-Threshold Theatre and the Nadal JCC present *Kafka and Son*, a solo show by **Alon Nashman**, adapted from **Franz Kafka**'s *Letter to his Father*. Nashman portrays both Kafkas, father and son, in this "blistering, often hilarious dissection of domestic authority." The legendary Jewish writer is depicted at age 35, still living at home, a petty bureaucrat, timid son and failed artist, under the thumb of a boorish and overbearing father. Nadal JCC, Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. at Bloor. March 7 to 18. 416-504-7529.

Alon Nashman

* * *

Names in the News: Torontonian **Sol Friedman,** a graduate of the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, was one of two runners-up in the adult division of the Vortex Art Competition sponsored by the Blue Man Group. *Qbert*, his mixed-media piece on canvas, won for traditional neo-classical portraiture and is on display in the Panasonic Theatre for a year. Friedman, who recently returned from Thailand, received a $1,000 prize at a private ceremony at the Drake Hotel.

* * *

Family Mysteries Wanted: Primitive Entertainment, a Toronto-based television production company, seeks intriguing genealogical stories for *Ancestors in the Attic*, a new series to be broadcast on History Television. "Do you have a family mystery you've always wanted to solve, a family legend you'd like to confirm or a brick wall that you need some help to get through?" If so, phone 416-964-9223, ext. 223, or e-mail ancestors.search@allianceatlantis.com.

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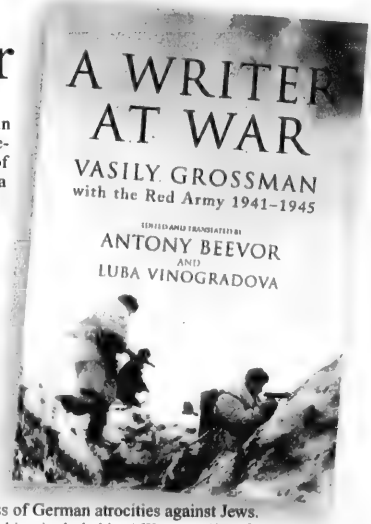
A Writer's Long and Dangerous War



***A Writer at War: Vasily Grossman with the Red Army 1941-1945*, edited and translated by Antony Beevor and Luba Vinogradova, Knopf Canada.**

By NORMAN RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

Until recently, Isaac Babel has held the singular fame of being a Jew riding with the Red Army, at times incognito, while creating great literature. In his *1920 Diary*, Babel straddles the unlikely irony of depicting his Cossack comrades while watching them destroy Jewish villages along the Polish-Russian border. Out of these experiences came the remarkable young man's collection of stories, *Red Cavalry*, which appeared to great acclaim in Russia in 1926.

There is a tradition of young writers – usually men – establishing themselves as war correspondents, or simply as veterans of the front, while gestating the material they will later use in fiction. Ernest Hemingway's World War I experiences influenced later fictional portrayals of a "lost generation," just as Norman Mailer rose to fame with a young man's novel of war, *The Naked and the Dead*.

The eastern front during World War II was the scene of instruction for Vasily Grossman, who travelled as a war correspondent with the Red Army, covering such tumultuous events as the battle of Stalingrad, the liberation of Treblinka in the summer of 1944, and the Russian occupation of Berlin in the spring of 1945.

Grossman published his first novel, *Gliukauf!* (*Good Luck!*) in 1934, but his best known work, including his masterpiece *Life and Fate*, drew on his experiences as a correspondent, beginning in 1941, for the Red Army newspaper *Krasnaya Zvezda* (*Red Star*).

Like Babel, Grossman faced the paradoxical challenge of writing honestly, within the censor's limits, about Soviet military and political goals. At the same time, his Jewish background ensured that with his success and heroism as a war writer, came the danger of incurring Stalin's mistrust.

Grossman was born in 1905 in Berdichev in the Ukraine. As a young man, he spent time in Moscow, followed by a stint as a mine engineer in eastern Ukraine. The middle to late 1930s were a time of danger for writers in the Soviet Union, and in 1937, Grossman joined the politically sanctioned Writers' Union. Still, he never became a party member.

In the introduction to *A Writer at War: Vasily Grossman with the Red Army 1941-1945*, the editors offer a telling description of the ways that luck and good timing saved Grossman from becoming a victim of Stalin's unrelenting purges of Jewish literary figures.

A Writer at War is an impressive compendium of Grossman's correspondent's reports, writing found in his notebooks, along with subtle and detailed editorial introductions, which contextualize his writing. The thoroughness of the presentation and the editors' access to Grossman's papers reflect the turn in east-west relations. The editors gained full access to Grossman's files in the Russian State Archive for Social-Political History, as well as those in the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defence. In addition, Grossman's surviving daughter acted as a resource in the book's creation.

Like Babel's *1920 Diary*, Grossman's wartime writing is a startling mix of graphic violence and widespread destruction alongside lyrical vignettes, which convey the individual experience in the face of war.

Some of what Grossman noted – with regard to the pomposity of Red Army generals, the completeness of early defeats, and even the portrayal of dead Russians in the aftermath of battle – would never be published in *Krasnaya Zvezda*. One of the enduring relationships traced in *A Writer at War* is that of Grossman and his editor, Gen. David Ortenberg.

Ortenberg had the power to send Grossman into the heart of battle or to withdraw him on a whim, and he was far less naive in his appreciation of what a Jewish reporter, however famous, should be allowed to write about the nation's early defeats and the growing awareness of German atrocities against Jews.

Everything included in *A Writer at War*, from Grossman's first accounts of his departure for the front to his depictions of Berlin in flames, makes for powerful reading. As he travels toward the front in August 1941, he writes: "We spend a night at the railway station. Every corner is filled with Red Army soldiers. Many of them are badly dressed, in rags. They have already been 'there.' Abkhazians look the worst. Many of them are barefoot."

Grossman maintains the same eye for detail and sympathy through to the end of his travels into Germany. Among his reports in early May 1945, is the following: "The day of Berlin's capitulation. It's difficult to describe it. A monstrous concentration of impressions. Fire and fires, smoke, smoke, smoke. Enormous crowds of [German] prisoners. Their faces are full of drama. In many faces there's sadness, not only personal suffering, but also the suffering of a citizen. This overcast, cold and rainy day is undoubtedly the day of Germany's ruin. In smoke, among the ruins, in flames, amid hundreds of corpses in the streets."

Among the most startling sections in *A Writer at War* is the piece titled *Treblinka July 1944*. Grossman interviewed survivors of the camp immediately after its liberation by the Red Army, and he conveys in spare, cinematic prose the grotesquely elaborate process of mass murder enacted there: "In order to achieve the final deception for people arriving from Europe, the railroad dead-end siding was made to look like a passenger station. On the platform at which another 20 carriages would be unloaded stood a station building with a ticket office, baggage room and a restaurant hall. There were arrows everywhere, indicating 'To Bialystok,' 'To Baranovichi,' 'To Volokovysk.'"

Equally startling is Grossman's report of the German annihilation of the Ukrainian Jews, both in the countryside and in major centres like Kiev. His coverage in the aftermath of the destruction of Jewish Berdichev is heightened by his own feelings of guilt, connected with the belief that he had not done enough to help his mother escape disaster.

In the postwar years Grossman's career was undermined by his efforts, as part of the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee, to complete and publish a volume called *The Black Book*, which would detail German atrocities against Jews. This effort ran counter to the Stalinist position on suffering – "Do not divide the dead" – as well as to an official effort to downplay Ukrainian collaboration with the Nazis.

Life and Fate, Grossman's great novel of the siege of Stalingrad, was suppressed until his death in 1964. A copy of the manuscript was spirited out of Russia on microfilm by Andrei Sakharov. It appeared in print in Russia only after the collapse of communism.

Norman Ravvin is chair of Concordia University's Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies. His books include the novel, Lola by Night, *and the story collection,* Sex, Skyscrapers and Standard Yiddish.

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New book lowers the volume on parenting

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Just the cover of her new book is a useful parenting tool, jokes Sarah Chana Radcliffe. "Just look at the title," she told close to 150 listeners at a recent book launch at the Village Shul sponsored by the Jewish Family Institute.

In bold letters, the title *Raise Your Kids Without Raising Your Voice* (HarperCollins), indeed sends a clear message. And with 260 practical pages between its covers, there's lots of help inside for those looking to change their family's lives.

Sarah Chana Radcliffe

Though Toronto psychologist Radcliffe isn't a new author – her five books on Jewish family life, from Targum Press, have been translated into four languages – this is her first from mainstream publisher HarperCollins.

A mother of six, Radcliffe brings more than just academic experience to this very personal book. "I studied parenting before I became a parent," she says, "but the 'feelings' side came from my own experience." *Raise Your Kids* focuses not just on parenting strategies but on parents' emotions, and what Radcliffe calls "the real parenting journey as we live it."

"Most parenting books tell you what you do," Radcliffe says. "You could read a thousand and still be yelling at your kids." She explains, "That's because of our own human pain in parenting. If we can get a handle on that, we can do a lot better with this job."

Unlike many parenting books, while Radcliffe honours children's feelings, she emphasizes respect for parents. "In the past 30 years, [experts have] taught parents how to give a lot of sensitivity to their children." What we've ended up with, she says, are "sensitive parents and abusive children."

So is it really possible to raise children without raising your voice?

Fern Reich, whose children are now in their late teens, told listeners at the launch event that it is. Ten years ago, a self-identified parenting book "junkie," Reich couldn't implement much of what she'd learned until she found Radcliffe's classes. At her first, "I got it – by the third class, I knew I'd hit gold," she says.

Through concrete examples, *Raise Your Kids* presents tools aimed not merely at lowering the volume, but at building respectful relationships. Indeed, many of Radcliffe's strategies can be used not just with children, but between spouses and even in the workplace.

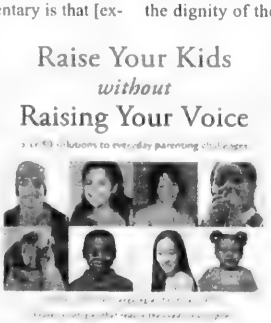
The CLeaR method, for example, is a three-step system using Comments, Labels and Rewards to set kids up for success. Instead of shouting or nagging, parents must look for opportunities to identify and praise positive behaviour.

Reich provided an example: Johnny, whose room is very messy, actually makes his bed. The parent first comments: "Johnny, you made your bed!" Then, the parent labels the effort: "You're very tidy." Finally, a small reward is given: "Why don't we read an extra story tonight?"

Radcliffe clarifies the difference between rewards and bribes – effective rewards can help build relationships, while bribes simply give children excessive control. A child who receives a reward will feel proud of his accomplishments. A bribed child may simply feel abandoned; "I'm only three and calling all the shots... Is anybody home?"

Many of Radcliffe's principles are derived from Judaism, like a "Torah prohibition against hurting people's feelings with words... the Torah goes out of its way to avoid negative words." Similarly, "never tell a child he's obnoxious, lazy, selfish, mean."

"The [rabbinic] commentary is that [expressing] anger causes us to lose our minds/souls temporarily. If our kid has ticked us off and we open our mouth and say destructive things, we lose it – our essential human nature." While her grounding in Torah is essential, she emphasizes that the book is also rooted in psychological principles.



SARAH CHANA RADCLIFFE

Simply for parenting tools such as the CLeaR method and the 2X rule – only ask kids twice; most parents, Reich says, use something like a "10X rule," getting louder and louder each time – the book is a valuable guide. But Radcliffe adds many insights from clients, students and her own children who, she jokes in the book's acknowledgments "provided all the examples of misbehaviour."

Although many parenting books address a specific period – infants, toddlers, teens – Radcliffe says "these few simple things will get you through 20 years and beyond," while "maintaining the dignity of the parent, the dignity of the child, the warmth of the relationship, the priority of the relationship."

Not all parents will agree with all her advice she recommends several alternative therapies, like aromatherapy, acupressure and other naturopathic interventions for emotional healing. Yet few could argue with her 30 years' experience. And throughout the book, she's quick to point out that while certain situations can be "self-helped," for others, parents should seek professional assistance.

With just a few basic ideas, Radcliffe says, we can make our home an oasis in a stressful world. "We underestimate the damage that parental anger can do," says Radcliffe. "We minimize it – we think 'everybody yells.' We need to put yelling where we've put hitting, as a culture."

To participate in a class with Sarah Chana Radcliffe, contact the Jewish Family Institute at 416-785-1107, ext. 204.

Time to declutter

After our twins were born and our lives became even more hectic with four children and very busy careers, we never had a chance to address the ever-decreasing space in our home. The diminishing elbowroom seemed to be causing more chaos and havoc among the children as they continued to grow and occupy more physical space. The more I tried to clear out some of the older toys and clothes, the more new things seemed to take over whatever space was created.

By nature, I seek some degree of orderliness, and my husband and I like to have a pleasant, presentable home environment. We love our home, but we were starting to feel like the time had come to move.

We spent 18 months canvassing houses on the market, feeling hopeful that something would become available that would meet our very specific mix of house requirements. It had to be large enough so that each child could have his/her own room, be walking distance to our synagogue, be close to our children's friends, have a spacious living and dining room (because we like to celebrate the Sabbath with lots of guests), and be within our price range.

We had no success, and finally decided to take a breather, because house hunting is quite exhausting, from both a physical and an emotional point of view. Yet, the clutter seemed to be forever building, with no solution in sight.

Finally, in December, instead of going on the trip that we had planned, my husband and I decided to take stock of our belongings and try to clear out the mess (which we would have to do anyway, to sell the house). As we sorted through the piles of old paperwork, books and toys, we realized that much of what we were storing in our already limited space, were items that we never, ever used!

With each passing day of clearing out the junk, we saw our house in a new light. It already has a large living and dining room, we are nearly next door to the synagogue, and all our kids' friends live close by and love to drop in! If we were to move our teenage daughter into her own room in the basement – which already had a large, beautiful bathroom – then she would have her own, much needed, personal space, allowing each of the boys to have his own room. Then there would be less chaos overall.

Each day of cleaning and organizing brought a new possibility for loving our existing home, so much so, that we decided to stay right where we are – and now that we weren't moving, we had more money to spend on upgrading what we have!

Although the effort to declutter and reorganize has been a lot of work, our daughter now has a brand new, beautiful room in the basement, with her own bathroom – a real haven for her and her friends. Each of our boys has his own room with everything he needs, and our family room has been reorganized so that it has more of a comfortable, leisure-based focus. We added more cupboard space in the eat-in area of our kitchen, so that pots and pans are no longer falling on my head and the drawers are no longer stuffed to the maximum!

Our house looks great, we are proud of the welcoming, organized environment that we have created, and our children have started to take ownership of their rooms, becoming much more conscious of keeping them neat.

To top it all off, we all feel less encumbered, more personally organized, and we love to come home. For me, and probably for most of us, it is important to love our immediate environment – and a decluttered personal space, leads to a decluttered mind.

Shelley Millman Herman is a life coach. She can be reached at shelley@globalrecruit.com.

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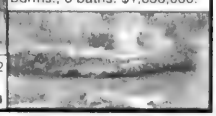

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Help us fill in the dots, at CJN Box #5082.

WISE program gets women back to work

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

When Jessie Wallace first signed up for Jewish Vocational Service Toronto's Women in Successful Employment (WISE) program, she knew she was on to something good.

"I signed up in August but had to keep cancelling because life got in the way. My coach never gave up on me, though. She kept encouraging me to come, and said that when I'm ready, they'd be there for me. Finally in December I made it," says the 49-year-old mother of two adopted children in their 30s and a 14-year-old son.

WISE is a downtown program that helps unemployed or underemployed women over age 25 find work. It offers one-on-one counselling, and teaches the skills necessary to find sustainable employment through a number of workshops that include career exploration, resumé building, cover letters, cold-calling, effective interviews and networking.

Nancy Reiner, WISE manager, says that since the office – located near Yonge and King streets – first opened almost a year ago, they have served about 325 women.

"We have four full-time employment counsellors, so we have a lot of time to spend with our clients. The idea is to create a safe environment for women so their barriers can come down.

"They gain a lot from meeting women who are in a similar situation. When they feel comfortable, they tend to share with each other."

A number of their clients are older than 40, she says, and often feel they can't get jobs because of their age. "A lot has to do with their confidence. Age can be a barrier, but it's not impossible to find employment. Many women sabotage themselves [with their attitude].

"Our job developer, who sets up job shadowing and information interviews, is in her 60s, so the women see that gainful employment is a [definite possibility]."

They see a wide range of women, from those who have not finished high school to those with graduate degrees, says Reiner. "We also see newcomers to Toronto, a number who have been laid off, and many housewives who were home raising kids for a long time and want to go back to work."

Offers counselling, teaches skills to find employment

Wallace, who ran a home-based design and construction company for 10 years, says she first thought about changing careers when she realized she was no longer getting personal satisfaction from her job. "It was a lack of joy that drove me to my decision."

She took a transition workshop first, she says, because it dealt with where to start when looking for a job. "I realized I was full of fear because I had worked at home for so long. Even putting together a resumé was frightening.

"That workshop helped me re-evaluate my skills, and helped me realize I really do have a lot to offer."

An important tip, she says, was to set up an information session with a prospective employer. "I never thought about asking a company what they can do for me. I only thought about what I can do for them. My needs have to be met as well."

What she really loves about the WISE program, she says, is the bond she created with the other women.

"As women, we all appreciate how hard we work, and what a burden we carry. It's not easy to find our own satisfaction and joy; our husbands and children always come first.

"I shared a workshop with a dentist who needed to change careers. It was empowering to see that her struggle is my struggle, and our struggle is someone else's struggle.

"Once we were in a workshop all our differences dissipated."

Networking is also a big part of the program, says Wallace. "I met one woman who wanted to learn English by working in a coffee shop and another women connected her with an employer. It's amazing to see how much you can accomplish if you talk to people."

When she was home and unemployed, she felt alone and full of shame, she says. "Coming here I felt nurtured and empowered. It's also a good way to start a routine. I get up in the morning, get my son off to school, and come on in. It is a stepping-stone to going back to work."

For information on the WISE program, call 416-682-9095.

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Champion boxer a product of Chicago's mean streets

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When Beryl Rasofsky was growing up in the mean streets of Chicago, he was so small and malnourished, he was given the nickname "Runt."

Small he may have been, but living in the "bloody twentieth," a Chicago ward also known to police and crime reporters as "bloody Maxwell," he had to be tough.

So instead of following the wishes of his father, Reb Itchik, to become a Hebrew teacher and talmudic scholar, Rasofsky fell in with a different crowd. A fighter not a scholar, he became part of a world personified by the neighbourhood hero Samuel "Nails" Morton. Morton owned a garage but was widely known for his involvement in the rackets. Nails became something of a folk hero to the twentieth's Jewish community, patrolling the neighbourhood at night and beating the you-know-what out of anybody who meant harm to his fellow Jews.

Rasofsky would take up a life of gambling, street fighting and petty crime and go on to achieve international fame as a world champion prizefighter, and later as a war hero, under his anglicized name, Barney Ross.

Ross' incredible story is the subject of a fascinating biography authored by Canadian-born Douglas Century and published by Schocken Books. Full of pathos, humour and stories of a lifestyle that seem consigned to a bygone era, *Barney Ross* takes the reader on a fascinating voyage back to the turn of the 20th century when Jews fought hard to make a way for themselves.

Barney Ross

Known as the "pride of the ghetto," Ross was one of several denizens of the Jewish enclave, centred on Maxwell Street, who went on to achieve fame: bandleader Benny Goodman, navy admiral Hyman Rickover, Supreme Court Justice Arthur Goldberg, actor Paul Muni, Paramount Pictures mogul Barney Balaban and William Paley, president and chair of CBS.

There was also no shortage of Jewish mobsters in Ross' neighbourhood, among them Jacob "Greasy Thumb" Guzik, the brains behind the Capone organization, and of course, Nails Morton. One small-timer who went on to some notoriety was Jacob "Sparky" Rubenstein, a volatile and hot-headed pal of Ross who became famous beyond his hoodlum/strip-club world when, as Jack Ruby, he shot Lee Harvey Oswald, John Kennedy's assassin, in November 1963.

Barney Ross is a veritable gold mine of fascinating tidbits, anecdotes and stories describing the book's protagonist and the milieu in which he lived.

Ross' father eked out a living by running a hole-in-the-wall grocery store. He was killed at age 60 when he was shot in the chest by robbers. Following his father's death, Ross' emotionally distraught mother was sent to live with a relative in Connecticut and his three youngest siblings were dispatched to the local Jewish orphanage. Ross vowed he'd raise the money to get them out of there.

A lost soul following his father's death, he descended into the Chicago underworld and was rumoured to have worked for Al Capone as a message boy.

When Ross first entered the ring, he was following in the footsteps of numerous fellow Jews. The people of the book were so prominent in boxing, Century notes, they may have accounted for one-third the total number of fighters. Ross was only 15 when, inspired no doubt by Jackie Fields, a successful boxer from his neighbourhood, he began serious training.

At first he hid his involvement in the sport from his mother, who had returned to Chicago and who would have disapproved, but by 1929 he had gained some fame and was a featherweight Golden Gloves winner.

In the early '30s, he was one of three members of boxing's "holy trinity," three fighters who would each one day be inducted into the Boxing Hall of Fame. Ross' lightweight championship bouts against "Tough Tony" Canzaneri are, according to Century, still considered classics – the second in September 1933 is described as a "glowing gladiatorial spectacle."

Ross eventually held three world titles, and thanks to his first win, he was able to set up his mother in a comfortable home and bring his brothers and sister out of the orphanage.

In the mid-'30s, Ross was on top of the boxing world, rubbing shoulders with celebrities, being invited to the best restaurants, enjoying the good life.

But already, the signs were there that the good times wouldn't last. His love of gambling was becoming a big problem and Century notes that after a win over Ceferino Garcia, he blew the entire $18,000 purse in a few hours, "betting wrong on eight [horse] races out of eight."

Ross' career came to an end in a championship match against Henry Armstrong in which he was brutally manhandled. He ended his career in 1938 with a record of 74 wins, four losses and three ties.

Ross came down hard after the highs of his fight career. His younger brother recalls how Barney spent all his money and was down and out when World War II started. Ross enlisted in the Marines and, at 33, was known to other marines as "grandpa."

In 1942, Ross took part in the battle for Guadalcanal, a Pacific island held by the Japanese. Century's description of Ross' life and death struggle is intense, noting that Ross, wounded and pinned down, recited the *Shema* many times while fending off furious Japanese attacks.

After receiving the Silver Star for bravery, Ross was shipped back to San Diego. By then he was taking morphine in excess – at first it was administered to relieve the pain of his shrapnel wounds. Back in the United States, he beat his narcotic addiction and later would encourage others to do so as well. He also pioneered a practice later adopted by many celebrities of using his fame to advance a political cause. In his case, it was to bring attention to the murder of Europe's Jews.

Toward the end of the war, he aligned himself with the "Bergson Group," a small band of Zionists allied with Revisionist leader Vladimir Jabotinsky and in 1948 Ross is reported to have called on his underworld connections to run guns for the Irgun militia.

A hard man who could pummel an opponent and who could hold off a Japanese attack single-handed, Ross was beloved by his contemporaries. When he was down and out and diagnosed with terminal cancer in 1966, the fight community and numerous celebrities came to his aid with contributions to help his family.

He died on Jan. 10, 1967, at the age of 57.

They don't make fighters like Ross anymore – hard men who gained public respect for their community and who were heroes for their fellow Jews. Century's moving account of Ross' life shouldn't be missed.

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News or entertainment?

Sandie Benitah
20Something

When Brangelina (Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie) announced they were having a baby, I called at least five of my girlfriends to debate the issue.

When Jessica Simpson and Nick Lachey decided to call it quits, I had a knot in my stomach all day.

I don't subscribe to *US* magazine and I don't own a Team Aniston T-shirt, not because I don't want to, but because then my deep, dark secret would be out: I am a full-fledged celebrity junkie.

I know I'm not the only one out there enjoying this guilty pleasure. On a recent flight to San Francisco, I sat beside a girl who was reading the latest speculation on Britney Spears' weight. It took all I had not to tell her that a more reliable source was saying the pop star was pregnant again. In front of me was a woman about 40, reading another tabloid and discussing with her friend how much Denise Richard's daughter looked like Charlie Sheen.

I looked at my boyfriend, thinking what I could say to engage him in a conversation about Hollywood. "Think TomKat's faking it?" I asked. He stared at me blankly before returning to his *National Geographic* magazine.

Celebrity culture is fascinating to me, not because I have illusions of making it in Hollywood, but because in a way, it tells us about ourselves.

Tabloids are filled with *lashon harah*. What could be worse than reading about the success and mishaps of people? Maybe that's why they call tabloids a "guilty pleasure."

On the other hand, don't newspapers do the same thing? Entertainment is just another form of storytelling, and people who read the *Globe and Mail* instead of *People* magazine are guilty of the same pleasure. For example, I know some people who never even really knew who Wayne Gretzky was before the media started referring to him as Betzky. All of a sudden, the illegal gambling ring he allegedly knew of is shaping up to be the story of the year. Throw in the possibility of his wife betraying him and now you've got a soap opera that even my boyfriend can't stop talking about.

The news we read today reads like a tabloid. But don't blame the reporters because it's their job to be storytellers.

Even days after 9/11 hit, people were still glued to their TVs, not because they were interested in new information, but because they couldn't tear themselves away from the horrifying images. As tragic as it was, the images played out like a movie and so tragedy became our entertainment. Treating current events like entertainment is dangerous, as now the media feeds into our constant need to be amused.

If you look at the arts and entertainment section of any major newspaper today, you won't only find news on the new opera centre. I guarantee you'll find the juiciest Hollywood tidbits of the day. The line of distinction between news and entertainment has been blurred.

More news stories today are being made into scandals and sensationalized until we can't tear ourselves away from them. Remember the Beltway Sniper in the States? I was actually disappointed with the way it ended. I caught myself thinking how I would write the ending differently before reminding myself it wasn't a TV movie but a real life saga.

The Liberal sponsorship scandal reminds me of an episode of *The Sopranos*. And the fuss being made over David Emerson crossing the parliamentary floor to a Conservative portfolio a day after he was elected as a Liberal reminds me of how Nicole Richie must have felt when her best friend Paris Hilton crossed the dance-club floor to link arms with Rod Stewart's daughter Kimberly and announce she wanted Kim to be her new sidekick on *The Simple Life*.

There are some people who can tell the difference between news and entertainment. When the *Toronto Star* ran a huge picture of Britney and her husband K-Fed on its front page early last year, the paper received scores of angry letters, condemning it for lack of news judgment.

But that was the only copy of the *Star* I bought that month. A couple of my girlfriends, who never interest themselves with newspapers, bought copies too.

Being a celebrity junkie is pathetic, I know. I guess I'm just a sucker for a good story.

Queen Esther's Chicken for Purim

2 whole roasting chickens
1 tblsp. oil
1 large onion, peeled, thinly sliced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 cup pitted, finely chopped prunes
1 apple, cored and chopped
1 cup finely chopped dried apricots
1/2 cup raisins
1/4 tsp. fresh ground pepper
1 tsp cinnamon
1/4 tsp saffron, dissolved in 2 tblsp. hot water
1 tsp. sugar
1/2 cup orange juice

Rinse chicken with cold water, pat dry. Heat oil in a non-stick skillet; brown onion and garlic. Add prunes, apple, apricots, raisins, pepper, cinnamon, saffron water and sugar. Mix well. Preheat oven to 350° F. Stuff chickens with fruit mixture; truss cavities shut. Place stuffed chickens in greased oven roasting pan; pour orange juice over chickens. Cover, bake for 1-1/2 hrs., basting with pan juices. To serve, spoon juices over the chicken.

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About Life

Dear Ella,

I hate exchanging gifts with my mother-in-law. This woman can tell you what I gave her for any occasion for the past 20 years!

She has an amazing bookkeeping system. She knows who gave what and what they spent (approximately), and she reciprocates with a gift that is the same value as what was given to her. My husband says she's always been that way. How are you supposed to give a gift from your heart if she uses this cold, calculating system for every present she receives?

She does the same with phone calls. Last year, she was in the hospital for a week, and she can tell you exactly who called and visited, and how many times. She also knows who sent flowers, a card or a basket.

She is a lovely woman, but this aspect of her makes me crazy! Should I just come out and tell her how rude and ridiculous she is being?

Gift Tracker

Dear Gift Tracker

The system your mother-in-law follows is not that unique. Many people do this all the time. Some people even do it without consciously realizing they're doing it.

You are not going to change how your mother-in-law handles the receiving and giving of gifts or phone calls. She has been doing this for many years and isn't going to change her ways now.

This doesn't make her a bad person, only a hard person to buy gifts for, as she is always calculating worth instead of appreciating thought and effort.

But don't let her ways change you. Continue giving in the way you are accustomed to. Gift-giving is something that makes people feel really good, especially if they are giving from the heart. Giving out of obligation does not have the same rewards. I'm not sure that making waves about this will accomplish anything, though it may encourage her to be more discreet.

I'm glad to hear that aside from this unfortunate trait of hers, you feel she is a wonderful woman. Look past this character flaw and try not to let her bring you down.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *email: eb@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional*

Do we have a sense of humour?

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Perhaps I know best why it is man alone who laughs; he alone suffers so deeply that he had to invent laughter. – Friedrich Nietzsche

I am thankful for laughter, except when milk comes out of my nose. – Woody Allen

When I think about the Toronto Jewish community in the context of humour, laughter, joking and wit, I associate it more with Nietzche's quote than with Woody Allen's.

I say this because for months I have tried to write a column on this town's funnybone – the harebrained and slapstick side of Jewish Toronto. I searched high and low for the belly laughs, but I just couldn't find them. My failed investigation seemed to be saying that we are a suffering and maudlin group

There must be something I missed, however – a place, maybe in the aisles of our kosher meat markets or at our shul kiddushes, where a gut-aching silliness would make me keel over and force me to scarf down an entire roll of flavoured Tums.

Maybe if I look closely enough, I might uncover something quirky that will elicit uncontrollable hilarity.

Perhaps it can be found in the front offices of our local synagogues. Now, calling a shul office can be maddening, but at the same time, a hoot. As an example, you know when you call your temple that: a) 99 times out of 100, the rabbi will be out, even if he's in; b) the secretary will be *broiges* (that's Yiddish for "upset") about something that happened 10 years ago; and c) you'll be put on hold for what seems like forever and forced to listen to a tape of *Kol Nidre* by Yossele Rosenblatt.

Going into a Jewish bakery used to be quite an event, one I look back on and chuckle unabashedly about. One bakery I patronized was staffed by elderly women who would, upon my arrival, ask me in piercingly loud voices why I wasn't religious, why I was single and how come I didn't get a haircut and "look decent like the other boys." I was never sure who the "other" boys were. I just wanted to buy a sliced rye. After spending thousands of dollars on therapy, I took my business elsewhere, to a place where buying kaiser buns and rum balls was simple and not accompanied by an intense interrogation that left me feeling responsible for all the ills of the Jewish world.

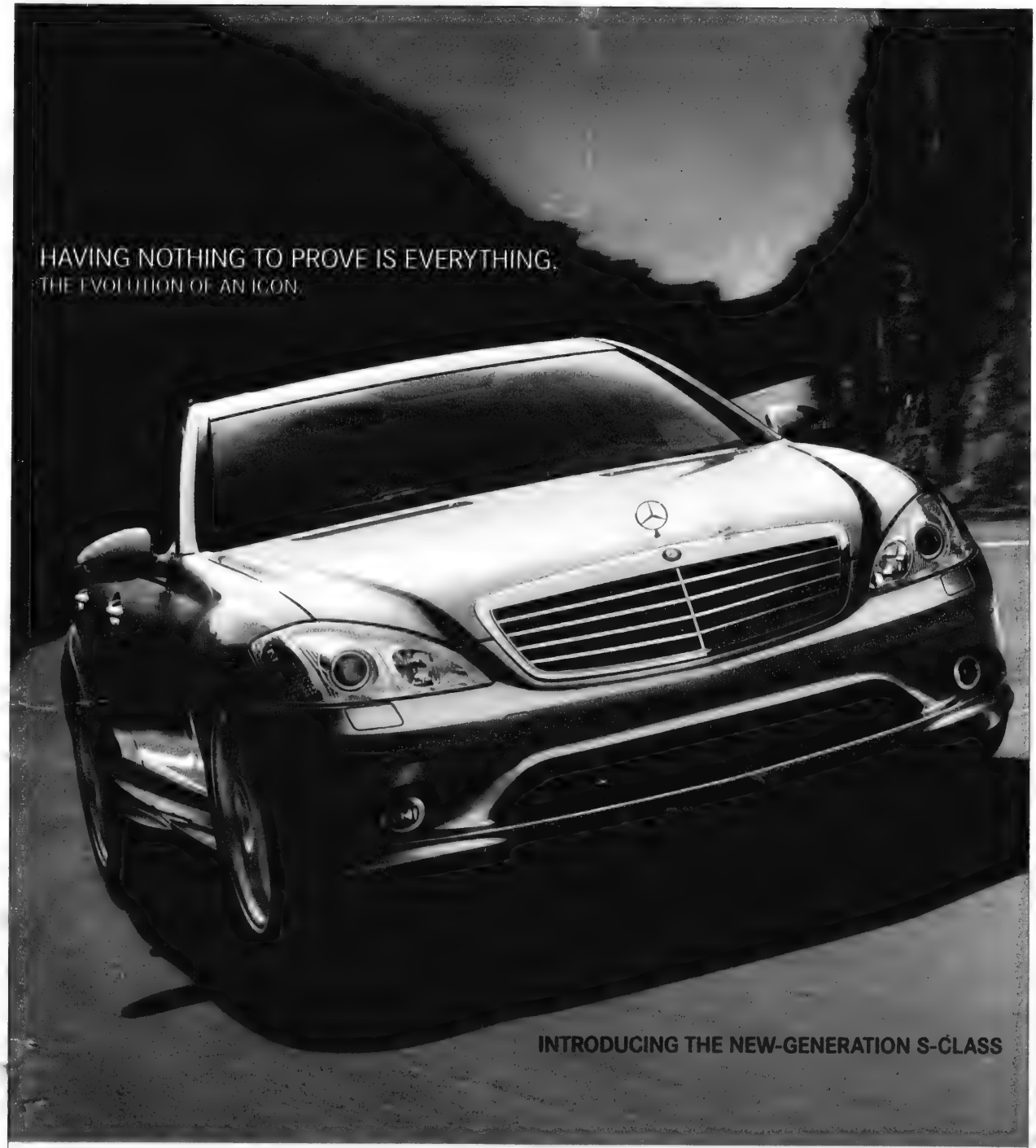
And then there are the comedians in our community who bring laughter to the lives of even the most stern, staid and sober among us. My good friend Alan Robbins – known to some as Adar – is one such person. Alan is an extremely good-hearted, learned and caring Jew whose mission in life is to call it as he sees it. He is one of the community *b'adranim* (comics).

He's a bit like a frum Lenny Bruce. He's able to detect the hilarious underpinnings of most situations, and he makes sure that everyone in a room knows who is right wing or left wing, and he makes us all aware of the strange things that happen to our bodies as we age, including excessive hair growth in strange places. He is belligerent in an endearing way, and I have seen him cause milk to come out of people's noses as he makes them cackle like hyenas.

So here's the deal, schlemiel. E-mail me something about the Toronto Jewish community that made your head fall off and roll down Clark Avenue. I'll try to include it in a followup column on my quest to uncover the merriment of the Toronto Jewish community.

The funniest example will get to ride in a Chabad van and sing *Heveinu Shalom Alechem* on their loudspeaker.

Avrum@veahavta.org, Sudan?



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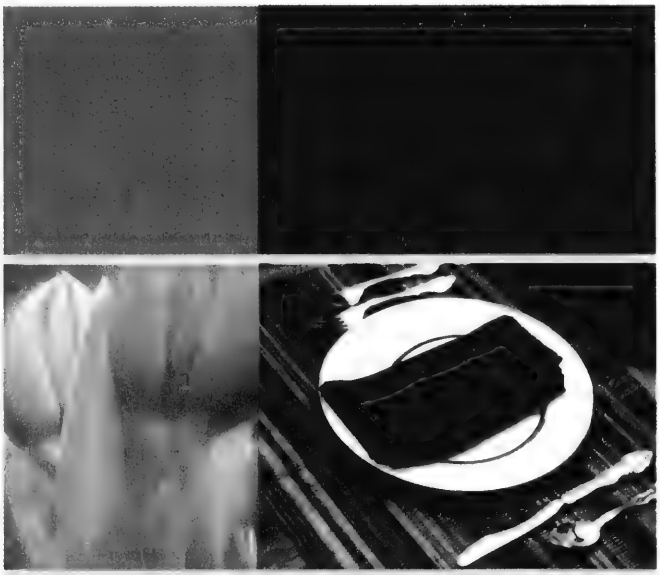

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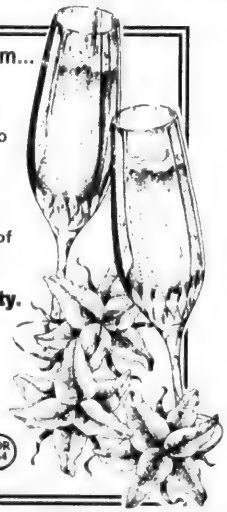

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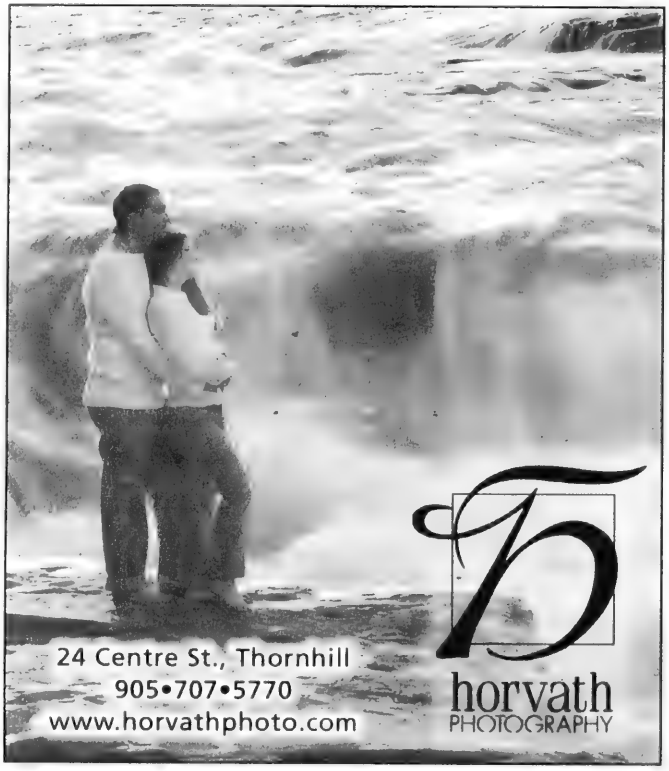

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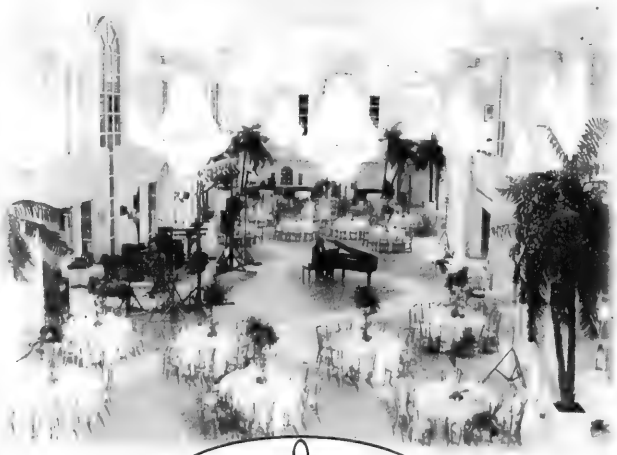

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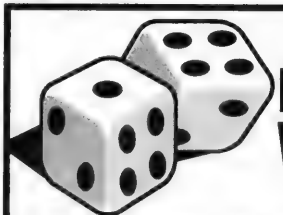

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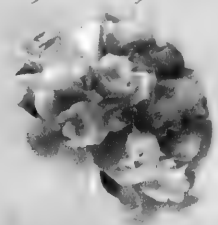

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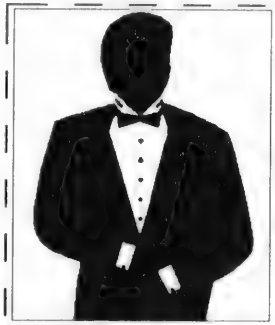

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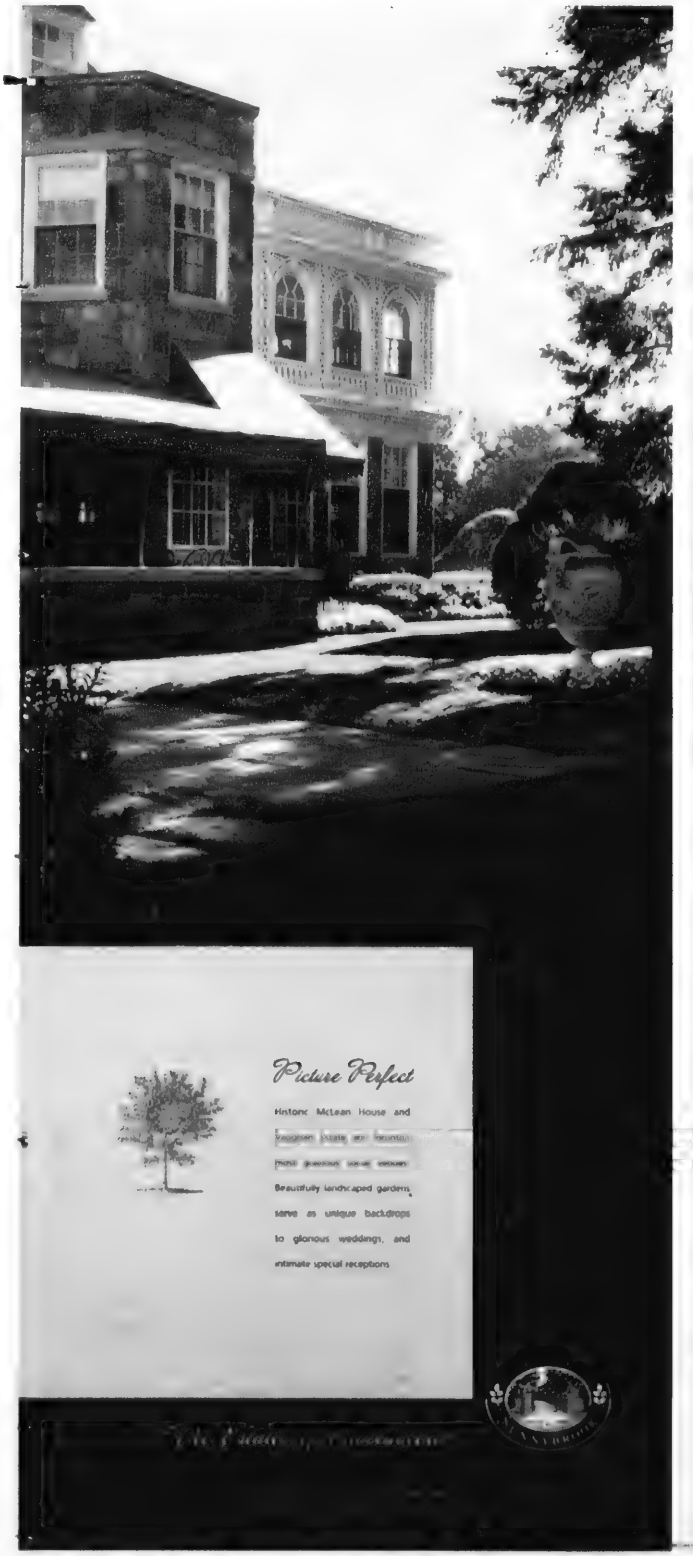

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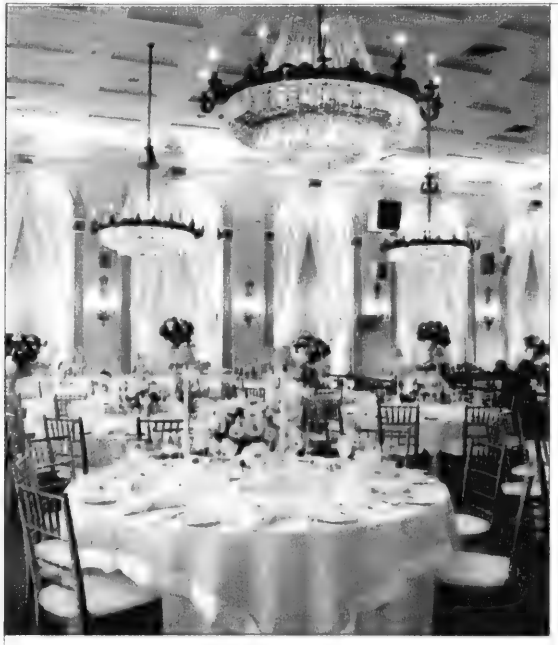

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Part of that standard is upping the ante on gourmet cuisine. The Granite Club's chefs, headed by renowned Executive Chef Nigel Didock, are on the cutting edge of culinary trends; the innovations and geographic subtleties offered at Toronto's finest restaurants are concurrently reflected in the Granite's special event menus. Indeed, a fair share of those innovations originate in the Granite Club's kitchen.

Another part of the standard is upgrading the lawns and gardens. The Granite Club's already-lush frontage is being enhanced by the planting of additional flower beds and the construction of a lattice archway, to be enrobed with ivy and seasonal flowers.

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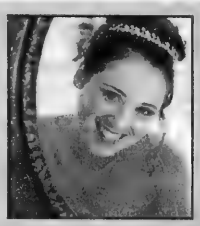

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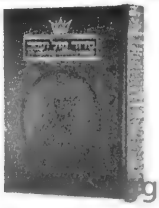

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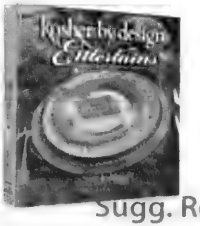

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This Week

National

Jewish groups praise John Tory for funding pledge. *Page 3*

800 turn out in Montreal for thoughtful tribute to Andrea Bronfman. *Page 16*

On Campus

Students polled about their views on sex. *Page 25*

Arts & Travel

Alon Nashman launches one-man play on Franz Kafka. *Page 35*

CJN Profile

Rock producer Bob Ezrin inducted into Hall of Fame. *Page 37*

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WAITING TO GO HOME: Thousands of Falas Mora, formerly Jewish Ethiopians converted to Christianity, wait in Gondar, Ethiopia, for the news that they will soon be on their way to Israel. Last month, a United Israel Appeal-Federations Canada group visited the Gondar camp to help launch a special rescue program for the remaining Falas Mora. Please see the related story on page 18. *[Victor Yagoda photo]*

Shocked Paris mourns murder victim

The image of Ilan Halimi was displayed at a memorial ceremony last week in Paris at La Grande Synagogue de la Victoire. Halimi was kidnapped, tortured and brutally murdered in what officials described as a hate crime directed against Jews. French President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin attended the ceremony. On Sunday, tens of thousands of people demonstrated in Paris against racism and anti-Semitism. A suspect in the murder was arrested in the Ivory Coast. Please see related stories on pages 4 and 28. *[RNS/Reuters photo]*

Rothstein nominated to Supreme Court

Will become body's third Jewish member

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

On Monday, Canadians were treated to a first in Canadian politics – a Supreme Court nominee being questioned by parliamentarians about his judicial philosophy and previous High Court decisions.

Federal Court Justice Marshall Rothstein, a native of Winnipeg, has gained a reputation as a prominent voice on intellectual property matters, but he was expected to also answer questions about hot-button issues, including abortion, medicare and school funding. Though MPs have been given three hours to question Rothstein, unlike their counterparts in the United States, they do not have the authority to veto a nominee.

Named from a list of jurists prepared by the previous Liberal government, Rothstein was appointed to the court by Prime Minister Stephen Harper. He will become the third Jewish member of the nine-member Supreme Court, joining Rosalie Abella of Toronto and Morris Fish of Montreal.

Rothstein is widely praised as a fair-minded and hardworking jurist whose decisions in some circumstances broke new ground. One of his more controversial decisions – later overturned by the Supreme Court – was the Harvard mouse case, which examined whether a genetically modified mouse could be patented. Applying the Patent Act, Rothstein ruled it could, later explaining that the moral and social implications in the case were policy issues better addressed in Parliament than in the courts.

Continued on page 24

Trumah
Candlelighting: 5:50
Havdallah: 6:55
Greater Toronto Area

Will Hamas become the next Hezbollah? — please see page 27

The News in Brief

Canada

Jews Named As Critics

OTTAWA — Four Jewish MPs were named by Opposition leader Bill Graham to the Liberal shadow cabinet. They are Raymonde Folco (Laval-Les-Isles), official languages; Irwin Cotler (Mount-Royal), public safety; Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre), Indian Affairs; and Ontario MP Susan Kadis (Thornhill), associate critic for infrastructure and communities.

Matas Gets Award

VANCOUVER — Winnipeg human rights lawyer David Matas, senior legal counsel for B'nai Brith Canada, received the man of the year award from the B.C.-based Brotherhood Interfaith Society at a dinner last Saturday evening in Richmond. Founded in 1996, the society's constituent groups come from the Muslim, Jewish and Christian communities. Matas was honoured for his work with numerous charitable groups.

World

Harvard Prez Resigns

BOSTON — Lawrence Summers, the Jewish president of Harvard University, resigned last week. Among the many controversies that dogged him in his five years at Harvard were remarks against efforts by universities to divest from firms that do business with Israel. He called such sanctions "anti-Semitic in their effect if not their intent."

Mayor Slags Israel

ROME — Italian Jewish leaders and politicians are calling for the resignation of a mayor who took part in a pro-Palestinian demonstration. After participating in the Feb. 18 demonstration in Rome, Mauro Bertini, the Communist mayor of the town of Marano, suggested the world would be better off without Israel, which he called a "punch in the stomach of humanity." Pierferdinando Casini, president of Italy's lower house of parliament, called the remarks "shameful and irresponsible."

Ahmadinejad Sued

BERLIN — An Israeli lawyer is suing Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in Germany for Holocaust denial. Ervin Eran Shahar filed suit with the German Federal Prosecutors' Office in Karlsruhe last week, asking it to press charges against Ahmadinejad for repeated statements questioning the Shoah. Holocaust denial is a crime in Germany. Shahar acknowledged that Ahmadinejad is not German and may enjoy diplomatic immunity, but he argued that prosecution in absentia would send an important political message. The prosecutors' office had no immediate comment.

Footballer Still Fascist

ROME — An Italian soccer player repeated his pro-fascist views after meeting with Holocaust survivors last month. But Lazio's Paolo di Canio also called Italy's wartime anti-Semitic actions unjust and "terrible." He and other Lazio and Roma players met three survivors at Rome's city hall in an encounter set up by the mayor. An admirer of wartime dictator Benito Mussolini, di Canio has been fined twice for giving fascist salutes at matches. "My ideas remain the same, but I don't want it to sound as if I believe in violence," he said after the meeting.

Jews Join Mardi Gras

NEW ORLEANS — Two Jewish groups, Krewe de Jieux and Krewe du Mishigas, took part last month in the first parade of New Orleans' Mardi Gras season. The city's first post-Hurricane Katrina Mardi Gras was scaled back to eight days from the usual two weeks.

Jews Help Churches

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The Jewish community of Birmingham, Ala., is reaching out to 10 churches hit by a rash of recent arsons in rural parts of the state between Feb. 3 and Feb. 14. All the churches have been Baptist, and six of them burned to the ground. Racial motives are being discounted, since half of the churches were black and half were white. After the first six churches burned, the Birmingham Jewish Federation donated $1,000 from its reserve fund to help rebuild them. After the other arsons, that was raised to $2,000. The American Jewish Committee has also offered a $5,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of the arsonists.

Panel Raps Red Ken

LONDON — London Mayor Ken Livingstone was rapped for comparing a Jewish journalist to a Nazi. The Adjudication Panel of England, which hears complaints against local officials, found Livingstone guilty Feb. 24 of disreputable conduct and said a decision on a penalty was pending. The three-person panel's ruling comes after Livingstone last year asked a critical Jewish reporter from London's *Evening Standard* if he was a "German war criminal" and said he was acting "like a concentration camp guard." The mayor is a longtime critic of Israel and a friend of an anti-Zionist imam.

Court Orders Ruling

WASHINGTON — A U.S. appeals court ordered a lower court to rule on whether a U.S. citizen born in Jerusalem can have "Israel" alone inscribed as the place of birth. The Feb. 17 decision sends the case of Menachem Zivotofsky, 3, back to the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. That court said a request to list the boy as born in "Jerusalem, Israel" was a political matter, not a judicial one, and refused to rule. His parents now want only "Israel" listed as his birthplace. The State Department is defending the case. The United States doesn't recognize Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem.

Venerable Jewish Paper Names New Editor

LONDON — The London *Jewish Chronicle* has hired veteran British journalist David Rowan as its new editor.

Rowan was named to head the paper after the resignation of Ned Temko, who had been editor since 1990 and resigned to be chief political correspondent for the *Observer*.

David Rowan

The world's oldest Jewish newspaper, the *Chronicle* has been published for 165 years and has a circulation of about 34,000.

Rowan writes for the *Times of London* and is the media interviewer for the *London Evening Standard*. He previously worked for the *Guardian* and the Guardian Unlimited website.

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation 38,949 copies
Total paid circulation 38,099 copies

CCNA verified circulation Sept. 7, 2005

SUBSCRIPTIONS
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Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.

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The Canadian Jewish news

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Tory comments on school funding well received

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

Advocates of public funding for Jewish day schools are buoyed by the recent comments of Ontario Progressive Conservative leader John Tory supporting the issue, and say they must now fundraise for a public relations campaign to bring politicians and the public onside.

Tory told more than 1,000 delegates attending a three-day policy conference in Niagara Falls last month that he's committed to finding a way to help parents with children in independent and private schools.

Ontario's Catholic schools are fully funded by the province, but no other faith-based schools are, and the PC leader framed the issue in terms of fairness.

"I am still completely and totally committed to ensuring that part of our platform for the 2007 election is a policy which addresses the fairness issue for independent schools," he told reporters. "It's fair to say that the issue of fairness more starkly presents itself when you are dealing with faith-based schools as opposed to others."

He added that he has "come to understand even better the fact that there is a fairness issue that needs to be addressed."

Tory's remarks were not all that different from those he made in an interview with *The CJN* in late 2004. At the time, he said he favoured the reinstatement of the Equity in Education Tax Credit (EETC), which the Liberals had repealed in 2003, "but... I intend to engage in a broad process of consultation, both within my own party and outside it, with people who have children in independent schools, with educators, [and] with members of my party, to frankly improve the policy."

He added in the interview that he would consider two important changes: income testing so that more support went to those with lower incomes, and better accountability from schools.

Tory also said at the time that while he would not limit help to faith-based schools only, "the fairness argument applies more explicitly to faith-based schools."

He expressed much the same sentiments at the Niagara Falls policy conference, which was attended by a contingent of Jewish parents and funding advocates.

"The scope of who it applies to has not been decided," he said. "But the issue itself that is clear, that has to be looked at, where the fairness issue applies directly, is to faith-based schools."

And he said financial assistance will likely go to parents rather than schools.

"My own predisposition is it should be provided to parents, but we're not there yet."

He indicated that any financial help will likely be in the form of tax credits.

Tory rejected doing away with the Catholic separate system, and said the key issue is to strike a balance between funding private schools and maintaining "a quality public education system."

Ira Walfish, co-chair of the Ontario Association of Jewish Day Schools (OAJDS), who attended the weekend PC conference, said the major difference between Tory's comments a year ago to *The CJN* and those this month to fellow Conservatives is that "now they're putting together a platform."

Walfish noted that a white paper on education the party produced does not discuss funding private or faith-based schools. Even so, "it's very much on the agenda now."

The issue was raised at the conference at a seminar on education that was attended by several Jewish parents from Toronto and chaired by Conservative MPP Frank Klees.

"It was great," Walfish said. "The Christian advocates were there too, and they really made the case."

Tory himself attended a Friday night dinner hosted by the Jewish parents at the hotel where the conference took place, and the PC leader "said all the right things," Walfish said. "He hasn't made up his mind on whether [funding] should go to only faith-based schools or not, but he was very positive."

The next step is for the OAJDS and others to raise funds for a "professional and serious" public campaign.

A recent e-mailing to parents of children in Jewish day schools urged that the issue be presented as one of discrimination.

Continued on page 17

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Perhaps they understand

From the editor's desk

The rioting and rage in most of the Muslim world last month that greeted the publication in September – five months ago – of the cartoon caricatures of Muhammad have been quite instructive.

Out of all proportion to the "offence," the massive umbrage was clearly an orchestrated manipulation by malevolent leaders, mostly in Iran and Syria. Their purposes were many: to further alienate ordinary Muslims from the ways of the West, to distract world attention from their own ongoing international mischief and to make the western world shudder.

Alas, they succeeded in all respects.

The hysterics, mass rampage, arson and ultimately even killing, were alarming and frightening. Do the demonstrators and their leaders place no value on human life?

The spectacle of public officials declaring a boycott of Danish products or demanding a formal apology from the Danish government was eye-opening and disillusioning. Does the governing elite in Muslim society understand nothing about the nature of democracy and the relationship between government and a free, independent press?

But the absurd "equal-treatment" call by various Iranian luminaries for an editorial contest lampooning the Holocaust was disgusting. It was further evidence of a dangerous inrooting of profound ignorance among the leaders of that society. Cynically cultivated by the likes of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the outgrowth of that ignorance is hatred of Israel and Jews. Like a poisoned mushroom, it infects everyone who ingests it.

But not only Iranians consume. Hatred of and incitement towards Jews and Israel are rampant throughout the Muslim world, a spreading malignancy of intolerance and violence.

The West is not immune. Muslims in western countries too have been influenced by leaders who abuse their followers' trust and prey upon their gullibilities with calumnies and lies about Jews and Israel.

Last month in Paris, a young Jew, Ilan Halimi, was savagely tortured and murdered, his naked, burned, handcuffed body thrown into the streets like detritus in a sewer. He had been kidnapped. But ransom wasn't the key purpose of his kidnapping. Murder-of-a-Jew was.

At first, French authorities did not believe that religious hatred was the motive for the crime. But they soon understood otherwise. France was in shock.

Speaking to the Conseil Représentatif des Institutions Juives de France (CRIF) on Feb. 20, French Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin conveyed his personal condolences to the family of Ilan Halimi "who are mourning their son, murdered in tragic circumstances… I want them to know that we shall do our utmost to ensure the perpetrators of this barbaric crime are arrested and brought to justice." (A suspect has since been arrested. Please see the related story in this paper.)

De Villepin's remarks to the CRIF are important to note. There was an urgency to his presentation because of the three-headed menace that served as the backdrop for those remarks: the Halimi murder, the dangerous posturing of Iran and the election of a Hamas majority in the West Bank and Gaza. He spoke to all three matters.

"I want to speak from the heart and tell you forcefully, with conviction: the fight against anti-Semitism is an absolute priority for me because I feel responsible for the safety of you all and because anti-Semitism is the negation of the Republican spirit."

De Villepin elaborated on some of judicial, policing and security measures his government had enacted to deal with anti-Semitism. He referred to the fight against anti-Semitism as "a moral duty." And indeed, he reported a 47 per cent decrease in reported incidents of anti-Semitism in 2005 over the previous year.

"The French Republic is well aware of the debt it owes its Jewish citizens… France therefore bears a particular responsibility in the fight against anti-Semitism and racism of every kind, both on its own soil and throughout the world."

On the subject of Iran, de Villepin reconfirmed his "shared determination [with Russian President Vladimir Putin] to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons."

He added: "President Ahmadinejad's comments [on the Holocaust and Israel's existence] are disgraceful. France has firmly and unreservedly condemned them. We cannot tolerate international dialogue being derailed by unacceptably provocative statements which offend Israel, the Jewish people and the honour of the entire international community."

On the subject of Hamas and the Middle East, de Villepin was unequivocal. "France will never compromise on Israel's security. France will always be at Israel's side in our absolute rejection of terrorism, fanaticism and violence… We have laid down three principles for dialogue with any Palestinian government: the renunciation of violence, recognition of the State of Israel and recognition of the agreements signed in the past by Israel and the PLO. Those principles are an absolute prerequisite for dialogue between the French authorities and the future Palestinian government emerging from the latest election."

Then, he repeated: "We shall be at Israel's side." Of course, France's credibility on matters relating to Israel and the Middle East, historically, has been somewhat shaky. But if de Villepin, and indeed all western leaders, have finally understood the correlation between hatred of the Jews and danger to the West, perhaps, credibility will no longer be an issue.

–*MBD*

See JN

MIRACLE VEGGIES: Nissan Tamir of Omer, a small community near Be'er Sheva, has been growing organic vegetables in his yard for years. This year, however, he was suprised to see that two radishes were growing non-stop. When he decided enough was enough, he pulled them out and found that each weighed about 10 kilograms. [Israel Sun photo]

Travel to Israel surges to 2 million – and climbing

Ministry sets target at 5 million visitors in 2009

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Israel has enjoyed a remarkable resurgence in tourist travel in the last two years, but as far as officials of the country's Ministry of Tourism are concerned, the best is yet to come.

Eli Cohen, director general of the ministry, believes that with targeted marketing and given increased demand for travel to Israel, last year's number of two million visitors can easily be eclipsed in 2006 and grow from there.

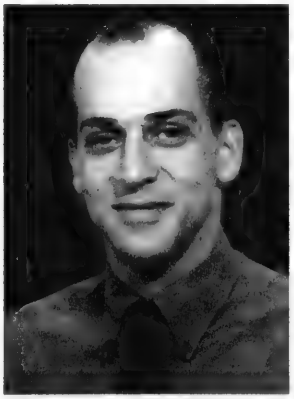
The Tourism Ministry has set a target of five million visitors in 2009, said Arie Sommer, consul and tourism commissioner for North and South America. One million of the visitors are expected to hail from North America.

Cohen and Sommer were in Toronto last week where they met community leaders, travel industry professionals and the media to encourage travel to Israel.

Canadians and people from the rest of the world no longer are deterred by the security situation in Israel, said Cohen. What is holding back an influx of Canadian visitors is the "lack of capacity in airplane seats" and "big prices in tickets."

Last year, approximately 50,000 Canadians visited the Jewish state, but the ministry believes that could grow by as much as 30 per cent in 2006 and double by 2007.

Cohen said tourism is a major factor in the health of the Israeli economy. Every 100,000 tourists generate $200 million (US) in revenue and leads to the employment of 4,000 Israelis. He said the Israeli government has taken steps at home to make it easier for airlines to fly into Israel, amending regulations to permit an extra 400,000 passengers to arrive in the Jewish state in 2005 and early 2006. He challenged airlines in Canada to lower their prices and make more seats available for travellers to Israel.



Eli Cohen

Airlines flying direct to Israel charge up to $1,000 during the slow winter season, but the fares could be as low as $200 at that time, he suggested. As for the high season when fares as high as $2,000 are charged, he said prices could instead be in the $700 to $800 range. Asking a family of five to spend $10,000 on airfare alone is a clear disincentive to travel to Israel, he added.

Cohen said Canadians can take their cue from airlines in Europe, which have slashed fares. Where airlines once charged up to $1,000 for a return trip from Frankfurt to Tel Aviv, now passengers can travel on charter for a return fare of less than $200, he said.

Dani Shahal, the Toronto-based consul for tourism, said his office may soon announce additional low-cost flights to Israel from Toronto via England on a British charter carrier.

Travel to Israel from Italy, Spain, Poland, Hungary, Ukraine and Russia doubled in 2005, while Britain, France and Germany were also important sources of travellers. Germany is expected to send more than 200,000 people to Israel in 2006 and the ministry believes as many as 500,000 British travellers may visit Israel in 2007, Cohen said.

People around the world are discovering Israel as a safe destination that has more to offer than its religious heritage, Cohen said. "Israel is becoming more and more a typical tourist destination, with sea and sun, city-scapes, trips to Eilat."

Thanks to low-cost airfares, Europeans are booking three-day, two-night trips. Some are even coming to Israel to shop, as prices, by European standards, are relatively cheap, Cohen said.

Tel Aviv has developed a reputation as a European-style city with a vibrant nightlife. Other parts of the country are advertising their unique attractions, such as desert jeep safaris, Dead Sea spas and Galilee bed and breakfasts. Ministry of Tourism marketing efforts are asking visitors to abandon their preconceptions of Israel and discover the country's fun side, Cohen said.

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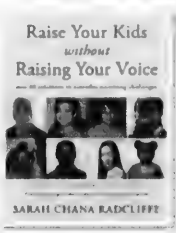

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Schechter Institute president at Toronto conference

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

From ignorance to the Internet, seven key challenges are confronting Judaism in the 21st century, says Rabbi David Golinkin, president of the Schechter Institute in Jerusalem.

Rabbi David Golinkin, keynote speaker at a Torah in Toronto evening of study, sponsored by the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, said that disunity among Jews, ignorance about the religion, lack of observance, individualism, assimilation, medical ethics and the influence of technology are the key challenges for Judaism in the modern world.

Rabbi David Golinkin

"Unfortunately, we see much disunity and divisiveness [among Jews today]," said the rabbi, who holds a PhD in Talmud.

"The lessons of Jewish history [teach us] disunity leads to catastrophe and unity can lead to redemption."

To foster unity, Rabbi Golinkin encourages Jews from different streams to "meet with their counterparts."

He also cited the need for rabbis from different denominations to be on the same page with respect to recognizing conversions to Judaism.

Rabbi Golinkin noted most Jews have little knowledge of the religion and the solution to that is bolstering the quality and quantity of Jewish education.

"There is a tremendous need for serious Jewish education in North America… and bringing serious Jewish studies into the Israeli public school system," he said, adding educational outreach to Russian-speaking Jews should be a priority.

Most Jews do not practise the faith and the rabbi views this lack of observance as a major roadblock to Jewish continuity.

"Without Jewish observance, there is no future for Jews," the rabbi asserted.

"We need to teach Jews commitment to observance and also how to observe."

To that end, he suggested offering "hands-on workshops" on how to observe.

Individualism, a philosophy that is believed and practised widely in North America, is another threat to Judaism, said the rabbi.

"The antidote to this is that we need to teach Jewish peoplehood in our schools," Rabbi Golinkin said.

"We have to show it's not enough to think about 'you,' we have to think about 'us.'"

The rabbi said that Jews all over the world are "bombarded by pop culture," which he feels is dragging them away from their Jewishness.

With medical advances growing by the day, a variety of ethical questions have arisen about how to simultaneously honour Jewish law, while promoting health and wellness.

Abortion, euthanasia and artificial insemination are just a few of such issues.

"We need to use our collective wisdom in order to deal with medical issues," stated Rabbi Golinkin, noting he recently served on a commission in Israel that helped craft a law regarding end-of-life issues.

The final conundrum described by Rabbi Golinkin is the Internet and the pervasive influence the computer and other forms of technology have on our lives.

In one sense, the Internet can provide people with easy access to Jewish knowledge, he said.

Yet using technology may take away the time people need for studying Torah.

"Computers and the Internet have taken over a sizable chunk of our lives," he said.

"How can we limit [technology's influence] so we still have time to study Torah?"

Watch for full interview with Rabbi Golinkin in next week's issue of The CJN.

TOASTING TET: Grade 1 students at the United Synagogue Day School's Beth Tzedec campus put on a play last month about the Hebrew letter *tet*. Titled *Story of the Toast*, it was part of their study of the Hebrew aleph bet. Pictured here is the good cook *Tabach Tov*, played by Melanie Rose, centre, along with, from left, Sophie Sklar, Cooper Levy, Sydney Manis and Halee Ochshorn, who are holding *tet*-related items in the story.

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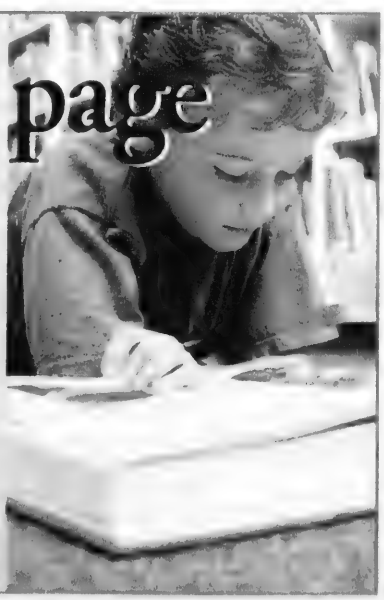


World allows for both Bible and evolution: rabbi

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

While they are often pitted against each other, the Bible's concept of how the world was created and the theory of evolution are not incompatible, according to various rabbis.

Referring to the writings of prominent rabbis dating back hundreds of years, Rabbi Wayne Allen recently told a small group attending a Torah in Toronto session, sponsored by the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, that Judaism allows for believing in both modern and traditional views about the origins of earth.

"Creation and evolution are not in conflict," Rabbi Allen said.

"Judaism can support an understanding of evolution that is compatible with our observance of Torah."

The theory of evolution holds that species are related to one another through common descent and over time, they evolve and change to adapt to their surroundings.

In the Bible, God is described as the supreme being behind the creation of everything in the universe.

Rabbi Allen cited the writings of such revered rabbis as Maimonides and Abraham Isaac Kook to illustrate that these two theories are not mutually exclusive.

Paraphrasing Maimonides, the 12th- century Jewish philosopher, Rabbi Allen explained that the biblical story of creation expresses obscure ideas that are not exact, meaning we should not accept them as the exact truth.

"What the Torah is doing is trying to create a word picture… [of creation]. We shouldn't compromise our understanding of science in accordance with it," Allen said of Maimonide's argument.

"Torah is not exactly telling us facts as they are - Torah is telling us ideas and those ideas are obscure."

Rabbi Allen also referred to a commentary composed by Rabbi Israel Lipschitz in Poland in 1842, which discusses the discoveries of dinosaur remains.

"God creates creatures of some sort and they evolve and change. Some die out, but we also develop new species," Rabbi Allen said in interpreting Rabbi Lipschitz's commentary.

"It's the spirit of God that infuses all of these creatures [and their subsequent] evolution."

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook went even further in 1938 when he wrote that evolution clearly illustrates God's brilliance.

"God created a world that allows for evolution to take place," Rabbi Allen paraphrased Rabbi Kook.

"Because evolution teaches us things change for a greater possibility of long-term survival, it is telling us God is even more brilliant than we thought."

A subsequent Torah in Toronto session focused on the challenges Jewish students face on university and college campuses.

Rabbis Sean and Jennifer Gorman, the session's leaders, said the biggest dilemma Jewish students grapple with is meeting fellow Jews.

"The issue brought up to us [most frequently] is where do you go to meet Jews on campus," noted Rabbi Jennifer Gorman.

"Where do you go to make long-term relationships?"

The rabbis encouraged students to get involved with Jewish student groups, such as Hillel and Koach, not only as a means for developing relationships with Jews, but also to band together to combat anti-Semitism.

"As students, you're not capable of fighting that fight alone," said Rabbi Sean Gorman.

"You need to be part of Jewish student organizations."

Israeli dance festival for children at York U

This year marks the 36th anniversary of Rikudiyah, Toronto's annual Israeli dance festival for children.

At the festival, nearly 400 dancers, from 18 schools, will burst onto the floor in a blue and white kaleidoscope of motion. Nirkoda Israeli Dancers, the Chai Dancers, and Dor L'Dor, a group formed from Grade 2 students and parents, will make special presentations.

Rikudiyah brings Jewish youth closer to their culture and heritage, connecting them to Israel.

From its start in a tiny classroom in the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre packed with 40 children, Rikudiyah has blossomed into a spectacular display of joy and excitement that is Israeli dance.

Over 36 years, thousands of children have been involved with Rikudiyah. "I was so excited, I can't wait until next year," said one child. That's a typical comment from a festival participant.

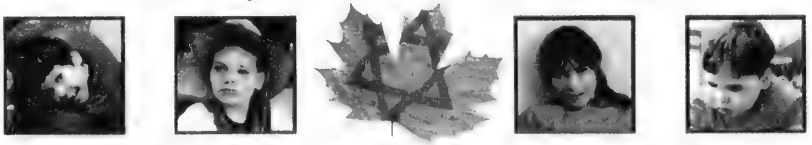
Dance teacher/choreographer Teme Kernerman conceived and initiated the festival, inspired by her training and experience in New York in the mid-1950s. Her non-competitive format ensures that no child has to audition. She insists that all instructors dance with their groups, reinforcing that this is a performance without pressure. Chai means life and to celebrate this memorable "double chai" year, a special commemorative pin has been commissioned and will be presented to the participating children at the festival.

Rikudiyah 2006 is co-sponsored by the Koffler Centre of the Arts, Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education.

This annual community celebration takes place on Sunday, April 2, 2:30 p.m. at York University, Tait McKenzie Building.

For tickets, call Teme Kernerman at 416-636-2880, ext. 364.

Israel, You're Not Alone



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The issue of fairness

John Tory is a man of conscience. Last month, the leader of the Opposition at Queen's Park went on record saying he was determined to right the widely acknowledged wrong that has persisted in Ontario's system of public funding for faith-based schools: only Catholic schools in Ontario receive funding from the government, while all other faith-based schools do not. The Supreme Court of Canada and the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations have ruled the practice to be blatantly unfair. Yet it persists.

"I am still completely and totally committed to ensuring that part of our platform for the 2007 election is a policy which addresses the fairness issue for independent schools… The issue of fairness more starkly presents itself when you are dealing with faith-based schools as opposed to others," he told a policy conference in Niagara Falls last month.

But Tory is also a man of courage, for he knew his commitment would rile much of the powerful mainstream media. The *Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star*, for example, immediately pounced on him criticizing him for, essentially, jeopardizing the public system. "As the *Star* has noted before…, the system is indeed unfair," the paper's editorial of Feb. 22 said. "But the answer is not to inflict further damage on the public system."

As we, too, have noted before, there is no credible evidence that, if the issue is handled responsibly, the public school system would be damaged by introducing some element of funding fairness toward other faith-based schools. Indeed, some experts argue that any small measure of competition that might result from fair funding would only enhance the public system.

We understand that the idea of funding fairness legitimately evokes reasonable concerns for the public system by thoughtful, fair-minded individuals. And we do not disparage or make light of them. However, to allay those concerns, the following points must be made:

• Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada that refuses to extend any funding to non-Catholic, faith-based schools. British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec do so, and no one suggests their public school systems have been harmed as a result.

• Non-Catholic, faith-based schools seek funding only for the general, non-religious portion of their schools' programs.

• The total estimated amount involved, $200 million to $300 million, is a relatively small portion of Ontario's more than $10-billion annual education budget.

• Schools receiving provincial funding should have to account to the province regarding record-keeping, teaching standards and the content of the educational program. The province will thus be able to safeguard the integrity of its expenditures in accordance with public policy objectives.

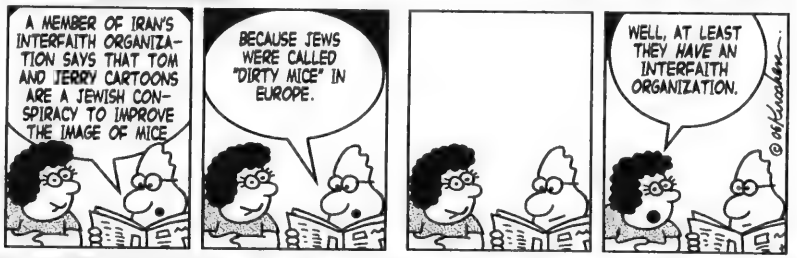
The current system, it must be emphasized yet again, is unjust to those families who effectively pay a double tax to educate their children. But why, in our proudly multicultural country, when the issue is fairness, should political courage be its prerequisite?

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• Following the release of Iosif Mendelevich, hundreds of his fellow Jewish Refuseniks in major cities across the Soviet Union were reportedly lining up day and night for exit visas.

• Canadian Jewish Congress sent Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer a message congratulating them on their engagement.

Dry Bones


A MEMBER OF IRAN'S INTERFAITH ORGANIZATION SAYS THAT TOM AND JERRY CARTOONS ARE A JEWISH CONSPIRACY TO IMPROVE THE IMAGE OF MICE.
BECAUSE JEWS WERE CALLED "DIRTY MICE" IN EUROPE.
WELL, AT LEAST THEY HAVE AN INTERFAITH ORGANIZATION.
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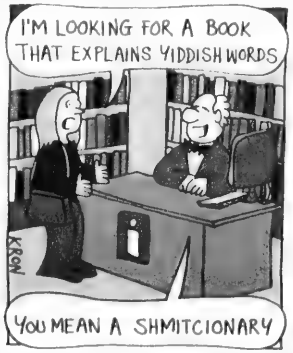
Troy – from the right

It certainly is impossible to argue with the sentiment of Gil Troy's column "Left and right must rein in the extremists" (*CJN*, Feb. 16), for indeed the time has come "to seek social consensus… debate with integrity… rather than discourse that demonizes fellow Jews." In making the point, though, he has made a number of statements that, sadly, further vilify "the settlers."

They are continually portrayed as extremist, hotheaded, unlawful and, of course, violent. In truth, it was always the "right-wing nuts" who refused to take up arms against their fellow Jews. It was the Irgun and Stern Gang (Lechi) that were turned in to the British and shot at by their left-wing fellow Jews, not the other way around.



It was a left-wing columnist for *Ha'aretz* who, during the Gaza withdrawal, urged his readers to hit the road and confront anti-withdrawal protesters with tire irons or other equally effective tools. Oddly, there were no repercussions in the Israeli media over this clearly hateful and violence-promoting article. Nor did the media have much to say when buses full of anti-withdrawal demonstrators never even got rolling because the police got on the buses and confiscated the bus drivers' licences. Not a peep about freedom of speech or civil rights.

Then, as now, the Israeli media by and large had no problem with having rights trampled on, as long as it was done to those pesky settlers. Even Troy, who clearly agrees the settlers were the victims of police violence, implies that they brought it on themselves. "Both sides behaved abominably," he wrote.

I agree whole-heartedly that references to Nazism among Jews must stop. It's ugly and hateful. But I respectfully disagree with Troy's assertion that the people peacefully protesting in Amona were somehow responsible for the actions of the Israeli riot police, that it was settlers tolerating "a culture of lawlessness and treasonous rhetoric" that triggered this violence. This is not so. Very few police were injured. Most of the 200 injured, some of them quite seriously, were demonstrators. These people, all unarmed and non-violent, included many middle-aged and elderly. They included rabbis, cabinet members, Knesset members and even Brig.-Gen. Effi Eitam. Were there a few hooligans? Yes, by most accounts, there were some. Most were not. Yet, they were clubbed to the ground, the young and the old, with no prior discussion or warning.

Someone gave the order that day to crack heads, which was the plan. How could Jews do this to fellow Jews? I believe what made that order even possible is the ongoing smear campaign that is being directed against the settlers, a large segment of Israelis who still believe in Zionism and are not prepared to move into the *Post*-Zionist era. That does not make them criminals. When all sides are treated equally by the Israeli media and the courts, real communication and healing will finally be possible.

Michael Lebovic
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Troy – from the left

Gil Troy's interpretation of the battle to remove illegal settlers from Amona as a clash between "left" and "right" is well off the mark. There were no Israeli leftists directly involved. Amona was a clash between erstwhile allies on the right, unless acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz underwent a conversion experience.

On the left, neither Labor leader Amir Peretz nor Meretz chief Yossi Beilen was at Amona. Peace Now did initiate the legal action to remove the illegal outpost, but that was done within a normal democratic framework. The only extremists were the lawbreakers who forcefully resisted the legally constituted authorities. However, I am not prepared to say that the police and Israel Defence Forces were without fault, until we see the results of an impartial investigation.

Troy's plea that we should not "demonize fellow Jews" amounts to a defence of those who established an illegal outpost, ignored a court order to vacate it and then violently resisted the legally constituted authorities who attempted to remove them. Israeli lawbreakers do not deserve our sympathy or understanding.

Amona was a clash between the far right and the pragmatic right. The "left" resorted not to violence but to legal action against the extremists.

Stephen Scheinberg, Co-Chair
Canadian Friends of Peace Now

* * *

Writing a book about Snowdon

I am a retired college administrator who is writing a book titled *Memories of Snowdon in the '50s*. I am looking for personal contributions of memories, stories and photos from people who lived in the Queen Mary Road and Decarie Boulevard area of Montreal in the late 1940s and '50s.

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'There is a better way to fight denial'

By DEBORAH LIPSTADT
JTA

David Irving's arrest and three-year jail sentence for having denied the Holocaust has been met with a chorus of cheers in the Jewish community.

A notorious liar, he was once considered a prominent historian. Many people were delighted that prison would now house a man who has called Jews cockroaches, believes black newscasters should be relegated to reading news of criminals and drug busts, and asked a survivor how much money she had made from having a number tattooed on her arm.

At long last, justice seemed to prevail. In the immediate aftermath of the verdict, my blog (Lipstadt.blogspot.com) was flooded with expressions of delight. Most people assumed I was dancing the horah.

But I was not.

I fought this man's libel charge against me for six years. For more than three months I had to silently sit in court in London listening to him say the most horrible things about Jews, people of colour and survivors. He made fun of those who talked about gas chambers and sneered at survivors' accounts of what they endured. He was full of bluster about how he was going to demolish the myth of the Holocaust.

Quietly and meticulously, relying on the stellar work of a dream team of historians, we showed that every one – not many, not most, but all – of Irving's claims were complete rot. They were based on lies, distortions and fabrications. They were, as the prominent historian Richard Evans and the leader of our research team, said, "A tissue of lies."

Deborah Lipstadt

In no way, Evans continued, could this man even be thought of as a historian.

Some people have argued that since he has written more than 30 books on historical topics, he is a historian. If I wrote books on building bridges that would not make me a structural engineer. Irving has been dubbed by some people on the Internet as a "distorian."

During my trial, Irving kept trying to introduce evidence of a world Jewish cabal or global conspiracy against him. He described me as "the gold-tipped spearhead of the enemies of truth," his euphemism for the Jews.

He laughed at survivors, declaring them liars or psychopaths. And he called the judge – in a very telling slip, "Mein Fuhrer."

He suffered an overwhelming loss. When the judge, in a 350-page judgment, said he "perverts," "distorts," "lies," and that his conclusions are a "travesty," Irving's reputation was left in tatters. When two different courts of appeal concurred, he faced financial ruin.

Why then was I not delighted with the court sentence handed down in Vienna on Feb. 20? I am writing this sifting in the shadow of the Vatican, preparing to teach a course on the Holocaust at the Pontifical Gregorian University, the Jesuit university affiliated with the Vatican. For centuries the church censored Jewish books, forcing Jews to remove anything the church authorities deemed objectionable to Christianity. Even prayers were censored.

We Jews, who have suffered from censorship, should not be supporting it. Moreover, I don't believe censorship is efficacious. It renders the censored item into forbidden fruit, making it more appealing, not less so.

In Europe, as in many quarters in the United States, this discussion has been joined with the debate over the Danish cartoons. Various Jewish organizations have pointed out – and rightfully so – that the Islamic world, which is so vigorously protesting the insult they perceive in these cartoons, is ignoring its own double standard. It has lived quite comfortably for many years with a spate of anti-Semitic cartoons. Some are well nigh pornographic and worthy of what one might find in *Der Sturmer*, the Nazi anti-Semitic newspaper.

While it is legitimate to argue that there is a difference between cartoons and the murder of millions of people, it is hard to argue for laws against Holocaust denial but demand that the Danish cartoonists' freedom of speech be protected. It suggests a double standard.

More importantly, there is a far better way to fight Holocaust denial than to rely on the transitory force of law. When Irving forced me to go to court to defend my freedom of expression, my most important weapon was the historical truth. We have truth and history on our side. From both an ideological and strategic perspective, those are far more powerful weapons than laws, especially laws that seem to counter the ideal of freedom of expression.

The best way to counter Holocaust deniers is to teach as many people as possible this history. That is why courses on history of the Holocaust have proven so popular and important. Students who take those courses will never fall prey to the David Irving-like distortions.

Jewish tradition teaches that the word *emet*, truth, composed as it is from the first, middle and last letters of the Hebrew alphabet, encompasses everything. The truth of the Holocaust is terrible and painful, but it is the truth, and that is the most potent weapon anyone could want.

Deborah Lipstadt teaches at Emory University and is the author of History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving.

Holocaust denier's sentence spurs debate

By RUTH ELLEN GRUBER
JTA

ROME — Holocaust scholar Deborah Lipstadt was once sued by David Irving, but that doesn't mean she supports the jail sentence given to the Holocaust denier last week.

"I'm in principle against laws that promote censorship. I'm in principle against laws on Holocaust denial.

"I'm in principle against laws that prevent the publishing of cartoons in Denmark," Lipstadt, a professor of Jewish and Holocaust studies at Emory University in Atlanta, told *JTA* on Tuesday, a day after an Austrian court sentenced Irving to three years in prison for statements he made in 1989 saying there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz.

Lipstadt said, however, that she understands the need for laws on Holocaust denial in countries such as Germany and Austria, given their records during World War II.

The sentence sent a potent message to both local extremists and the international community.

But it also added fuel to freedom-of-speech debates sparked by recent violent protests against Danish cartoons of the Islamic Prophet Muhammad.

Irving, 67, was arrested in November, when he entered Austria to give a lecture at a far-right student fraternity.

Irving's lawyer, Elmar Kresbach, lodged an immediate appeal after the sentence was announced. He told reporters the sentence had been meant as a political warning.

"Irving had expected certain strictness by the court because he was a very well-known case," he said. "But the sentence was too harsh. It became a bit of a message trial and the message was too strong."

Austrian prosecutors on the case want Irving to spend more time in jail. The prosecutors appealed, saying that his sentence of three years is too lenient, given Irving's importance to right-wing extremists.

Irving, who faced up to 10 years in jail, had pleaded guilty to the charges. But he also had said he had changed some of his views and now believed that the gas chambers had existed and that "millions of Jews died."

David Irving

"I was wrong. I recognize my guilt," he told the court, in fluent German. "I have changed my ideas since 1989. History and historic research are like a tree in constant growth."

Judge Peter Liebetreu was not convinced. "The court did not consider the defendant to have genuinely changed his mind," he said after pronouncing the sentence. "The regret he showed was considered to be mere lip service to the law."

Lipstadt was not alone among Jewish observers in expressing concern over the latest chapter in Irving's well-publicized effort to deny the Holocaust.

"The sentence against Irving confirms that he and his views are discredited, but as a general rule I don't think that this is the way this should be dealt with," Antony Lerman, director of the London-based Institute for Jewish Policy Research, told *JTA*. "It is better to combat denial by education and using good speech to drive out bad speech.

"Freedom of expression is important," he said. "Once you start legislating about history, it could lead to a rocky road."

Other Jewish groups, however, praised the verdict.

"The sentence confirms David Irving as a bigot and an anti-Semite and also serves a direct challenge to the Iranian regime's embrace of Holocaust denial," Rabbi Abraham Cooper of the Simon Wiesenthal Center said in a statement.

Amos Luzzatto, president of the Union of Italian Jewish Communities, welcomed the verdict for both the message it sent to local extremists and to the international community in the wake of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's declarations that the Holocaust is a myth.

"Even more than the conviction, it was fundamental to remove Irving's audience," he said. "An Irving appreciated by supporters of the Iranian president gains strength and listeners. On the other hand, an Irving whom no one pays attention to is finished."

Irving looked shocked when the verdict was announced. "Of course, it's a question of freedom of speech," he said. "The law is an ass."

Austria was part of the Third Reich during World War II, and the country only began to come to terms with its Nazi past in the late 1980s, after it came to light that former president Kurt Waldheim had lied about his World War II activities as a soldier in the German army.

The country, which currently holds the presidency of the European Union, is one of 11 countries that have laws making Holocaust denial a criminal offense.

The Austrian law subjects to prosecution anyone who "denies, grossly plays down, approves or tries to excuse the National Socialist genocide or other National Socialist crimes against humanity in a print publication, in broadcast or other media."

In the weeks before Irving's trial took place, violent protests over cartoons depicting Muhammad ignited debates over the limits of free expression and led some to question the validity of legislating what one could say about the Holocaust.

"I don't think there's a parallel between this and the cartoon, but in the eyes of the general public that thinks about issues of free speech, it's an understandable connection," Lipstadt said.

Britain and the United States have no laws on Holocaust denial.

Both the Wiesenthal Center and the Anti-Defamation League acknowledged the dilemma in their statements.

"While Irving's rants would not have led to legal action in the United States, it is important that we recognize and respect Austria's commitment to fighting Holocaust denial, the most odious form of hatred, as part of its historic responsibility to its Nazi past," Cooper of the Wiesenthal Center said.

This was not the first time Irving had tangled with the law for his views.

In 1992, a German court fined Irving for having publicly declared that there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz. He was barred from entering Germany and several other countries.

In 2000, he lost a highly publicized libel lawsuit in London against Lipstadt and her publisher, Penguin Books, after Lipstadt called him a Holocaust denier in her 1994 book *Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory*.

That victory, perhaps, helps support her conviction that books, and not laws, are what should fuel the fight against denying the Holocaust.

"We don't need laws to fight Holocaust deniers. We've got history on our side," she said.

With files from JTA's Peter Ephross in New York.

Opinions

Fasting and feasting on Purim

Fasting and feasting are two sides of the same coin. Both the abstention from food and the indulgence in it use our nutritional patterns to mark specific events. Although radically different in experience (especially for our stomachs), the similarities are unmistakable.

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

Humans must eat, but we can't eat continuously. Overeating and constant denial have disastrous effects on our survival and development. Those are the biological realities of our lives. But we add significance to these base facts by using food to serve other human needs: those of meaning and celebration.

All known cultures have distinctive foodways: particular patterns of eating, diverse menus and recipes, preferred and disdained foods, and specific rules for table culture. We use food to welcome people and comfort them, to celebrate and mourn. Individuals, too, have their own ideas about, and styles of, eating. All of which goes to indicate that we add both cultural and personal layers to our basic biological drives.

Religions use food feasts to aid in the observance of key events. Eating in family or communal venues establishes a sense of community by bringing like-minded people together. We celebrate through and with our foodways.

While feasting is certainly more fun, fasting also helps us locate central moments and focus our attention. Perhaps this explains why Queen Esther demands that the community fast with her as she prepares to approach the King to subvert Haman's evil decree. As on Yom Kippur, fasting is a form of prayer. Abstaining from food enables concentration and supplication while also establishing an aura of piety. Removing food makes us aware of our humanity, of our needs and dependencies, thereby creating room for thought and reflection. So Esther relies on these characteristics, linking herself with the community she is about to represent. By fasting, they take responsibility, too.

The day before Purim is the Fast of Esther. On it, we abstain from food in memory of Esther's unique form of prayer and preparation. This year, I call on all of us to fast for one additional cause: agunot, Jewish women who are denied divorces. For many years, some of us in Montreal have held silent vigils on the fast of Esther to address the silence of the community on the prevalent problems with Jewish divorce. If Esther called on the community to join her, we do too. If she used the fast to demand that they take responsibility, we do too. This is not just the problem of individual women, left alone, abandoned. It's a communal problem that requires communal commitment.

Let's dedicate Shabbat Zachor to domestic violence and the Fast of Esther to agunot, those who suffer from *get* abuse – the Jewish community's unique form of domestic violence.

Looking for a rabbi

I'm writing this column on Valentine's Day, and it occurs to me that looking for a new congregational rabbi is a lot like looking for a new love. It has all the tension and anxiety of a first date.

I mean no disrespect – I am referring to caritas, the kind of charitable, platonic love that is defined as a deep, warm, caring response to another.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

As my congregation grapples with this challenge, we ask ourselves what kind of a person we want to stand before us every week as we worship, to rejoice with us at simchahs, comfort us when we mourn, and hold our hands when we are ill. Someone who will be both teacher and counsellor, someone who will open to us the beauty of Judaism's history, culture and ethics, while guiding us in a deeper understanding of halachah and *minhag* (religious custom).

Every congregation is looking for a rabbi who will always be in the office when congregants call, is at every simchah and shivah, spends every day visiting the sick and seniors, is a hit with teenagers, never needs a day off, looks good at interfaith dinners, plays well on local TV, teaches in the Hebrew school while developing profound insights that become part of every weekly sermon… in other words, walks on water.

That such a person does not exist has never decreased the demand for one. In Stephen Fried's book, *The New Rabbi*, he puts it like this:

"Congregations all want to hire the same rabbi. They all want someone who attends every meeting and is at his desk working until midnight; someone who is 28 years old but has preached for 30 years; someone who has a burning desire to work with teenagers but spends all his time with senior citizens; basically, someone who does everything well and will stay with the congregation forever."

That is no doubt why there is a prayer in our siddur for the leaders of the community, and why in Pirkei Avot, community service is a matter of ethics, not a search for reward. And they did not even have congregations to satisfy!

Rabban Gamliel, son of Rabbi Yehudah ha-Nasi (Judah the Prince, head of the academy and putative redactor of the Mishnah) taught: "Let all who occupy themselves with [the affairs of] the community do so only for the sake of heaven; for the merit of their fathers will sustain them, and their devotion to duty, too, will endure forever."

Now, lest congregational boards misread this, we do not expect our rabbinical leaders to work without pay. Indeed, the duties of a congregational rabbi today would astound, if not horrify, the rabbis of the Talmud. Everything to everyone? Impossible. After all, we as congregants have responsibilities as well, and sometimes we forget this essential fact of congregational life.

We have a responsibility to work at making our synagogues warm, caring places of fellowship, where members can count on support in times of personal stress, illness or bereavement. This means we will take time from our lives to visit the sick, comfort the mourners and welcome newcomers. The rabbi can't do it all.

We should make learning a life commitment. Maybe we could study Jewish history (I wish!). Maybe parshat hashavuah – a rabbinical favourite. Adult ed? You bet.

We should support the youth groups with money, and of course, wheedle our kids into attending.

This is not a sermon on how to be Jewish, but it is a meditation on being the best congregational members we can be. Our own synagogue spent a great deal of time on what we expected from ourselves as a congregation, and then, only then, could we define what we were seeking from a rabbi.

As the prayer puts it, "Bless those who consecrate synagogues for prayer and who come to them to pray, those who provide light for them, wine for blessing the coming and going of Shabbat, food for wayfarers and charity for the poor. May He bless all those who faithfully concern themselves with communal needs… [and] forgiving any wrongdoing, may He send to them and to all Israel blessing and success in the work of their hands."

Freedom of expression and the Danish cartoons

Much has been written about the controversy surrounding the September 2005 Danish reprinting of cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad in an alleged disrespectful manner.

In response to these cartoons, Muslim communities have reacted in threatening, violent and destructive displays around the world. There have been boycotts of goods exported from countries where these cartoons have been reprinted. In an illogical reaction, a leading Iranian newspaper encouraged publication of the most offensive cartoons mocking the memory of the Holocaust. Danish embassies have been attacked and, recently, a Muslim cleric in Pakistan offered a reward of more $1 million (US) to anyone who kills the Danish cartoonists responsible for the original drawings.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

Newspapers and magazines around the world have subsequently reprinted these cartoons, including publications in Canada. A University of Prince Edward Island student newspaper and a Dalhousie University professor have insisted on the public display of some of the cartoons that have caused the recent furor.

In all cases, the media is quick to justify their actions by citing the importance of the related notions of freedom of the press and freedom of expression.

To be sure, freedom of expression is a vital concept in any truly free and democratic society. It is enshrined in our Constitution as part of Section 2(b) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Arguably, however, freedom of expression can sometimes be used as a shield to justify any expression, however malevolent and/or dangerous.

To refer to an old adage, freedom of speech does not justify shouting "fire" in a crowded theatre. Moreover, the various rights contained in the Charter, including freedom of expression, are not absolutes. These rights can be breached by a law if that law is regarded as a reasonable limitation on the exercise of that right.

Since 1982, there have been many instances where laws have been challenged as constituting a violation of freedom of expression. The courts have held some of these laws to be reasonable limitations on freedom of expression, therefore justifying the violation. Whereas, in other cases, they were not held to be reasonable limitations, with the result that the court has struck down these law.

The various laws challenged have ranged from restrictions on tobacco advertising to laws prohibiting the sale of obscene materials. Even Prime Minister Stephen Harper, when he was the chief executive officer of the National Citizens' Coalition, challenged a federal law restricting third party advertising during the course of an election campaign.

Of more immediate concern to the Canadian Jewish community, there have been challenges to laws prohibiting the propagation of hate against identifiable groups (as challenged by James Keegstra) and to laws prohibiting the spreading of false news (as challenged by Ernst Zundel).

Some of these challenges have been successful and others have not.

It has been suggested that the courts will justify restrictions on the offending expression if it can be demonstrated that the expression causes potential harm to vulnerable persons in society.

Returning to the Danish cartoons, many of those insisting on a reprint have invoked freedom of expression as their justification. Our political leaders have also made similar observations. For example, the prime minister has said, while regretting the reprinting of the cartoons, Canadians have the right to free speech. Similarly, Foreign Minister Peter MacKay, while condemning the violent protests around the world, is quoted as saying that "freedom of expression is a legally enshrined principle in Canada but it must be exercised responsibly."

Freedom of expression is, indeed, a constitutionally protected right.

But it is a thin justification when the real motive behind the reprinting may be a desire to commercially exploit the controversy, fan the flames of an already explosive situation or simply grab public attention. Besides, these are older cartoons that are easily available on the Internet for anyone who wishes to see what the furor is all about.

Unlike many local Muslim communities, which have had measured responses to these publications, the governments of Syria and Iran are using this prolonged controversy to incite a worldwide reaction against the West and western values.

In Canada, are we automatically elevating every journalistic decision to reprint the cartoons to the level of defending freedom of expression?

To do so in every instance is disparaging to the concept of free expression, an otherwise essential feature of our democratic society.

The Kirshner File

The French politician with the Nazi tattoo

There is no other political figure in Europe quite like Simone Veil. One of the first female cabinet ministers in France, and the past president of the European parliament, she is a Holocaust survivor whose left arm is tattooed with the telltale blue numerals of a former concentration camp inmate.

Sheldon Kirshner in Paris

When I asked to see the tattoo she received in Auschwitz-Birkenau – where she arrived in April 1944 along with her mother and older sister Madeleine – she rolled up her sleeve and, in a monotone voice, said, "7860051." Pausing momentarily she mused, "It's a number I will never forget."

Virtually the sole member of her family to survive the horrors of the war, Veil, 75, was profoundly affected by her experiences. When she assumed the presidency of the European Parliament in 1979 for a three-year stint, she declared, "I am placing my hope in Europe, in a Europe that has overcome hatred and barbarism to commit itself to achieving peace and solidarity between the peoples of Europe."

European unity is still her pet cause. "I'm a European activist," said Veil, now a member of the Constitutional Council of France, which vets laws to ensure that they are constitutionally sound. "Without a European parliament, we may have had more conflicts. But we have to remain vigilant."

Veil, who spoke in a melange of French and English, was making a veiled reference to the spate of violent anti-Semitic incidents that have wracked France since the outbreak of the second Palestinian uprising in September 2000. France, she said, has adopted "very drastic" measures to deal with this phenomenon. "Everyone is grateful to the government for what it has done. Jews in France have a future. You find them in all sectors of society. My grandchildren go to school in Paris, and they have no problems at all."

She believes that the threat to Jews comes not from the far right but from the extreme left and supporters of the Palestinians. "I am very nervous and worried about this," she noted, saying she is also concerned about the pro-Palestinian stance of French Jewish intellectuals. Endorsing the consensus of Jewish community organizations, Veil suggested that young men of Arab origin have largely been the perpetrators of these anti-Semitic acts. But she added that French Muslims are far more often the victims of racial discrimination than Jews.

When I asked whether her political career has ever been affected by anti-Semitism, she replied that the far right attacked her when, as minister of health from 1974 to 1979, she legalized abortion and made access to contraception devices easier. (From 1993 to 1995, she served as minister of social affairs). "It was a difficult moment, very difficult," said Veil, who was interviewed in her office near the busy St. Lazare train station.

Her reputation was hardly tarnished by that episode. "I'm the most popular politician in France," she said, dispensing with modesty. Dominique Moisi, a political commentator who knows her, observed that Veil is widely respected for her honesty, competence and humane approach.

Veil studied law and political science before joining the ministry of justice as a civil servant in 1957 and moving up in the ranks as an advisor and magistrate. While at the ministry, Veil was instrumental in improving living conditions for prisoners and granting illegitimate children equal rights. Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the French president from 1974 to 1981, noticed her and offered Veil a cabinet job as health minister.

"D'Estaing wanted women in government," said Moisi. "She hadn't been involved in politics, but her husband had been active in centre-right politics. She got into politics almost by accident."

Veil, who has three children, 12 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, was born in Nice on July 13, 1927 as Simone Jacob. To the best of her knowledge, her family arrived in France prior to the 1789 revolution.

Veil's father, Andre, was an architect who was banned from working in 1941 under Vichy France's anti-Jewish laws. Five months before France was liberated from the Nazi yoke, she and her older sister and their mother were deported to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Her father and 19-year-old brother, Jean, were sent to a Nazi camp in Kaunas, Lithuania, where they perished. "We don't know why they were deported there." Some years ago, Veil visited Kaunas in an attempt to learn more about their last days. She discovered that they were transported to Lithuania on a convoy of 800 Jews, of whom only 15 survived.

Veil's recollections of Auschwitz-Birkenau are clear. "For the first 48 hours, it was impossible to believe what was going on. There was a lot of bullying and shouting. The people who arrived with us were gassed."

Asked how she managed to survive, she said, "It was a matter of age. I was young and strong. I had this will to live. I dug ditches and carried stones. I was always in the company of my mother and sister."

A Polish kapo, a woman who was hanged by the British after the war as a Nazi collaborator, saved them from certain death. "She told me, 'You're too beautiful to die here. I want to do something for you.'"

[Sheldon Kirshner photo]

Simone Veil

To this day, she vividly remembers the suffering, the exhaustion, the hunger and the cold she endured. But what really haunts her is her memory of the doomed Hungarian Jews who were abruptly separated on arrival and immediately dispatched to the gas chambers. "We were the horrified witnesses," said Veil.

Before the Red Army liberated Auschwitz-Birkenau in January 1945, the Veils were marched 70 kilometres in the snow to Bergen-Belsen. There, amid ghastly conditions, her mother succumbed to typhus, a disease that affected her, too.

In April of that year, Veil was finally freed by the British army. "We uttered no cries of joy. There was only silence, then tears of emotion and sadness. We dared not believe, even at the very end, that our executioners had not succeeded in killing us to erase all trace of their crime."

Shortly after being liberated, she married Antoine Veil, an economist. But in 1953, she was devastated by the deaths of her sister a psychologist – and her 15-month-old son in a car accident. "For me, this was even worse than the death of my mother," she said, her eyes misting over, her voice growing weak. "My sister was happy with this child. It was terrible. We were very close."

Veil – who holds honorary degrees from the Weizmann Institute, Bar-Ilan University and Hebrew University – heads the Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah, which was established by the government in 1999 and is now one of the largest charitable organizations in France.

Capitalized by funds expropriated from French Jews murdered during the war, its mandate is to disseminate information about the Holocaust, encourage and fund research on it and raise awareness of racial prejudice.

There was a time, after the war, when she could not have imagined that French Holocaust deniers such as Robert Faurisson would exist. But today, Faurisson and his cockeyed theories are of no real concern to her. "He has little impact and no influence. It's just propaganda."

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Jewish Toronto

Canadians meet leaders of South Africa's Jewish community

Mission participants discover country's Jewish roots

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

The elephant was clearly agitated. It was flopping its ears back and forth, and steadily walking towards the open-air truck. The truck's wheels spun in the mud, and even the guide was starting to look concerned.

It was a thrilling moment, and, for Liora Yakubowicz, it was a highlight of the trip. "You have to remember that even though you feel safe, you're still in the wild and they're in control," she says.

It's not exactly what you'd expect of a UJA Federation mission, but this adventure did indeed take place during a recent mission to South Africa.

Yakubowicz and her husband, Simon, were the Toronto chairs of the trip. Together with Montreal chairs Stanley and Barbara Plotnick, they led 30 Torontonians and another 30 Canadians from Vancouver, Montreal, Hamilton and Ottawa on the mission, which was under the auspices of UIA Federations Canada and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Members of the recent UJA Federation mission to South Africa take a tour of the Sabi Sabi Game Reserve. (Photo courtesy of Orah Buck)

"There's a real feeling of friendship because all the people on the trip are involved in Federation or UIA," says Simon Yakubowicz. "It's not like going with strangers."

In Johannesburg, a world apart from the elephants and lions of the Sabi Sabi Game Reserve, the mission participants met with members of the South African Jewish community, where they discussed issues of mutual concern. In Capetown they met with Jewish community leadership and visited sites, such as the Jewish Museum, which traces the story of South African Jewry, and the Holocaust Centre.

Among the issues discussed was South Africa's endemic crime and poverty. "Their life is difficult," says Liora Yakubowicz. "They're living with circumstances I wouldn't want to be living with."

"The community's got its own challenges," says Simon Yakubowicz, pointing to serious security problems and a high rate of emigration.

He notes, however, that the exodus from South Africa has created a more cohesive community. "Because of the size, more of the community is involved in communal programs than they are here. Here there's a big part of the community that's not involved."

Among the community leaders with whom the mission participants spoke were Helen Suzman, a long-time anti-apartheid activist, and Mendel Kaplan, honorary president of Keren Hayesod and former national chairman of the South Africa's United Israel Appeal.

"My impression was of a most beautiful country," says Carol Kassel, vice president, Planned Giving and Endowments at UJA Federation. "Our South African counterparts live a rich Jewish life, with almost 90% of all children enrolled in Jewish day schools."

"They put on a fantastic trip," says Liora Yakubowicz. "First rate, first class, with top accommodations and terrific guides." And, to top it off, there's "always a Jewish context, which is fantastic."

Something to CHAT about

A formal signing recently took place for the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto to manage the assets of CHAT's (Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto) Legacy Endowment Fund.

"This outstanding partnership between CHAT and the Jewish Foundation will guarantee that the CHAT Legacy Endowment Fund will be managed in the most fiscally responsible way possible and because of the expertise of the Foundation's Investment Committee, the funds will achieve a far greater return than CHAT could have offered," said Alan Applebaum, CHAT president.

"CHAT is very excited about this partnership," said CHAT chair Lori Disenhouse. "It is recognition that we have the same goals and this will be the best way for CHAT to realize its objective of making the Jewish high school experience accessible to the maximum number of Jewish young people in the GTA."

Pictured left to right at the signing ceremony are: (standing) Lori Disenhouse, Paul Shavin, director of Education, CHAT; Ted Sokolsky, president UJA Federation; Carol Kassel, vice president Planned Giving and Endowments, Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, and Elizabeth Wolfe, Chair of the Jewish Foundation. (seated l. to r.) Alan Applebaum, and David Engel, chair UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

Jewish Road Show may uncover your hidden treasures

By ELLEN SCHEINBERG
UJA Federation

Do you have family treasures in your home such as kiddush cups, old Rosh Hashana cards, war letters, family diaries or a menorah that belonged to your *bubbie*? Are you curious about the origins of the item, how it was used, as well as its potential value?

On May 7 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. you'll have the opportunity to get your questions answered at The Beth Tzedec Museum where UJA Federation's Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA), part of the Latner Centre for Jewish Knowledge and Heritage, is co-hosting the Toronto Jewish Road Show.

The road show will include an illustrated keynote address by New York author and Judaic expert Jonathan Greenstein; several workshops on the preservation and care of photographs, textual records and collection of Judaica and finally, an afternoon involving the evaluation of Jewish family treasures and heirlooms by local and international experts. The services of translators will also be available to reveal the content of documents written in Yiddish, Hebrew or Polish.

Brooky Robins, chair of the OJA, sees this event as an opportunity to teach the community about preserving the past and developing a better understanding of family heirlooms.

"Members of the community can bring in their family treasures and learn about the objects, photographs or documents that they cherish," she says. "Family treasures help us learn that we all have a place in history."

For more information or to pre-register before April 28th, contact Dorion Liebgott at 416-781-3514 ext. 32 or the OJA at 416 635 2883 ext. 170

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Joseph Lebovic provides Hungarian young people with trip of a lifetime

Philanthropist sponsors 40 on birthright israel experience

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

Canadian philanthropist Joseph Lebovic has given 40 young Hungarian Jews a number of gifts: a trip to Israel, pride in their heritage, and a sympathetic ear.

The Hungarians—who range in age from 18 to 26—were participants on a recent *birthright israel* trip sponsored by Lebovic.

The structured 10-day Israel Experience Toronto tour included visits to the Negev, Massada, Ein Gedi and Jerusalem. While in Israel they learned about topics related to Zionism, Judaism, the State of Israel and the land of Israel.

Lebovic chose to sponsor the group because he lived in Hungary during the war. "I know where they come from," he says. Lebovic says that it is important to instill Jewish pride in Eastern European youth, many of whom don't even have the confidence to tell their friends that they're Jewish.

With minimal Jewish education, and parents and grandparents who avoid talking about the Holocaust, the needs of these Jewish young people are different from those of their North American counterparts. "We have to create a program that caters to Eastern European participants," Lebovic says.

More than 98,000 students from 45 countries have participated in *birthright israel* trips since the project's establishment five years ago, and of the 17,000 Canadian participants, 13,000 have been from the Greater Toronto Area. The trips, at no cost to participants, create a connection between young Jews and the State of Israel and strengthen their Jewish identity.

Toronto philanthropist Joseph Lebovic spends some time in Israel with the group of 40 Hungarians he sponsored on birthright israel.

Lebovic spent three days with the Hungarian group, trying to instill pride in their Jewish heritage. "They see it isn't just money, but somebody taking an interest," he says. "They feel proud that somebody took the time to talk to them."

This trip is just one example of Lebovic's commitment to the Jewish community. He and his brother Wolf are the lead donors behind the Lebovic Jewish Community Campus—a 50-acre site being built in Vaughan by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and its Tomorrow Campaign, chaired by Gerald Schwartz and Lawrence Tanenbaum. The campus will house schools, community services, and fitness and conference facilities.

As for *birthright israel*, Lebovic says it's money well spent. "I'm going to do it again. They do feel a lot stronger about being Jewish."

UJA Federation covets the next generation of Jewish leaders

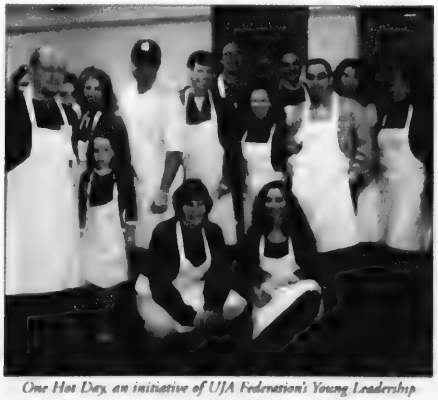
With missions to Israel and Ethiopia, movie nights, and hands-on volunteer opportunities, UJA Federation is targeting a whole new generation of Jewish leaders.

UJA Federation Young Leadership chair Steven Farber notes that a broad range of activities is required to cater to the needs of UJA's young adults—loosely defined as those between 25 and 40. It's a diverse age group that includes recent graduates who are still paying off student loans, single professionals who work long hours, and young parents who are focused on their children's needs.

A number of different divisions within UJA Federation already cater to this age group. "The difficulty is that they exist within a vacuum with very little coordination," says Farber.

To remedy this problem, the groups are in the process of creating a coordinating mechanism through which they will work together. Its primary focus will be communication—each group will know what the others are working on so it can offer support and encourage its members to participate. They will also work together to encourage unaffiliated young adults to get involved. "This whole effort is about having more people in the community become affiliated," says Farber.

The new initiative began informally, as a round table discussion between representatives of different young leadership groups and the main goal is to attract and train the next generation of leaders. When the young leaders "graduate" into general community, they'll take substantial leadership experience with them.



One Hot Day, an initiative of UJA Federation's Young Leadership Division, sees volunteers roll up their sleeves for a number of important community causes, such as this one which helped to feed Toronto's homeless.

Canadians get first-hand look at life of Falas Mura

This is a real manifestation of Zionism.

These words, spoken at the closing caucus, summarize the recent UIA Federations Canada national fact-finding mission to Ethiopia and Israel. Twenty people who participated in the mission, accompanied a group of new Ethiopian olim to Israel.

UJA Federation of Greater Toronto – along with other North American Jewish Federations – is financing Operation Promise – which seeks to raise $100 million to bring the remaining Falas Mura to Israel, to absorb the new immigrants, and to help all Ethiopian-Israelis through improved education.

The Falas Mura are former Jews who converted to Christianity under threat or force.

"All of us have undertaken this mission in order to grapple with the most urgent need facing the Jewish community: The Falas Mura in Ethiopia, preparing to finally move to Israel and the Ethiopian Israeli community, struggling to become fully integrated into Israeli society," said Mission Chair Harvey Wolfe.

The group which flew to Ethiopia last month, spent three days witnessing the preparations required for the trip to Israel.

Maxyne Finkelstein of UIA Federations Canada, (second from left), along with Brad Fox and Judith Finer-Freedman meet with a member of the Ethiopian community in Israel.

"We went to the compound in Gondar and saw a school with 2,100 students," said Joey Steiner of Toronto, a past president of UJA Federation. "It was quite an amazing operation. There was a feeding station for children and pregnant and nursing women. It's altogether a tremendously impressive operation for the people waiting to see if they'll qualify to come to Israel. We also went to what used to be a Jewish village and visited the cemetery there where we temporarily affixed a plaque in memory of those who died en route out of the country, and never made it to Israel."

Once in Israel, the mission participants accompanied the new Ethiopian Olim to a welcome reception at the airport, and to the absorption centre in Mevasseret Tzion, between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

"While a bit sleep deprived, the group has had an extraordinary opportunity to understand the personal side to this aliyah," said UIA Federations Canada, executive vice president Maxyne Finkelstein. "The mission personalized the plight of these incredibly poor people who are preparing to restart their lives as Jews, dealing with all the complexities of moving into this century."

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The message of the Tabernacle

By RABBI YECHIEL GOLDREICH

RABBINICAL REFLECTIONS

No one will tell you that the structure itself was especially impressive. It was about 120 feet long, 40 feet wide, and 60 feet tall, probably no larger than one of the big, renovated houses we see today.

The people who built it could presumably have made a much bigger "building" if they had wanted to. There was no lack of qualified workmen. Heaven knows that almost everyone had plenty of experience in construction.

But this type of edifice, the Mishkan, the Tabernacle, the portable sanctuary that housed the Holy Ark in the desert, was meant to be different from the more banal jobs the children of Israel were used to doing. It was meant to be a work of art.

The materials were durable but delicate. The Mishkan was also made to be taken apart and, like the community that built it, to be transported from place to place. Made out of exotic lumber and colourful leather, coated with precious metals, it was the collective labour of many poor, hardworking souls.

This was their "synagogue," their House of God, and I'm sure they were proud of it. I'm not clear about what became of the structure, but like other public buildings, it probably fell into disuse when the larger, more permanent building – the Temple – was constructed.

Maybe it seems foolish to get sentimental about a "building," but I truly believe there was magic going on in that place. I don't mean magic only as a metaphor for the special feelings of holidays and celebrations that were observed there, but I believe that truly enchanted experiences often happened there.

I'm not the only one who believes this. The collective childhood memory of our people recalls the extraordinary setting and the voice from deep inside that place.

And so, Jews in synagogues worldwide read the parshiot at the end of Exodus every year, the passages about this sanctuary that our ancestors built as a home for God. Consider the millions of hours spent by people simply studying the furniture, dimensions and method of construction of the Tabernacle.

Religious synagogues still model themselves on this building today, to reconnect to our past and reproduce what we have lost. Like grownups visiting a childhood home, we are certainly not simply surveying the house structure or planning to tear it down to build something else, but trying to re-experience the warmth, simplicity and miracles of our formative years in our present-day lives.

Rabbi Goldreich is the assistant rabbi of Congregation Bnai Torah and a tfillah teacher at the Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto.

Jewish humour, Part 2

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

The Jewish Highway

A rabbi, seriously ill, was sent the following message from his congregation: "We wish you a speedy recovery, by a vote of 213 to 56." **[http://tinyurl.com/7uewk]**

Last week, we looked at sites that trace Jewish humour from biblical times to the early 20th century. Today we continue the voyage and focus on American entertainment.

The TV documentary *A Gift for Laughter* suggests two reasons for the Jewish use of humour. As a survival mechanism ("as a defensive response to the burden of suffering and as a technique for overcoming adversity by sharpening one's wits") and as a people in relation to the dominant society ("many Jewish parents teach their children to learn, to question authority, to explore different points of view"). **[http://tinyurl.com/e6eo6]** Questioning authority has certainly been a hallmark of many Jewish entertainers, among them Jon Stewart, Lenny Bruce or Minnie Marx's boys. **[http://hauntedsmile.com/excerpt.html]**

Guests: Hooray for Capt. Spaulding, the African explorer!

Spaulding: Did someone call me schnorrer?

Guests: Hooray, hooray, hooray!

(Groucho Marx in *Animal Crackers*, 1930) **[http://tinyurl.com/exqwf]**

A couple of years ago, PBS radio produced a wonderful radio series in which they lovingly restored incredible Yiddish radio programs from the 1930s to the '50s. One of the stars of the Yiddish Radio Project was C. Israel Lutsky, better known as the Jewish Philosopher. Part Dear Abby, part Dr. Phil, there was no question he felt he could not address. You can listen to a rare English-language broadcast in which he expounds on the Jewish gift for humour. **[http://yiddishradioproject.org/gems/23/]**

A few decades later, Jeff Berkwits looked at the ubiquity of Jewish humour and asked an interesting question. "What defines Jewish comedy, and have traditional Jewish values, deeply rooted in Judaism's religious and cultural traditions, become so mainstream they no longer qualify as distinctly Jewish?" Comedian Max Alexanders adds, "It's like a bagel. A bagel was once just a Jewish food. Now, they serve bagels at McDonald's with bacon on them." Comedy writer Bruce Vilanch points out that in *Seinfeld* "even the non-Jewish characters seem to be Jewish, and certainly their parents seem to be Jewish." **[http://tinyurl.com/pud5n]**

Speaking of Jerry Seinfeld, if you'd like to invite him to liven up a party you're throwing, you'd better speak to Gail Stocker. She represents such stars as Jon Stewart, Roseanne Barr or a couple dozen other Jewish comedians (and many other A-listers.) Unfortunately, her site doesn't say how much they charge. But I guess if you have to ask… well, you know. **[http://comedycontact.com/jewishcomics.html]**

Trying to compile a comprehensive list of Jewish American comedians is no easy task. Undaunted, the always formidable online encyclopedia Wikipedia has created a section titled List of Jewish American entertainers that runs 31 pages. You'll find veterans like Sid Caesar, Fanny Brice and the Horwitz brothers – Moe, Shemp and Curly Howard, aka the Three Stooges. And more contemporary shticksters including Sandra Bernhard, Gilbert Gottfried and Larry David. (Sensing the inherent pitfalls when trying to create a list of Jews in contemporary society, Wikipedia also provides a link to its article on Who Is a Jew.) **[http://tinyurl.com/nv68s]**

Jewish comedians – and Jews – are used to being heckled, insulted – and worse. But rarely has the Jewish funny bone been so battered as when British researchers conducted a study to determine the word's funniest joke – without a single Jewish joke among the finalists of the 40,000 surveyed. As veteran comic Alan King told *Forward*, "There aren't 40,000 gentile jokes. If there are, they've been changed." (You can read the winner on the *Forward* site, which I must admit is not bad.) **[http://tinyurl.com/7at4d]**

King believes there really is no such thing as the greatest Jewish joke, although he offered what he called "the greatest priest, minister and rabbi" joke.

"A priest, minister and rabbi go into a bar. The bartender says, 'What is this, a joke?'"

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

Jewish Life

Assessment of World Jewry

Three years ago, the Jewish Agency For Israel established The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute, a think tank based in Jerusalem that brings together scholars, researchers, lay and professional leaders, and public figures of experience and renown from all over the Jewish world. The institute's mandate is to think in present and future terms about the important issues facing the Jewish world and to offer recommendations and strategies for those issues that are implementable.

Among its publications, the institute publishes an Annual Assessment *of the state of the Jewish world.*

The CJN *reproduces here the "Foreword" from the executive report of the assessment for 2005, by former U.S. ambassador to Israel Dennis Ross, chair of the board and professional guiding council of The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute; and a table of "Selected Indicators of World Jewry."*

Country	Jewish Population (Core Definition)			Index of Human Development		Jewish Day-school Attendance Rate (%)	Recent Out-marriage Rate (%)	Ever Visited Israel (% of Jew. Pop.)	Aliyah	Tourists to Israel	Violent Antisemitic Incidents
				Value	World Rank						
	1970[a]	2005[b]	Projected 2020[c]	2002[d]	2002[d]	Most recent[e]	Most recent[e]	Most recent[e]	2004[e]	2004[e]	2004[f]
World	12,653,000	13,033,000	13,558,000	.956–.273	1–177				20,993	1,505,606[g]	
Israel	2,582,000	5,235,000	6,228,000	.908	22	97	5	–		–	
North America	5,686,000	5,652,000	5,581,000	.939–.943	4–8				2,132	422,700	
United States	5,400,000	5,280,000	5,200,000[h]	.939	8	29[i]	54	35	1,890	379,127	17
Canada	286,000	372,000	381,000	.943	4	55	35	66	242	43,573	52
Latin America	514,000	398,000	364,000	.888–.463	29–153				1,238	63,784	
Argentina	282,000	185,000	162,000[j]	.853	34	50–55	45	>50	458	11,734	8
Brazil	90,000	97,000	90,000[k]	.775	72	71	45	>50	237	11,414	5
Mexico	35,000	40,000	42,000	.802	53	85	10	>70	53	14,668	..
Other countries	107,000	76,000	70,000[l]	.888–.463	29–153	75	15–95	>50	490	25,968	..
Europe non-FSU	1,331,000	1,161,000	1,030,000	.956–.734	1–88				3,174	751,254[m]	
France	530,000	494,000	482,000	.925	16	40	40–45	>70	2,003	257,484	96
United Kingdom	390,000	298,000	238,000	.980	12	60	40–45	78	368	146,482	84
Germany	30,000	115,000	108,000	.921	19	<20	>80	>50	85	75,895	50
Hungary	70,000	50,000	34,000	.837	38	<15	60	..	112	6,868	8
Other EU[n]	171,000	150,000	134,000	.946–.842	2–42	10–25	35–75	>50	314	205,551	..
Other non-EU[n]	140,000	54,000	34,000	.956–.751	1–88	5–20	50–80	..	297	57,449	..
FSU[n]	2,151,000	380,000	178,000	.853–.671	36–116				10,127	100,010[n]	
Russia	808,000	235,000	130,000[j]	.795	57	<15	80	..	3,982	55,702	45
Ukraine	777,000	84,000	25,000[j]	.777	70	<15	80	..	3,055	24,207	16
Rest FSU Europe	312,000	40,000	15,000[j]	.858–.681	36–113	<15	65–75	..	984	8,619	..
FSU Asia	254,000	21,000	3,000	.786–.671	78–116	<15	50–75	..	2,106	3,795	..
Asia (rest)[n]	104,000	19,000	21,000	.938–.482	9–149				285	95,208	
Africa	195,000	79,000	60,000	.853–.273	35–177				3,880	43,367	
South Africa	118,000	73,000	57,000	.666	119	85	20	70	82	12,609	5
Oceania	70,000	109,000	101,000	.946–.542	3–133				56	17,226	
Australia	65,000	102,000	95,000	.946	3	65	23		54	14,871	16

a Source: Division of Jewish Demography and Statistics, The A. Harman Institute of Contemporary Jewry, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
b Source: DellaPergola, American Jewish Year Book (2005). Provisional data
c Source: adapted from DellaPergola, Rebhun, Tolts (2000), medium variant
d A measure of a country's public health, educational attainment, and economic standard of living. Source: United Nations Development Programme (2004)
e Israel Central Bureau of Statistics (2005)
f Tel Aviv University Center for the Study of Antisemitism (2004)
g Including countries not reported
h After downward reduction following NJPS 2001
i Based on incomplete sample from NJPS 2001
j Revised population projections for 2020
k Without Baltic states
l Including Turkey
m With Baltic states
n Without Israel, FSU and Turkey

The Jewish People Policy Planning Institute inaugurated an annual assessment of the state of the Jewish People in 2004. Its initial assessment outlined the status of Jewish communities worldwide, including in Israel; described trends that should be a source of concern; and proposed remedies for problem areas. While comprehensive in scope, the 2004 assessment was designed not be replicated each year but to provide a baseline for subsequent comparison.

The 2005 assessment meets that purpose. It updates the geopolitical context in which world Jewry and Israel operate. It highlights critical changes in key communities, focusing on new challenges for French Jewry and the Jews of the former Soviet Union and Poland. It draws attention to trends, particularly demographic trends, that have become more troubling. It reviews how globalization and science and technology can provide new opportunities to promote greater cohesion and education of Jewish people internationally. And, of course, the 2005 JPPPI assessment makes recommendations.

Some of the recommendations are new and others, not surprisingly, build on last year's proposals. The recommendations fall into a number of different categories. One set of recommendations is urgent, responding to the historic decision of the Israeli government to disengage from Gaza and a small part of the West Bank. Taking note of the controversy and the possible trauma over the evacuation of 21 settlements in Gaza and four in the northern part of the West Bank, the assessment calls on Jewish leaders in the Diaspora to make strong declarations against violence, disobedience and violations of law that could be the response to the withdrawal. Similarly, world Jewry is called on to participate in the development of the Negev and the Galilee, both to assist in the absorption of evacuated Jewish settlers and to shift the demographic balance in these areas.

Other categories of recommendations include those on demography, on Diaspora-relations, on Jewish People leadership (enhancing quality and accelerating generational change), on crafting geopolitical grand strategies, and on fully utilizing cyberspace to take advantage of the global nature of the Jewish People. Suffice it to say that many of the recommendations will generate their own controversy, but the demographic trends, among other problems, demand serious responses and those to date have had limited effect. Whether on demography, or affecting generational change in Jewish leadership, or investing in Jewish education, or better integrating the Jewish People as a whole, it is clear that a hard-headed look at priorities is essential.

If nothing else, this year's recommendations should trigger such discussion. However, the measure of the assessment is not the discussion but the actions that result from them. World Jewry and leaders in Israel need to reflect on the recommendations and show how they are responding to them – or at least how their responses are addressing the challenges outlined in the assessment.

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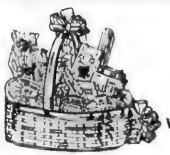

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Dr. Tamar Hermann, Director of the Tami Steinmetz Center for Peace Research at Tel University.

Tuesday, March 14th:
"Israel Elections in the International Media"
12pm at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life
Lunch and Discussion

Thursday, March 23rd:
"Predictions and Projected Consequences for the Israeli Elections 2006"
4pm at the Sidney Smith Building, Room 2102
Prof. Renan Levine, Professor of Political Science at the University of Toronto.

Monday, March 27th:
"Student Mock Israeli Elections '06: The Debate"
5pm at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life

Tuesday, March 28th, Israeli Elections Day:
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Andrea Bronfman memorialized in Montreal

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — A heartbroken Charles Bronfman tried to keep his composure, but could no longer contain his grief when he introduced one of his late wife Andrea's favourite songs, the light-hearted *Baubles, Bangles and Beads*.

That song from the Broadway musical *Kismet*, an exotic fantasy about fate, rendered by Cantor Gideon Zelermyer and the choir, concluded the memorial service for "Andy" held in the majestic sanctuary of Congregation Shaar Hashomayim last week.

She died Jan. 23 shortly after being struck by a vehicle near the Bronfmans' home in Manhattan at age 60. After a funeral in New York, she was buried in Jerusalem on Jan. 27.

About 800 people came to remember a "wee thing," as her late dad, Scotty Morrison, called his diminutive daughter who grew into a "powerful force," in the eyes of her husband, on the world Jewish scene and beyond. It was a moving tribute, thoughtfully organized, but spontaneous in its emotion.

"I was privileged to spend 25 years with Andy… Ours was a very, very special relationship," said Charles, 74, who has made New York his principal residence since 1998.

He promised to carry on the philanthropic causes she worked for. "There will be no fooling around; she left us our marching orders," said Charles, delivering the toughest public speech he has ever made.

He singled out the people of Israel for the kindness they have shown. "So often we hear about the aggressive nature of Israelis, their rudeness and lack of civility. This is total nonsense. I have never experienced such compassion, dignity and love, and not just from the leaders…

"Israel is unfortunately a country all too familiar with tragedy, yet [Andrea's death] struck a profound chord." The couple spent about three months a year at their home in Jerusalem.

The service opened with the Hebrew song *A Tale of Honey and Thorns*, a reminder, said Rabbi Adam Scheier, of the bittersweet nature of life. Both sides of the bimah's border were banked with masses of ferns and roses of all sizes, in shades of salmon, gold and vermilion. It ended with a contemporary arrangement of *K'El Maleh Rachamim*.

Relatives and friends drew a portrait of a complex woman who could be uncompromising and sometimes brusque in the pursuit of what she believed in, but warm, funny and loyal to those closest to her.

Other speakers were Charles' son, Stephen Bronfman, and Andrea's children, Jeremy, Pippa and Tony Cohen; Andrea's only sibling, Kappy Flanders, who organized the event; Andrea's friend Dany Pollack; Leo Kolber, Charles' friend of 57 years; McGill University professor Gil Troy; and Supreme Court Justice Rosalie Abella, whose husband Irving wrote the book *A Coat of Many Colours*, part of a Canadian Jewish history project Andrea initiated.

Stephen said his father is in "immense pain… Only time will heal such a big hole in such a big heart." Theirs was "a love story and a partnership," he said, with Andrea being "the voice of reason that got Dad through tough times. Boy, could you make him smile.

"Rest easy, Andy. We are taking care of Dad, and Dad is taking care of Yoffe," a reference to her beloved dog, which she was walking the morning of the accident.

Flanders said she and her sister, who grew up in England, were raised with Jewish values that taught them "from our earliest days, to love and share with one another, and to be grateful for each other."

Andrea, she said, had the grace and elegance of their Brooklyn-born mother, Doris, and the wit and charm of their father, Hyam, better known as Scotty. Andrea was "a mere 5-foot-2, with a push, but proved that good things really do come in small packages.

"We did not always see eye to eye; we were both strong women with strong opinions, but we deeply loved each other." Their strong bond withstood time and distance, she said, concluding, "For better or for worse, I will never be the same."

Andrea's eldest son, Jeremy, said his mother "was who she was; she didn't sugarcoat things," but he had difficulty continuing when he said she was "just coming into her own as a grandmother," even though she disliked the term.

Pippa said her mother "consistently dazzled and amazed everyone who crossed her path," yet the family knew her as simply their mom who made comfort foods and homey desserts, could sing every song from *The Sound of Music* and, as Tony recalled, "ate all that revolting blue icing off a Woolworth cake."

She was able to juggle her interests in such a way that the family always felt they came first.

Pollack described her friend as "prickly with anyone she perceived as taking advantage. She had sharp antennae for takers. She was impatient with sycophants and phonies… She was by no means an angel; in fact, she was rather proud of being a brat."

But to those she favoured, she was deeply loyal and generous. She held herself to "high standards of excellence. She did not take life lightly."

As Kolber said, Andrea "knew what she wanted and had a way of getting it. She told you exactly what she was thinking right to your face… It was as if she sensed her time was limited on Earth and had to get things done in a hurry."

Abella also pointed to the contradictions in Andrea's personality and preferences. She was someone who was "both sophisticated and earthy, serious and funny." She could not abide arrogance, cowardice and hypocrisy. "An ordinary challenge was no magnet for her preternatural skills and energy."

She loved the Jewish community for its pride, but not its resignation; and Israel when it was progressive rather than intransigent, Abella said. "But she loved Charles without reservation."

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Hamas tones down rhetoric without moderating views

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

What exactly is a Hamas "moderate"?

Ismail Haniyeh, the new Palestinian Authority president, has been described by many journalists as "moderate" or "pragmatist," with little to back up this claim.

In *The Democracy Game* (*New Yorker*, Feb. 27) David Remnick investigates whether Hamas can moderate. He casts a skeptical eye at Hamas leaders "fairly schooled in the arts of diplomatic wrangling and media manipulation" whose "public language attempts to yoke contradictory goals."

Remnick writes that Hamas is "trying to enter the realm of politics without relinquishing the prerequisites of armed resistance and the purity of ideological rejectionism. They want to maintain the support of their most radical fighters without losing the funding of the European Union. They hint at the possibility of a *hudna* – a prolonged truce – if Israel retreats to the borders that existed before the Six Day War, but they also reserve the 'historical' goal of absolute dominion made plain in their charter."

He notes that a media adviser "counselled Hamas candidates not to talk about killing Israelis and to limit their speech about taking back all of historic Palestine." In other words, tone down the Islamic rhetoric that frightens the West.

So by Hamas standards, moderates say less radical things – rather than actually moderating their views and renouncing any of Hamas' radical beliefs.

Those hard-core positions were expressed by Mahmoud al-Zahar, the Hamas leader in Gaza, on *Global News*, Feb. 18. Reporter Martin Himel presented Zahar saying: "We are not accepting the argument that Israel is our partner or to accept the existence of Israel as a legal state."

On CBC Radio news, Feb. 19, Margaret Evans reported that PA President Mahmoud Abbas "went head-to-head with Hamas publicly, warning them that any Palestinian administration has an obligation to respect existing agreements with Israel."

Abbas could arguably be called a moderate. He has spoken to the Palestinians, in their own language, about the need to reject violence and accept their own state living alongside Israel.

What did Nahlah Ayed mean when on CBC-TV News: Sunday Night, Feb. 19, she said, without explanation, that Haniyeh is considered by some to be a "relative moderate"?

After all, he rejects accommodation with Israel because he rejects the very idea of Israel's presence as a Jewish state. Compared to Abbas, Haniyeh could hardly be called a moderate. But within the extreme rejectionist terms defined by the Hamas charter, he might be considered a "relative" moderate since he has reportedly hinted at the possibility of a long-term truce with Israel. However, the phrase "relative moderate" is misleading and confusing to a general audience that doesn't have a deep understanding of Hamas and certain of its recently finessed public pronouncements.

On CTV *National News*, Feb. 19, Ellen Pinchuk said that Haniyeh is considered to be a "pragmatist." She quotes him as saying: "I pray to God almighty to help me in keeping up this responsibility in order to clarify the Palestinian issue and the Palestinian people's sacrifices until we regain the rights that were forcibly taken from this great people."

Like the term "moderate," "pragmatist" in this context is not something that is readily comprehensible. For sure, a clear, uncompromising vocabulary is needed to capture the truly immoderate nature of Hamas.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

Money now needed for PR campaign, funding advocates say

Continued from page 3

"Opposition to the EETC can be effectively disarmed by ensuring that the discrimination rationale is central, since nobody credibly defends discrimination," the mailing stated. "It is crucial that both the design and messaging of any initiative to fund independent schools focuses in a very disciplined and visible way on the discrimination issue."

A sample letter-to-the-editor reacting to Tory's statements says it's "hard to see what is controversial" about the remarks.

"It is beyond reasonable debate that funding Catholic schools at 100 per cent while providing nothing to non-Catholic faith-based schools is discrimination," the sample letter says. "Nobody seriously disagrees that funding 93 per cent of faith-based schools at 100 per cent, while excluding the other seven per cent just because they are not Catholic, is wrong."

Walfish said it's time Jewish advocacy organizations and other faith groups considered hiring a professional lobbyist to press the funding case.

Last week, both the *Globe and Mail* and *Toronto Star* ran editorials strongly opposing government support for private and faith-based schools, arguing that such a move would drain much-needed money from the public system.

Last Thursday, Parents for Equality in Education Funding again sent out sample letters, this time, as a reply to the editorials.

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Coast to Coast

Remaining Ethiopian Jews face dire conditions

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Harvey Wolfe has returned from a brief trip to Ethiopia shaken by the dire poverty and convinced of the urgency of providing the remaining people of Jewish descent in that country with the resources to live in dignity and bringing as many as possible to Israel.

Wolfe, a Montreal businessman, led a group of 20 Canadian Jewish fundraisers on a mission last month designed to show them the conditions of the Falas Mora, Ethiopians believed to have been Jewish before they were converted to Christianity in the late 19th and early 20th century and who still maintain certain Jewish practices. The group saw the work being done on the ground by principally the Jewish Agency and American-Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

The Canadians also accompanied 55 olim on their flight to Israel and witnessed their first day in the land they have dreamed of going to for two millennia.

"I was overwhelmed by the poverty and the sadness, not just among the Falas Mora, but among the people generally. It is something I can't get out of my mind, nor can I forget the smells. It's one big sewer," Wolfe said. "Anybody who visits has to want to help."

He was shocked by how primitive the Falas are; few can read and they have no understanding of the modern world, what a refrigerator is or even how to use a toilet.

In September, the Israeli government launched Operation Promise to bring thousands of Falas to Israel, where many have relatives. Wolfe said estimates of their numbers range from 13,000 to 18,000; it is unclear because Jewish Agency officials have to determine the ancestry of each individual, a difficult task when no written records exist and a limited number of people are in Ethiopia to make that assessment. About 300 Falas a month are being flown to Israel.

"The Israeli government may decide to increase this to 600 because the Ethiopian government has set a deadline of December, 2007 [for their emigration], although we heard that may be extended another year," Wolfe said.

Some 3,000 Falas were left behind during Israel's last major airlift of Ethiopians in 1991 because they were not recognized as Jews by Israel's chief rabbinate or even under the more liberal law of return. Since then many more have come forward, leaving their villages and congregating in the capital of Addis Ababa and the provincial centre of Gondor, waiting to be taken to what they believe is literally the Promised Land. Some have been waiting seven or eight years, Wolfe said.

"If I was making the decisions, and if money was not an issue, I would have brought them out as quickly as possible. They see themselves as Jewish, they practise some Judaism… They are a heck of a lot more Jewish than many people I know," said Wolfe, who is the immediate past world chair of the Keren Hayesod board of trustees, and now sits on the executives of that organization and of the Jewish Agency.

But, he acknowledged, the cost of acculturating Ethiopians to living in Israel is high, up to $100,000 (US) per person, he was told.

Israel has earmarked $23 million (US) over three years for the care of the Falas in Ethiopia and for their integration into Israel. This provides food, shelter and health care, as well as education in Judaism and Hebrew, in living in a modern society, and vocational training in preparation for settling them to Israel.

Israel has asked Diaspora Jewry to contribute another $100 million to this task.

Organized by United Israel Appeal-Federations Canada, the mission's itinerary included three days in Ethiopia. Participants were taken to a shantytown, just outside the Sheraton Hotel where they stayed, that has sprung up in Addis. Wolfe described it as consisting of tiny hovels that shelter several people each. For these, they must pay a high proportion of the little money they earn.

They also met with the more fortunate ones who are now living at the Israeli Embassy compound while they are processed for aliyah.

The Canadians then flew to Gondar in the mountains to visit a Jewish Agency compound where children and adults are taught and the children are fed twice a day. The facilities are very basic, Wolfe said, the classroom floors, for example, are bare earth.

Wolfe readily admits he felt uncomfortable as a privileged outsider coming to observe this desperation. Despite their need, he found the Falas a proud people. "They are not looking for a handout. Some of them sell things. If the price is $2 and you hand them $10, they insist on giving you more stuff."

Wolfe was astounded when waiting to depart for Israel, that the olim walked to the airport, carrying suitcases and other belongings on their heads.

None, of course, had ever been on a plane before and they were nervous, Wolfe said.

"The stewardess came around with headsets, and they had no idea what they were. My daughter [Wendy Fine] was sitting between two boys, and showed them how to put them on. When they heard the music, they were overwhelmed; they couldn't figure out where it came from."

The Canadians followed the Ethiopians as they arrived at the airport, where they were immediately given about NIS 300 (about $63 US) each for immediate needs, and then onto an absorption centre, where they settled into small apartments. "We could see they were very much in shock," Wolfe said.

No charges over cartoons

Calgary's chief crown prosecutor won't lay hate promotion charges against two publications that reprinted controversial Danish cartoons depicting the Muslim prophet Muhammad.

Gordon Wong said there is no evidence the Calgary-based *Western Standard* or the *Jewish Free Press* intended to promote hatred by publishing the cartoons, the *Toronto Star* reported.

"The intent was to debate the issues within the articles. That's different than inciting hatred," Wong said.

Last month, both publications reprinted some of the cartoons that have angered Muslims worldwide. One depicts Muhammad in a turban holding a bomb with a lit fuse. In another, he tells suicide bombers there are no virgins left in heaven for them.

Mohamed Elmasry, head of the Canadian Islamic Congress, said Canada's hate laws should be strengthened to include these types of images. The cartoons, he said, imply "that all Muslims, by being a Muslim, also are terrorists. It will endanger the well-being of Muslims in Canada."

Convictions under anti-hate provisions of the Criminal Code can occur only if there is a deliberate intent to promote hate. Comments on subjects in the public interest or on a religious topic are protected.

Meanwhile, the Calgary-based Islamic Supreme Council of Canada (ISCC), which has filed a human rights complaint in Alberta over the cartoons, said it will launch a national Islamic newspaper next month to help Canadians understand issues that are important to Muslims. The move came after the two Calgary publications reprinted the cartoons.

"This will not be a newspaper… of a specific denomination. This will represent the broader Muslim community," ISCC president Syed Soharwardy told CBC. The *Muslim Free Press* will publish every two weeks in four cities.

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Only paid Mazel tov announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words maximum. Send your photos to:

The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., #205 North York, ON. M3B 3K4
or email them to:
cblackman@cjnews.com

Joan and Larry Madorsky are thrilled to announce the engagement of their son

Jason to Jill

daughter of Sandra and Leslie Pantel of Montreal. Proud grandparents are Kathlyn Bernstein, Lillian Rothstein, Beverly and Hy Pantel. Sadly missed are Leon Bernstein, Ida and Morris Madorsky, Gertrude Pantel, Norman Rothstein.

A July 2006 wedding is planned.

MARA LEVIN & BRAD KOTANSKY

Paul & Geri Levin* and *Gita & Bill Kotansky joyfully announce the engagement of their children Mara and Brad. Excited family members are sister Alyssa Levin, grandparents Lillian Walker, Molly and Harry Lewkowicz. Sadly missed at this time are James E. Walker, Ray and Arthur Jaskolka, Leah and Moe Kotansky. A September 2006 wedding is planned in Toronto.

Mazel Tov on your 55th Anniversary February 28th

Ruth & Norem Litvak

All our love Judy, Michael, Patti, Sheldon, Corey, Jamie, Shaun, Lauren, Jodi, Evan, Robin, Noah, Emily & Shayne

Congratulations to Henry & Fela Leader
Who celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on February 16th. Mazel Tov from Arthur, Ellen & Jordana Leader-Ottawa. Rolland, Loris, Nathan & Jonah Leader-Toronto

Rina & Irving Gottesman, Lynette & Eric Inspektor announce the engagement of their children Jennifer & Russell. Grandparents are Shoshana & Sam Rotenberg and Carol Gottesman.

Mazel tov to Joey Hotz on your fifth birthday! Lots of love from your parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

Yetta Kudlats & Howard Kudlats and Channa Sargon & Eliot Sargon are proud to announce the engagment of their children Jessica & Adam.

Mazel tov to Bunnie & Ed Lewis who will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary March 11. Love from their children and grandchildren.

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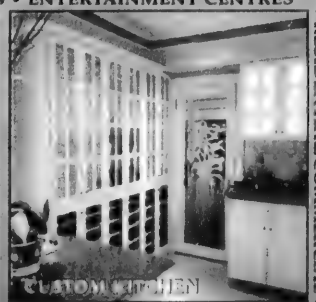

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, March 6, is the deadline for the March 16 issue and Monday, March 13, is the deadline for the March 23 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, March 2

THE YIDDISH CLUB

Faye Schulman, a photographer who escaped the Nazis and joined the partisans, speaks at the Yiddish Club. 12:15 p.m. at the Free Times Café, 620 College St. RSVP to yiddishvinkl@yahoo.ca or **Bess**, 416-630-7222.

GIFTED EDUCATION

Tikun Chaim, UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education, presents a forum on "Gifted Education: Past, Present and Future," facilitated by **Joanne Foster**. 7:30-9:30 p.m. at CHAT, 200 Wilmington Ave. 416-631-5835.

Saturday, March 4

BAYCREST ART AND SOUL

The 7th Annual Art and Soul fundraiser to support Alzheimer's research at Baycrest takes place at 8 p.m. at the Windsor Arms Hotel. Enjoy food, drinks, dancing and a silent auction. $55. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 2856, for tickets.

ATTITUDE OR GRATITUDE

A melaveh malka with the video *Gratitude or Attitude*, followed by a discussion with **Rabbis Jonathan Rietti** and **Yechiel Spero** at the Minsker Shul, 10 St. Andrew St. at 8:30 p.m. 416-595-5723, reachus@theminsk.com

Sunday, March 5

HESCHEL ARTS FESTIVAL

The Toronto Heschel School Arts Festival takes place 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at Adath Israel Synagogue. 416-635-5501, ext. 400.

SECULAR YIDDISH

Temple Har Zion presents **Prof. Kalman Weiser**, of York University, on "From Jewish People to Yiddish Nation: The Cultural Ideology of Secular Yiddishism," a program on Yiddish, in English. Service 9 a.m., breakfast 9:30 a.m., program 10 a.m. Non-members $8 Reservation required. Call 905-889-2252, ext. 5.

SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

Ateret Shalom Hebrew School has an open house on March 5 for the Parents and Tots Hebrew Fun and Learn program that begins Sunday, March 26, at Thornhill Woods Public School. Open house 9:30 a.m. for 18-24 month olds, 10:30 a.m. for 2-3 year olds. RSVP 905-886-1457.

PURIM FAMILY FESTIVAL

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism's Purim Family Festival is at Banbury Community Centre, 120 Banbury Rd. 10 a.m. Adults $8, children $5. RSVP 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc., for those 50+, for a tour of the Distillery Historic District. Meet at Balzac's Coffee House, 55 Mill St. at 10 a.m. For info and pre-registration, e-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

Monday, March 6

LIBRARY BOOK CLUB

The Holy Blossom Book Club discusses *The Singing Fire* by **Lillian Nattel** at 10 a.m. For information, call **Anne**, 416-789-3291, ext. 235.

JEWS AND THE MESSIAH

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents **Leon Wieseltier**, literary editor of *The New Republic*, on "Why Don't the Jews Want the Messiah?" 8 p.m. 416-781-3514, ext. 34

Tuesday, March 7

LUNCH & LEARN

Beth Tikvah presents "The Influence of the Cantorial Voice on Yiddish Song" with **Mitchell Leonard Smolkin**, artistic director of Ashkenaz Festival, singing Yiddish musical favourites. Lunch 12:15 p.m. Learn 1 p.m. Reserve by Friday, March 3, 416-221-3433, ext. 352.

Continued on page 21

EDUCATION AT BETH TIKVAH SYNAGOGUE

LUNCH AND LEARN TUESDAYS

March 7th

"The Influence of the Cantorial Voice on Yiddish Song"
With 27 year old phenomenon **Mitchell Leonard Smolkin**, artistic director of the Ashkenaz Festival. He will sing the Yiddish musical favorites of Cantors Moishe Oisher, Aaaron Lebedov Jan Peerce and Louis Danto. Accompanied by Nina Shapilsky on the piano. Lunch with a 'Yiddish Tum' catered by Sisterhood.

March 14th

Dr. Derek Penslar, Chair of Jewish Studies at University of Toronto and a frequent lecturer at Beth Tikvah will speak on Jewish humor, satire and wit Join in and enjoy this Purim Seudah

March 21st

Dr. Andrea Most, professor of English Literature at the University of Toronto, will speak about Jews on Broadway. She will show excerpts from the film *Oklahoma* and point out the film's Jewish connections. Who knew?!

March 28th

John Thompson, author of *Other People's Wars: Overseas Terrorism in Canada* and Director of the Mackenzie Institute, will focus on organized violence, terrorism and political instability.

Lunch at 12:15 p.m. & Learn at 1:00 p.m.
To reserve call
Beth Tikvah Synagogue 3080 Bayview Avenue
by 11 a.m. on the Friday before each program
Lunch and Learn Hotline 416-221-3433 Ext. 352

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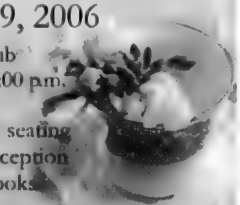

- Couvert $75 per person, limited general seating
- Sponsorship options include cocktail reception with Susie and copies of Susie's cookbooks

Dietary laws observed (COR)
For reservations and information please call
NCSY 905-761-6279 ext. 32.
NCSY

Continued from page 20

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Hillel presents "Reputation Management," with **Warren Kinsella**, journalist and political adviser; **Howard English**, of UJA Federation; and **Hershel Ezrin**, of the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy. 7 p.m. at the Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. $5.

WOMEN & THE LAW

Beth David Sisterhood presents **Len Rudner**, of Canadian Jewish Congress, on "Women and The Law." 7:30 p.m. Non-members $5.

FILM REVIEW

The Adath Israel Sisterhood Book and Film Review Club discusses the film *A Walk on Water*. 8 p.m. Members $10, non-members $15. 416-495-9281.

PURIM: THE HIDDEN WORLD

Jews for Judaism presents "The Hidden World: A Mystical Understanding of Purim" with **Rabbi Michael Skobac** at the Minsker Shul. For info, call Jews for Judaism 905-761-0040.

Wednesday, March 8

LUNCH AND LEARN

Darchei Noam Congregation presents "Hed Arzi: A Survey of Israeli Music" with **Brian Torobin**. Bring a brown bag lunch, beverages and cookies provided. 12-2 p.m. 15 Hove St. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca

Other news

CHURCH AND STATE

David Novak, chair of Jewish studies at the University of Toronto, will be scholar-in-residence at Shaar Shalom Congregation for the March 3-4 weekend. Following dinner on Friday night, he speaks on "Church-State Relations in Canada." On Shabbat morning, his pulpit sermon is "Can Jewish Law Be Unethical?" Reserve for dinner $30, under 12, $15, 905-889-4975

THE TENTH MAN

Teatron Theatre Productions presents the drama comedy *The Tenth Man* by **Paddy Chayefsky**, Wednesday, March 8, through Sunday, March 12, on the main stage at the Leah Posluns Theatre. Tickets $15-40, call 416-855-6651 or visit www.teatrontheatre.com.

SINGLES SERVICE

Singles 35+ are invited to a Shabbat service with **Rabbi Meir Gottesman** at Emuna Shleima Shul, 4120 Bathurst St. Saturday, March 11. Services 9:15 a.m., followed by kiddush. RSVP 416-785-1395.

PURIM CELEBRATIONS

The Winchevsky Centre celebrates International Women's Day and Purim with a musical and theatrical cabaret with an all-girl Klezmer band, Pomegranate. The evening will raise funds for the Morris Winchevsky School. Saturday, March 11, 8 p.m. $15. 416-789-5502.

PURIM CARDS

In lieu of mishloach, Manot Emunah Women are selling cards, 6 cards for $18, delivered directly to your home. 416-636-0036.

PURIM CARNIVALS

The Winchevsky Centre Community Purim Party on Sunday, March 12, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Enjoy the puppet play "What Really Happened the Night Esther Met the King!" by storyteller **Judy Shier Weisberg**, Purim songs, graggers and hamantaschen, costume parade and prizes, shalach manot activity in with Ve'ahavta's Mobile Jewish Response to the Homeless. $9, children under 3 free. 416-789-5502.

Beth Torah Synagogue Purim Carnival on Sunday, March 12, 5-7 p.m., at 47 Glenbrook Ave. Enjoy games, prizes, costumes, music and food. $5. Bring a non-perishable item for the Passover Food Drive. 416-782-4495.

POWER POINT MEGILLAH

Pride of Israel Synagogue Power Point Megillat Esther Program. This program accompanies the reading of the Megillah on Purim evening, Monday, March 13, at 6:45 p.m. and the morning reading Tuesday, March 14, following 7:30 a.m. services. 416-226-0111, ext. 10, or e-mail ravrhodes@thepride.org.

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jiastoronto.org. 416-630-6481

Conversation Café, every Thursday at the BJCC, 7-9 p.m. Practise English in informal setting. Participants and volunteers, call **Joanna** at ext. 30.

Family to Family, volunteer to connect to a newcomer family call **Allison** at ext. 28.

JIAS weekly activities for youth 8-12, and 14-18. Call **Allison** at ext. 28

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service, 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

High Conflict Divorce: A workshop for parents wanting to develop strategies to deal with a high-conflict situation and help to lessen the impact of that conflict on their children. This workshop requires active participation and is not for individuals in an abusive situation. Tuesday, March 7, 6:30-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Developing a Successful Parenting Plan: A workshop for parents wanting to develop a businesslike relationship with their 'ex' partners and to negotiate the day-to-day details of their children's lives. Tuesday, March 7, 7-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Adolescents and Divorce: A workshop for parents who have adolescents and are going through a separation or divorce. The focus is on understanding your adolescent during this transitional time and helping them to cope. Wednesday, March 8, 7-9 p.m. at the Promenade Mall, #313.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Tzedec Congregation Senior Haverim Program presents "Let's Go On a Cruise," a travelogue and slides of Lisbon, Spanish Morocco, Barcelona, Monte Carlo and Florence with **Irwin Patterson**, Monday, March 6, 1:30 p.m. $2. 1700 Bathurst St. 416-781-3511

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday Dance, March 5. Casino Rama, Wednesday, March 8, 22. Mah-jong group starting. For information, call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. March 2, bingo. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Boost Your Memory." Thursdays 11:15 a.m. Free.

Computer special event, Wednesday, March 8, 9-11 a.m. Online greeting card.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

"Nostalgia for the Present," an assemble artworks from discarded industrial materials by Blue Republic at the Koffler Gallery, March 2-April 30.

Bridge taught by **Shawn Mahood** Starts Tuesdays, March 28. Beginners, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Intermediate, 2:30-5 p.m. For info, call **Janet** at ext. 259.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Purim Carnival 2006, Sunday, March 5, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Music, costumes, games, hamantaschen and food, carnival booths and prizes. Costume contests 2-4 yrs., 5-8 yrs. $5, $10 families.

Jewish Meditation Orientation: "Connecting the Practice of Meditation to Our Tradition," Sundays 4:30-5:30 p.m. $15 per session.

Kafka and Son, March 7-18 at the Al Green Theatre. Tickets $15-25, 416-504-7529 or www.artsboxoffice.ca.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Baycrest is looking for volunteers to assist clients to their table, help clients do their shopping in the convenience store, or be a beauty-shop assistant. Volunteers are also needed to assist in lighting the Shabbat candles on Friday evenings, helping clients participate in weekly pre-Shabbat services on Friday afternoons and escorting clients and participating in a weekly lecture on Wednesday afternoons. Orientation will be provided. To volunteer, call 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

BIKING FOR KIDS: Twenty-eight Canadians participated in the 2005 Wheels of Love bike tour, a five-day bike ride from Katzrin to Jerusalem, a distance of more than 400 kilometres, in support of the Alyn Children's Hospital in Jerusalem. The 2006 tour is scheduled for Oct. 29 through Nov. 2. Participants will cycle from Jerusalem to Eilat. For information, visit www.alyn.org.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 24

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Radzeli, Bella	Feb. 14/06	3560 Bathurst St
Kaufman, Sara	Feb. 14/06	Private
Wilson, Charlotte	Feb. 15/06	3560 Bathurst St
Briskman, Lea	Feb. 16/06	Private
Aizikov, Leonid	Feb. 17/06	30 Troyer Crt
Gendler, Asya	Feb. 18/06	6101 Bathurst St
Gruda, Mary	Feb. 18/06	26 Campbell Ave
Rutman, Philip	Feb. 19/06	7300 Yonge St
Alex, Mary	Feb. 18/06	139 Yorkview Dr
Lazarus, Arthur	Feb. 19/06	Private
Lipnitzki, Sima	Feb. 19/06	6091 Bathurst St
Spivak, Sofia	Feb. 19/06	Private
Katz, Max	Feb. 20/06	89 Invermay Ave
Brown, Katie	Feb. 20/06	Private
Tseitlin, Boris	Feb. 22/06	Private
Jakubowicz, Sala	Feb. 21/06	68 Codsell Ave
Chapman, Ruth	Feb. 21/06	Private
Drezner, Dina	Feb. 23/06	8 Covington Rd
Doman, Gisella	Feb. 22/06	Private
Kivovic, Ladislav	Feb. 22/06	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Percy Lindzon	Feb 11/06	27 Vesta Dr
Daniel (Neil) Bohnen	Feb 11/06	60 Rose Park Dr
Helen Tollinsky	Feb 11/06	866 Sheppard Av W
Herb J. Adirim	Feb 12/06	764 Briar Hill Ave
Kaye Zeldin	Feb 14/06	9 Deer Park Cres
Carol Wise	Feb 14/06	400 Walmer Rd
Claire Urstein	Feb 14/06	140 Sherway Dr
Nickie Sher	Feb 15/06	205 Cummer Ave
Arthur Marcovitch	Feb 15/06	1055 Bay St
Elisabeth Adorjan	Feb 16/06	26 Daleberry Pl
Frances (Titel) Steinber	Feb 17/06	9 Knightswood Rd
Dr. Marvin Steinhardt	Feb 17/06	32 Cousion Ave
Alfred S. Magerman, Q.C.	Feb 17/06	43 Knollview Cr
Martha Saskin	Feb 18/06	645 Castlefield Ave

HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Sophie Athias	Feb 11/06	50 Bedle Ave
Romano Moldovan Holdengra	Feb 12/06	525 Lawrence Av W
Irene Zeitoun	Feb 15/06	3705 Bathurst St

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Obituary

Carol Wise was *CJN*'s beauty columnist

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Carol Wise, a makeup artist and longtime *Canadian Jewish News* beauty columnist, died last month after a long battle with cancer. She was 54.

As well as being a makeup artist for more than 30 years, Wise returned to school about five years ago to train as a psychotherapist.

Carol Wise

As part of her psychotherapy practice, she saw residents and families of residents at Lincoln Place Nursing Home, in order to help them deal with various issues, says her son Matthew.

"She loved it. She was a people person, and was happiest when she could help others."

She fought her illness bravely, he says, "and beat odds for a long time because of her strength and will.

"She never complained, and always had a positive outlook. No matter how dark the day, she could always find a bright side."

Francine Birken, Wise's sister-in-law, says she and Wise were more sisters than anything else. "Our bond was unbelievable. We were best friends. Carol was a dynamic, magnificent woman. She healed so many people with her psychotherapy.

"So many people she saw at Lincoln Place couldn't deal with their own loss of independence or with their parents' illnesses. She literally put these people's lives together.

"She also made people feel good in her work as a makeup artist. She made brides feel like they were the most beautiful person on earth."

Wise was a spiritual person who did yoga, ate well, and was very health conscious, says Birken. "She took care of herself as well as others.

"Carol had a real presence about her. She was a striking woman, inside and out."

Roz Mogani called Wise the epitome of grace and elegance.

"When she walked into a room, people noticed her," said Mogani, who was a teenager when she first met Wise.

"She had an ability to connect with people. We would always have wonderful philosophical conversations. She was a sweet soul."

As well as her son and sister-in-law, Wise leaves her mother Belle Birken, daughter Stacey, who is expecting her first child in about one month, son-in-law Jamie Michaels, brother Howard Birken, sister Elayne, and brother-in-law Jack Shuster.

KINDERGARTEN: Evan Friedlan, Perry Osler, Benjamin Alter, Sharan Kanesalinkam

GRADE 1: Tyler Soberano, Aleksandra Milkevic, Michael Li

GRADE 2: Christopher Poloniato, Matthew Lawless, Jake Offenheim, Patrick Yu, Ivan Golovine

GRADE 3: Rebecca Giblon, Ruslan Mamyshev, Itai Bar-Natan, Kosta Kalenteridis

GRADE 4: Alexandru Florea, Arvin Farhang, Elliot Kaufman, Kevin Gao, Sohanthen Udayashankar

GRADE 5: David Itkin, Matthew Worden, Kevin Wu, Benjamin Blium

GRADE 6: Michael Kleinman, Bohishan Sirithar, Michael Noukhovitch, Arvn Sithamparapillai, Eric Zhan, Antony Qian

GRADE 7: Keshev Kulkarni, Archutham Mylvannan, Fern Ramoutar, Robert Matyjewicz

GRADE 8: Richard Douglas, Harris Kaufman, Arjun Sithamparapillai

GRADE 9: Yossi Lipton, Sonia Songtion Zhang, Jonathan Joseph

GRADE 10: Robert Kleinman, Avinash Kulkerni, Varoon Parekh

Chess winners are not necessarily in order from left to right.

(Carolyn Blackman photos)

Feature

Newly nominated jurist's reputation is 'excellent, beyond reproach'

Continued from page 1

Ed Morgan, a professor of law and president of Canadian Jewish Congress, appeared before Rothstein once on a tax case.

"His general reputation as a jurist is excellent, beyond reproach," Morgan said. "The Federal Court has had a mixed record, but he's one of the jurists who pulled it up."

Morgan, who won his case before Justice Rothstein, described the judge as possessing "a keen analytic mind.

"He's a lawyer's lawyer. It would be right to say he applies the law with the minimum amount of politicization," adding that Rothstein "leans to the conservative side."

Morgan speculated Rothstein's judicial philosophy will lead him to "be a less activist than interventionist judge… He's a very prudent jurist."

Morgan suggested that Abella, named to the court by former prime minister Paul Martin, has a more "interventionist" reputation. "Both have fine legal minds. It should make for highly intellectual debate."

In describing his philosophy behind the appointment of judges, during the recent federal election campaign, Harper said, "When I appoint judges, what we'll be looking for is what I call the judicial temperament, and that is the ability to competently and shrewdly and wisely apply the laws that are passed by the Parliament of Canada."

After naming Rothstein to the High Court, Harper said, "Marshall Rothstein's candidacy was scrutinized by a comprehensive process initiated by the previous government that included members from all the political parties. I believe he has the qualifications necessary to serve Canadians well from the country's highest court."

Later, the prime minister stated: "I am looking forward to watching the ad hoc [parliamentary] committee's work and listening to Mr. Rothstein's answers. This hearing marks an unprecedented step towards the more open and accountable approach to nominations that Canadians deserve."

Rothstein was born on Dec. 25, 1940, and grew up in Winnipeg. He was married in 1966 to Sheila Dorfman of Montreal and they have four children. Dorfman works as a doctor at a walk-in clinic in Ottawa.

Rothstein served as a partner in the prestigious Winnipeg firm of Aikins, MacAulay & Thorvaldson, practising in the areas of administrative law and litigation, primarily in the transportation field. He also served as a labour and commercial arbitrator as well as a member of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

Rothstein lectured in transportation law at the University of Manitoba's faculty of law as well as in contract law.

He was named a judge of the Federal Court in 1992 and was appointed to the court's appeal division in 1999.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

יידיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פֿון: אַלעק סילווער

דער ייִד און די וועלט

פֿון לילי (לאה) קוסנער

(א פֿראַגמענט פֿון א גרעסערער אַרבעט)

שוין פֿון חומש ווערט געלערנט, אַז מיר זיינען אַנדערש פֿון אַלע פֿעלקער. בלעם, דער שונא ישׂראל, איז נעשיקט געוואָרן פֿון בלק, קעניג פֿון מואָב, צו שילטן דאָס פֿאָלק ישׂראל, ווען זיי האָבן זיך דערנענטערט צום לאַנד כנען. אָנשטאָט דעם, האָט בלעם זיי געבענטשט אין אַ רייד פֿאָעטיש לשון: „מַה־טֹּבוּ אָהָלֶיךָ יַעֲקֹב מִשְׁכְּנֹתֶיךָ יִשְׂרָאֵל" — „ווי שיין זיינען דיינע געצעלטן, יעקב, דיינע ווינינגען, ישׂראל" בלעם פֿאַרגלייכט עם ישׂראל צו דער נאַטור: „ווי טיטלבוימער זיינען זיי אויסגעשטרעקט, ווי נערטנער בײַם טײַך, ווי אַלאָען, וואָס נאָט האָט געפֿלאַנצט, ווי צעדערן בײַם וואַסער." בלעם זאָגט וויייטער צום ייִדישן פֿאָלק: „נעבענטשט זיינען די וואָס בענטשן דיך, ארור פֿאַרשׂאָלטן די וואָס שילטן דיך!" (אַלע איבערזעצונגען פון יהואש)

אויב מיר ווילן פֿארשטיין דעם ווערט פון אַ ייִד, דאַרפן מיר פֿארשטיין, וואָס א באַוווסטזיניקער ניט־ייִד, וועלכער איז נישט אָנגעשטעקט מיט אַנטיסעמיטיזם, זאָגט וועגן אונדז. ערײַק האָפֿער, אַן אַמעריקאַנער סאָציאָלער פֿילאָזאָף, מחבר פון א קלאַסיש ווערק "The True Believer", האָט אויסגעדריקט זיין געפֿיל, אַז עפּעס אויסטענטיש און ספּעציעלעס מיילט אַפּ דעם ייִד פון אַנדערע פעלקער. ער האָט געשריבן אין דער „לאָס אַנדזשעלעס טיימס", אַז ייִדן זיינען א כאַראַקטעריסטיש פֿאָלק, וואָס פֿארמאָגט טיפּע מאָראַליש ווערטן. די באַציונג צו ייִדן איז אַנדערש ווי צו אַלע אַנדערע פעלקער. וואָס עס איז דערלויבט פֿאַר אַלעמען, איז פֿאַרבאָטן פֿאַר ייִדן.

אַנדערע פעלקער האָבן פֿארטריבן טויזנטער און אפֿילו מיליאָנען מענטשן פון זייערע טעריטאָריעס און עס עקזיסטירן נישט קיין פֿליטים פֿראָבלעמען. רוסלאַנד האָט עס געטאָן, אַזוי אויך פוילן, טשעכאָסלאָוואַקיי. טערקיי האָט אַרויסגעטריבן מיליאָנען גריכן; אלזשיר — א מיליאָן פֿראַנצויזן; אינדאָנעזיע — טויזנטער כינעזער. קיינער האָט נישט געזאָגט קיין ווארט וועגן פֿליטים. אַנדערש איז אַבער אין פֿאַל פון מדינת ישׂראל. די וועלט פֿאַדערט, אַז די ייִדישע מדינה זאָל צוריק אריינגענעמען יעדן אַראַבישן פֿליט, וואָס די אַראַבישע לענדער האָלטן ביי זיך און אין די אַלע יאָרן ווילן זיי אויפֿווייַזן דער אַזוי־גערופענער „הומאַניטאַרער" וועלט די אכזריותדיקייט פון ישׂראל.

דער היסטאָריקער אַרנאָלד טאָנבי — א פֿאַרברענטער שונא ישׂראל — באשולדיקט די ייִדן אין פֿאַרברכּסן קעגן דער מענטשהייט און באַציכנט די ישׂראלים, ווי: „קרימינעלע פֿאַרברעכערס, נעפּערלעכער פון די נאַציס". איך וויל דאָ וויייטער ציטירן, וואָס עריק האָפֿער זאָגט: „ווען אַנדערע פעלקער נעווינען א מלחמה, דיקטירן זיי די באַדינגונגען פון שלום. אַנדערש איז אַבער ווען עס קומט צו מדינת ישׂראל. זי מוז זיך בעטן, איז גרייט צו נעבן די גרעסטע פֿריוואָלעניעס אַון קען נאָך אַלץ נישט דערגרייכן קיין שלום."

צו פֿאַרענדיקן אין א פֿריילעכער שטימונג, וויל איך ציטירן דעם מאָדערנעם באַוווסטן היסטאָריקער פֿאל דיאַנסאָן. ער האָלט, אז אַלע אידעאַלאָגישע דערפֿינדונגען פון אינטעלעקט זיינען זייער קלאָר, ווען מען אַנטדעקט זיי. אַבער דאָס פֿאַדערט א ספּעציפישן טאַלאַנט און די ייִדן פֿארמאָגן אים. מיר דאַרפן זיי באַאַנטקענען אין זייערע פֿאַראַנטוואַרטלעכקייט, און א שטרעבונג צו שלום און ליבע.

האַנפֿלעך וועלן מיר קענען צוריקקומען צו דעם ענין.

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Survey looks at students' views on sex

'The results show that campus life is certainly not what it was in our parents' day'

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Five years after Noah Gurza and Jordan Ravka successfully launched an online campus dating service for Canadian students, they thought it might be interesting to poll students on their views on sex through a Canada-wide survey.

"It's important to gauge students on social issues, and we thought it would be a good opportunity to survey students from coast to coast on sex," Gurza said.

But what the two Toronto-based Jewish founders of CampusKiss.com did not expect was the number of students who responded to their CampusKiss and Tell University and College Sex Survey, and what they had to say about their sex lives.

Of 2,684 students polled last month, – 51 per cent female, 49 per cent male – in addition to other responses, 87 per cent said they have virtual sex in the form of instant messenger, web cams or the telephone.

"The results show that campus life is certainly not what it was in our parents' day, when they relied on parties and mutual friends to meet people," said Gurza, a 30-year-old consultant for the provincial government.

"When we started CampusKiss five years ago, we knew that the Internet and technology in general were playing a bigger role in student life… What's surprising about these results is that the Internet is being heavily used in student sex lives as well."

Ninety per cent of students from more than 150 Canadian colleges and universities said their campus supports and promotes safe sex, although 10 per cent admitted to not using any protection.

Another statistic suggested that one in five Canadian male students have had too many partners to count, while one in 10 women said this.

While Gurza said he hoped the survey would offer students a cross-country perspective on campus sex, he admitted that it was also a marketing technique meant to get some publicity for his online dating service.

"The response to this has been amazing. We've been on CNN, NBC, MSNBC, CBC," he said, adding that initially he and Ravka were expecting about 1,000 students would take part in the questionnaire.

"For us, the survey was a tremendous success. We wanted to make [it] fun. It was only 20 questions. It was a short, engaging and fun survey," he said.

Gurza guessed that part of the appeal was that students are generally curious to see if the views and practices of their peers are similar to theirs.

"Students want to know what other students think about sex, if things differ from campus to campus."

He said he hopes to make the survey an annual event.

While this was the first time CampusKiss.com conducted the survey, the dating service has been up and running since 2000.

Gurza was still working on his master's degree from York University in political science when he decided to launch a service he felt was lacking in Canada. He said that at the time, many online dating services existed for students in the United States, but there weren't any Canadian equivalents.

He teamed up with Ravka, a media-shy computer science graduate from McMaster University, whom Gurza calls the brains behind the technology of the site.

"I thought it would be a good idea to channel this into the Canadian landscape."

He also said that while there were dating services for the older crowds, "nothing had been done for this demographic.

"We're targeting 18- to 23-year-olds who grew up with the Internet. Going online is their new, preferred way to meet people, and that activity lends itself to our service, to people who are in the business of online dating."

But the 73,000 users can do more than search for a potential mate, he said. "It's a meeting place for students on campus, whether it's for dating purposes, friendship purposes, or you want to start a club."

Gurza added that their site has 1,700 different clubs, including political, movie and sports clubs, and the site regularly posts 20 monthly events across the country.

"CampusKiss has become a real community of students," he said.

While this site is designed so that students from across the country can connect, many of the users are from big city centres – Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver.

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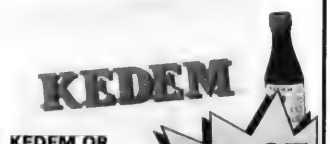

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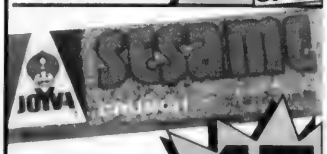

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A 'taste' of Shabbat from chefs of renown

In celebration of the 10th anniversary of Shabbat Across America/Canada on March 3, the National Jewish Outreach Program has give tens of thousands of Jews a "taste" of Shabbat, with some help from world-famous chefs.

A Gourmet Shabbat is a full-colour, glossy publication featuring Friday night customs, blessings and songs, and recipes from chefs such as Susie Fishbein, Jeffrey Nathan, Joan Nathan and Wolfgang Puck.

Shabbat Across America/Canada, which takes place in about 600 locations in the two countries, introduces Jews with limited knowledge and background to the joy and beauty of Sabbath.

Since its inception, more than half a million people have participated.

While specific program details vary from location to location, all participants enjoy an explanatory Friday evening service as well as a festive communal dinner.

For a list of synagogues participating in Shabbat Across America/Canada or to register for a local program, visit www.njop.org or call 1-888-SHABBAT.

Here are some of the recipes they offer:

GEFILTE FISH
Wolfgang Pack

1 head (about 2½ lb.) green cabbage
2 cups matzah meal
1 qt. fish stock
1 tbsp. olive oil
½ medium onion, minced
2 lb. fish fillets, such as pike, carp or whitefish, cut into chunks
3 eggs, separated
½ cup chopped Italian parsley
2 to 3 tsp. salt
2 tbsp. (6 or 7 sprigs) chopped fresh tarragon leaves
½ tsp. freshly ground white pepper
cayenne pepper to taste
1 medium carrot, peeled and cut into julienne
1 medium leek, white part only, cut into julienne

Preheat the oven to 375. Blanch the head of cabbage in boiling salted water, about 5 minutes, then place in a basin of cold water. Remove the whole leaves and cut away the tough core. As you peel off the outer leaves, you may have to return the head of cabbage to the boiling water to soften the inner leaves. Dry on a clean towel and reserve.

Place the matzah meal in a small bowl. Cover with 1 cup of stock and let soak until needed.

In a small skillet, heat the olive oil. Over medium heat, saute the onion until wilted, 4 to 5 minutes. Do not brown. Cool.

In a wooden bowl or on a chopping board, chop the fish fine with a chopper or large knife. Add the matzah meal with the stock, the cooled onions, the 3 egg yolks, the chopped parsley and tarragon, 2 tsp. of salt, white pepper; and cayenne, and continue to chop until well combined.

In a clean, medium bowl, whisk the egg whites until firm but not stiff. Stir a little into the fish mixture, and then quickly but gently, fold in the remaining whites. To test for flavour, bring a little fish stock to simmer; add a small ball of the fish mixture and cook for about 5 minutes. Taste and correct seasoning.

Heat the remaining fish stock and spoon a little into an 11 x 17-in. baking pan. Divide the fish mixture into 12 portions, about 4 oz. each, and enclose each portion in one or two cabbage leaves. You will find that when the leaves get smaller, you will have to use two leaves to wrap the fish. As each package is formed, place in the prepared baking pan, seam-side down. This size pan holds the 12 packages comfortably. Pour the remaining stock over the fish and top with the julienned carrots and leeks. Cover the pan with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Let cool in the stock and refrigerate until needed. Serves 12.

APPLE CIDER BRISKET
Jeff Nathan

2 tbsp. vegetable oil
1 6-lb. beef brisket, outer fat trimmed
3 large onions, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced into half-moons
3 cups apple cider, as needed
½ cup unsulfured molasses
6 garlic cloves thinly sliced
1 tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary or 1½ tsp. dried rosemary
1 tbsp. chopped fresh thyme or 1½ tsp. dried thyme
kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Position a rack in the centre of the oven and preheat to 325. Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven or small roasting pan over medium-high heat. Add the brisket and cook, turning once, until browned on both sides, about 8 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

Add the onions to the same pot and cook, stirring occasionally, just until softened, about 5 minutes. Place the brisket on top of the onions, add the cider and molasses, and sprinkle the meat and onions with the garlic, rosemary and thyme. If necessary, add more cider (or even water), to almost cover the brisket. Bring to a simmer, then cover tightly. Place in the oven and bake until the brisket is fork-tender, about 3 hours.

Uncover and let the brisket cool in the pot. Cover and refrigerate until the next day. Scrape off and discard any hardened fat on the surface of the cooking liquid. Transfer the brisket to a carving board, and slice thinly against the grain.

Meanwhile, bring the cooking liquid to a boil over high heat. Taste, and if the flavour needs concentrating, simmer for a few minutes to evaporate excess liquid. Season with salt and pepper. Return the sliced brisket to the liquid, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer until heated through. Serve hot with the onions. Serves 8-10.

For more great recipes, check out The CJN*'s web pages at www.cjnews.com/food*

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Iran wants to turn Hamas into Hezbollah: U.S. expert

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Iran wants the same control over Hamas it has over Hezbollah, an organization that is nothing less than a "delivery system" for Iranian weapons, Henry Crumpton, the U.S. State Department's counterterrorism coordinator, told the *Jerusalem Post*.

Crumpton, who last week held a joint counterterror dialogue with Israel, said that while most pundits think in terms of missiles when talking about Iranian delivery systems, Hezbollah – which he said is "just an extension of the Iranian government" – must be thought of in these terms as well.

"You combine the Iranian nuclear weapons program with Hezbollah, and that is a pretty nasty mixture," he said.

Crumpton said that while Iran does not yet have that kind of control over Hamas, "it is clearly an objective. The Iranians would love to have another proxy like that."

Asked what will keep Iran from gaining such control, Crumpton said, "I hope the Palestinian people, and I hope the leadership of Hamas, if they are going to be responsible or courageous enough."

Crumpton, a 20-year CIA veteran and highly respected former spy master, has been credited with coming up with the U.S. strategy after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks to use elite intelligence and military officers together with elements of Afghani society to oust the Taliban.

Faint echoes of a partnership strategy can be heard when he talks about the how the international community and United States should be acting vis-a-vis Hamas.

While the two situations are markedly different – primarily because the Taliban was foisted on the Afghans, and the Palestinians voted for Hamas – Crumpton said the similarity is that "Israel and the U.S. cannot impose our will, force our will on the Palestinian people – they have to be a part of this."

The soft-spoken Crumpton "starred" in the US' National Commission report on 9/11 as the person known simply as "Henry," who pressed the CIA to do more in Afghanistan to hunt down Osama bin Laden before the attacks in the United States, but who had two of his key proposals rejected. He also figured prominently in Bob Woodward's book on the war in Afghanistan, *Bush at War*, this time as the CIA operative "Hank" who – among other things – understood the importance of money and aid in gaining the support of Afghan warlords.

"This is not about us versus them," Crumpton said about Hamas and the Palestinian Authority. "It is about the Palestinian people working with foreign partners – the U.S., Europe and Israel – to persuade the new Hamas government to be responsible, or if not, then eventually get a new government in there."

While he did not say that the goal was to economically destabilize the PA so that the population would turn on Hamas, he did say the United States was not interested in giving Hamas a "free ride."

"This is not about destabilizing the PA – it is about providing humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people while not supporting Hamas, and giving Hamas the political opportunity to step forward and become responsible leaders," Crumpton said. He was not, however, starry-eyed about the prospects of Hamas rising to the occasion by recognizing Israel, accepting previous agreements with it, and renouncing terrorism.

"I think it will be tough," he said. "I think that they will have to make some bold decisions, and fundamentally change the way they look at Israel and the world. It won't be easy for them. I'm not kidding myself about this. To a large degree, violence is part of their identity – it defines who they are. But change is not impossible."

Analysis

Exposing Hamas

By BARRY RUBIN
Jerusalemp Post

How can a conservative British aristocrat, a German revolutionary philosopher and a New York Yankees catcher teach us to understand the new era in the Middle East?

Let's begin with the philosopher, Karl Marx, who wrote that history does repeat itself, but not precisely. The first time something happens, it takes place as tragedy, the second time as farce.

This certainly applies to the way Hamas is repeating the history of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), fooling the same people who should have learned better from the first go-round. Even the fact that virtually no one notices this duplication of the past is sufficient proof of the triumph of foolishness – even more so than the first time it was done.

Back in February 1974, the PLO's basic program of "Let's throw the Jews into the sea" was not exactly an inspired PR slogan. As a result, the PLO leader, master showman Yasser Arafat, came up with a new idea.

The PLO stated that its aim was to "establish a national authority on any lands that can be wrested from Zionist occupation." Arafat explained that this did not mean peace or recognition of Israel within its pre-1967 borders; instead, if the Palestinians gained the West Bank and Gaza Strip, they would use them as a base to attain total victory.

In this two-stage plan to eliminate Israel, terrorism, the demand that all Palestinian refugees return to their ancestors' pre-1948 homes and the rejection of negotiations with Israel would all continue. In Arafat's words, the strategy was not about peace, but about "how the rest of Palestine is to be liberated." And if any regime was established in the territories, its main duty would be to complete "the liberation of all Palestinian soil" by wiping Israel off the map in an act of genocide.

Marx wrote in favour of revolutionary candor: "The communists disdain to conceal their aims." Similarly, the PLO told us exactly what they intended. One merely had to read their speeches and documents. If the rest of the world wanted to pretend otherwise, well, that was scarcely Arafat's fault.

Of course there were cute gimmicks. For example, when a PLO leader declared: "We want to liberate all the Palestinian territories," Palestinians knew he meant everything, while Westerners could pretend he was talking only about the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem. It was a strategy British comedians call "nudge, nudge; wink, wink."

Shortly after that, Arafat was invited to the United Nations, since his plan supposedly made him a moderate. Still, perhaps one shouldn't complain too much about the "first coming" of the two-stage plan, because it took 20 years for the PLO to evolve far enough – in terms of giving lip service to moderation – for real recognition and negotiation to begin, with the 1993 Oslo agreement.

Yet here we are, nearly 13 years later, and even the PLO's promises have been shown to be hollow. In point of fact, the Palestinian nationalists are still back in 1974. Now, fast forward to the present and Hamas. This brings us to Lord Chesterfield, who warned that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. The Hamas victory has rolled the clock back about 32 years.

The statements that are winning Hamas positive treatment and the "moderate" seal of approval are almost precisely the same as the ones the PLO expressed in 1974. Indeed, Hamas' strategy must be deliberate in this regard. The most important statement made by Hamas since the election was the one made by Musa Abu Marzouk, the deputy head of its Political Bureau, in a Feb. 14 interview with Dream 2 TV (see www.memritv.org).

Marzouk explained: "Hamas believes that all of Palestine..., from the [Jordan] River to the [Mediterranean] Sea, belongs to the Palestinians." The current phase is to seek control over the West Bank, Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, but that "is a temporary and phased solution. This is not the permanent solution."

Hamas is also demanding that all the descendants of the Palestinian refugees move back to Israel.

In a remarkable comment, Marzouk likened the plan to a "truce" of the past, saying, "After all, there was a hudna from 1948 until 1967, and no Arab country recognized Israel." Of course, during that time Palestinian terrorism against Israel continued.

So not only is Marzouk demanding Israel give up all the territory and let in a couple of million Palestinians, with a level of disruption, violence and subversion that can be easily imagined, but even those concessions will not bring even a temporary cessation of terrorism, incitement and other measures against Israel.

Back in the 1970s and 1980s, despite some major shortcomings, most of the western world recognized that the PLO was a terrorist organization that did not deserve to be called moderate or be treated as a partner for talks or a recipient of aid. There were 20 years of pressure to achieve at least the appearance of change, only for the West to discover that this was the same type of group it had been all along.

But now, many are willing to grant all the benefits to Hamas, a decision based on a record, statements and a plan that can only be termed worse than what Arafat offered in 1974. Moreover, Hamas is making clear that it will continue the most extreme incitement to hate and kill Jews since the Third Reich, teaching this as the main lesson in Palestinian schools.

Given everything we know and see, it would probably take Hamas at least 20 years to reach a level of dissimulation equal to Arafat's, much less any sincere shift toward moderation – which even its Fatah rivals have not yet achieved.

This leaves us with the wisdom of that great baseball player, Yogi Berra: "It's déjà vu all over again!"

Barry Rubin is director of the Global Research in International Affairs Center and editor of the Middle East Review of International Affairs.

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Suspect arrested in killing of Parisian Jew

By MICHEL ZLOTOWSKI
Jerusalem Post

PARIS — A ceremony closing the shivah for Ilan Halimi, the Parisian Jew who died after enduring brutal and extended torture at the hands of his Muslim kidnappers, was held last Thursday evening at the main synagogue in Paris' 10th Quarter.

The ceremony was attended by France's Chief Rabbi Joseph Sitruk, who called on all Frenchmen, Jews and non-Jews alike, to participate in ceremonies held in memory of Halimi throughout France. President Jacques Chirac and Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin were also at the ceremony at the Victoire Synagogue.

President Chirac and his wife, Bernadette, comforted Halimi's mother, Ruth, and her two daughters as they entered the temple.

More than 2,000 people came to the synagogue, which could only seat 1,400; hundreds of Jews and non-Jews were compelled to remain outside in the freezing cold.

Halimi, 23, was kidnapped Jan. 21 and was held for three weeks; he was tortured in the southern Paris suburb of Bagneux. On Feb. 13, French authorities found Halimi naked, handcuffed and covered with burn marks near railroad tracks south of Paris. He died on his way to a hospital.

Halimi was abducted after a meeting with a young woman. His family later received a series of ransom demands – starting with one for around half a million euros.

French officials believe anti-Semitism may have played a role in the crime.

The Paris prosecutor revealed Halimi's case to the media on Feb. 14, the day after he died. He said then that "no element of the current investigation could link this murder to an anti-Semitic declaration or action." The Jewish community did not believe him, and was already buzzing with rumours that other Jews had been abducted after dating blond women.

The police issued Identikit pictures of the female suspect, and a few days later, a young blond woman turned herself in to police. Her information led almost immediately to the identification of the men who allegedly kidnapped and tortured Halimi.

The lead suspect in the brutal torture killing of Halami was arrested in the Ivory Coast last Thursday and was to be returned to France immediately, the French prime minister's office said.

Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo assured de Villepin that the suspect who fled France would be flown back "in the coming hours." A statement from Villepin's office said the quick transfer of the suspect, Youssouf Fofana, a French citizen, amounted to "judicial help." There had been questions about whether procedural issues could delay Fofana's extradition.

Up to a dozen people have been arrested in the case.

Fofana was arrested in Abidjan's northern suburb of Abobo, police in Abidjan and Paris said. He had flown to Ivory Coast on a commercial flight days after the discovery of Halimi's body.

At first three and then seven members of the gang were taken into custody for questioning. Fofana, 25, their leader, managed to escape investigators. He simply bought a ticket to Abidjan and flew to the Ivory Coast under his own name.

According to the police, Fofana – who likes to call himself "Brain of Barbarians" – is a Muslim of African origin, like some members of his group. Others are second-generation immigrants – Arabs from North Africa and others from the French Antilles and Portugal – and some are from families that have long lived in France.

Sources in Abidjan said that Fofana admitted his participation in the kidnapping of Ilan, but denied any anti-Semitic intention.

Police said that during the investigation, some of the suspects said they had indeed chosen Halimi as their victim "because Jews are rich, and if they are not, their community will pay for their release." One of the youngest members of the gang, aged 16, reportedly admitted having tortured Ilan with a burning cigarette because the young man was Jewish. He also reportedly admitted having extinguished a cigarette on Halimi's forehead "because he was bothering me."

The investigating judge, having heard the testimony of the first suspects, issued an arrest order for kidnapping and murder, including the aggravating circumstance of anti-Semitism.

In a letter to Roger Cukierman, president of France's organized Jewish community, Canadian Jewish Congress national president Ed Morgan and CJC chair of the executive Victor Goldbloom expressed the Canadian Jewish community's profound sadness over the incident, offered its condolences and support to the Halimi family and pledged its "indefatigable solidarity" to French Jewry.

"Our hearts are with you… and we pray for a world where good will and respect will triumph over hatred," the letter stated.

Morgan said in a statement that it's clear "the French authorities are taking this anti-Semitic crime very seriously and are demonstrating their solidarity with the Jews of France. The severity of this crime demands an appropriately severe punishment in order for justice to be served."

Goldbloom added that the criminal investigation into the case "must not only be thorough but should [also] make every effort to shed light on the mindset of and the external influences on the criminals involved in this case. This is a crucial step in the effort to ensure that horrific crimes like this never happen again."

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Israel Briefs

Warning of Hamas state

The head of Shin Bet said Israel must not enter into a long-term truce with Hamas. In his first address to the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee since the Islamist group began taking power in the PA, Yuval Diskin said Israel faces a "strategic threat" from Hamas. "If a Hamas state is established, that could mobilize along Israel's borders with a military capability… that's a strategic threat," Diskin said. "We can't accept a truce if the price is that… every Islamic organization from Saudi Arabia to Iran, Global Jihad to Al Qaeda, will come." Hamas says it won't renounce terror and recognize Israel, offering a protracted ceasefire instead. Israel has rejected the proposal as a ruse to regroup and rearm.

Iran offers to fund PA

Iran has offered to fund the Palestinian Authority. "The United States proved that it would not support democracy after it cut its aid to the Palestinian government after Hamas won the elections. We will certainly help the Palestinians," Ali Larijani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said last week after meeting in Tehran with Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal. Israel, which has long said Iran seeks to destabilize its ties with the Palestinians, vowed to block funds from reaching the West Bank and Gaza. Also last week, Egyptian Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit told U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice that Egypt isn't ready to cut off Hamas. The United States wants the Arab world to join it in cutting off Hamas until it recognizes Israel and renounces violence. "We should give Hamas time," he said. "I am sure that Hamas will develop, will evolve. We should not prejudge the issue."

Bird flu co-operation

Tests are underway in Israel to determine whether samples of blood and saliva from livestock and dead wild fowl, received from Palestinian Authority officials, confirm fears of possible outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease and bird flu in Gaza. Israeli officials warned that outbreaks of either disease would not only jeopardize Palestinians in Gaza, but also Israelis. "It is in Israel's interest to ensure that agricultural standards in Gaza are maintained," an Israeli official told the *Jerusalem Post*.

Sharon treated

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon had fluid removed from his stomach in a minor procedure last week at Hadassah Hospital. He's been in a coma there since Jan. 4, when he suffered a major stroke. Otherwise, his condition was unchanged.

Politician fights cancer

Veteran Israeli politician Benny Elon has cancer. A rabbi and leader of the nationalist-religious National Union bloc, Elon told *Yediot Achronot* that there is a tumour in his vocal cords. He was to start chemotherapy this week, but said he doesn't intend to withdraw from the March 28 general election. Elon, 51, said his doctors are optimistic because the growth was discovered early.

Police, evacuees meet

Police who took part in the demolition of nine houses in Amona last month, an action that led to violence between protesters and police, held a meeting with Gush Etzion Regional Council head Shaul Goldstein and representatives of the public. Those present included Judea and Samaria Police chief Yisrael Yitzhak and officers who were injured in the clashes. The sides agreed to continue the dialogue, which they hope will include youth, as many of the Amona protesters were young people. The Knesset has formed a committee to probe the Amona evacuation.

Israelis called 'good drivers'

Cmdr. Shachar Ayalon, head of the National Traffic Police, publicly disagreed with the notion that Israeli drivers are bad. "It's not true, it's a myth," he told the group's annual conference. "Israelis are good drivers. They are like every other driver." Accident statistics for 2005 do indicate that the roads are becoming safer. Deaths fell to 475 from 520 the year before, with the 2005 amount the second-lowest in the last 30 years and the lowest since 1982. The number of deaths so far in 2006 has fallen to 63 from 68 in the same period in 2005.

- from JTA and Jerusalem Post

Israel & the Jewish World

CJC leads AFN on first-ever joint mission to Israel

By JENNY HAZAN
CJN Israel Bureau

JERUSALEM — Jews have a lot more in common with Canada's aboriginal peoples than one might think.

Like Jews, Canada's aboriginals are a unified but nonetheless diverse group. As well, native peoples also have a tragic history of persecution, and they continue to struggle over land, the retention of their languages and cultures, and finding their rightful place among the nations.

Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) CEO Bernie Farber may have put it best: "In the Jews, Canada's First Nations see an indigenous people who have reclaimed their land and by so doing have reinvigorated their culture and language."

Phil Fontaine

Farber, along with CJC president Ed Morgan, led the first-ever joint Canadian Jewish Congress-Assembly of First Nations (AFN) educational mission to Israel last week.

More than 20 AFN affiliates – including AFN national Chief Phil Fontaine, New Brunswick Chief Peter Barlow, Saskatchewan Chief Kelly Bird, Manitoba Chief Tina Levesque, Yukon Territory Chief Rick O'Brien, and Beverley Jacobs, president of the Native Women's Association of Canada – spent a week touring historical sites and meeting various specialists and dignitaries, including Canadian Ambassador Donald Sinclair and President Moshe Katsav.

During last Wednesday's meeting with Katsav, Barlow proposed that Israel start a diplomatic relationship with Canada's indigenous peoples.

"You know how hard it was for you to be recognized," Barlow said. "We want to establish a diplomatic mission here. We are looking to become globally accepted and global players."

While Katsav didn't comment on the request, he noted that Jews were able to return to their ancestral homeland after 2,000 years in exile because they maintained the heritage that united them. "I call on you to keep your heritage and revive your language," he said.

The trip was Morgan's way of reciprocating for Fontaine's invitation to take part in the AFN's annual Grand Assembly in Yellowknife last July. "There, the Jewish community leadership learned a little bit more about Native Canadian issues," Morgan said. "In exchange, we wanted to introduce them to Israel, to learn more about Jewish history and issues."

It seems to have worked.

"The trip has been overwhelming," said Fontaine, who as head of the AFN represents 633 native communities and a total of 750,000 people across Canada. "It has been a real eye-opener!"

Much of the trip was dedicated to learning from Israeli experts about best practices in agriculture and the preservation of minority languages, areas of common concern for both peoples.

Participants visited the Weizmann Institute for Science in Rehovot, the Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Center, the Dan Fish Farms in the north (in co-operation with Israel's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development), and Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu, which is involved in industries such as fish hatcheries and agriculture.

"Israel has some expertise in agriculture in harsh climates," said Morgan, adding that although Israel's climate is very different from Canada's, both Israel and aboriginal reserves struggle with economic development in remote regions. "Israeli science has a lot to offer," he added.

Of even greater interest to Fontaine and his colleagues was Israel's expertise in the field of near-dormant languages.

"I am extremely interested to know how the Jewish people were able to revitalize Hebrew so that it became a first language," said Fontaine. He noted that there are 55 indigenous languages in Canada, but only three – Ojibway, Cree and Inuktitut – are spoken, while the rest are disappearing.

"Once they are gone from Canada, they will disappear forever because Canada is the homeland of those languages," Fontaine said. "When you lose a language, you lose a lot. Language is a repository for everything that we are as a people and a culture."

A lecture by scholar Shuki Ben-Ami about the survival of minority languages offered many ideas for language immersion programs, Fontaine said. "I believe we can take advantage of Israel's experience in this field."

Among the similarities between Jews and aboriginal peoples is the centrality of religion in their cultural identities, Morgan said, noting that the native group – a mix of observant and non-observant Christians of various denominations, and followers of indigenous religions – was inspired to conduct small religious ceremonies at each destination on the tour.

"It has been very interesting and very moving for us to learn more about their spirituality," Morgan said.

As well, Fontaine noted that just as Jews have unity in their diversity, there is also "incredible diversity in our community – unique histories, values, traditions, and teachings – but we are all First Nations."

A third, and perhaps most integral, area of commonality is a desire for land, self-government and autonomy. "The Jews have not felt fulfilled, in all their wanderings in this world, until gaining sovereignty over their own piece of land," says Morgan. "It's a yearning that the aboriginals also feel. They take a lot from the Jewish experience."

Fontaine noted that of the more than 1,000 land claims filed by his group, some 300 have been validated by Ottawa. "We want our land – land that rightfully belongs to us," he said. "We want to be self-governing within the constitutional framework of Canada. We want to take the decisions that affect us as individuals, as families, and as communities. We want to be self-sustaining."

Farber recalled a lecturer explaining to the group that it took Jews 2,000 years to reclaim their land. "Well, it won't take us 2,000 years!" Fontaine responded.

The emotional highlight of the tour was the group's visit to the Yad Vashem holocaust museum.

"The Holocaust was an attempt to eradicate the entire Jewish people," Fontaine said. "In a less dramatic way, we have experienced the same thing. The government of Canada has made a great attempt to assimilate us – to eradicate any sense of 'Indianness'. The consequences have been similarly tragic."

Fontaine added that he has "always believed that the struggle of the Jewish people in so many ways mirrors our own struggle. After coming here, what strikes me the most is the resilience of the Jewish people – to have survived all they have survived and to still manage to be this incredible presence on the world stage."

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KIDDISH
Jewish Kids' Fun Page
by Ellene Newman and Hallel Newman

The Royal Chronicles

This story has been adapted from the Book of Esther Verses 6:1 - 6:10.

King Achashverosh of Persia rolled over in his plush bed. *It must be almost midnight already,* he thought angrily, *and still I can't fall asleep. Of course, with everything that's going on, how can I? That party Esther made today... why would my queen risk her life and come into my throne room unannounced just to invite me to her party? And why did she also invite Haman? Prime Minister Haman is a great guy, and his plan to kill all the Jews is nothing short of genius, but why did Esther have to single him out? Why is she trying to win his favour? Is it possible that they're conspiring to kill me, like Bigtan and Teresh tried to do last year? Oh, I'm letting my imagination run away with me. Why can't I just go to sleep.* Achashverosh tried settling into the bedspreads. *Forget it! It's no use! That's it. I'm going to have to resort to drastic measures.* "Guards! Bring me the royal chronicles."

The servants hastened to the canopied bed. "A thousand pardons, Your Majesty, but which year does his majesty desire?"

"Try 67. That was an uneventful year, if I remember correctly."

Two servants rushed to the records chamber to retrieve the volume. They returned bearing the enormous leather-bound book. "Which entry does his Majesty wish to see?"

"Nothing specific. Just read it out loud from the beginning. When I fall asleep, stop."

"The peasants of Medea petitioned the king to lower the taxes by at least five per cent on all grain being exported to distant provinces, due to a lack of..."

I feel tired already, thought the King.

"...when the legislature redacted a preexisting edict, expanding governmental control over all millet grown within the district of..."

Just a few more minutes and I'll be asleep. What a great idea...

"...The two of them sought to assassinate the King by poisoning his water. In the chaos following the King's death, they would escape undetected..." droned the servant.

So much for the boring stuff, thought Achashverosh, suddenly wide awake.

"In all likelihood their plan would have succeeded if not for the intervention of Mordechai the Jew, who alerted the palace of the conspiracy."

Achashverosh sat up. The servants jumped back, startled.

"Mordechai the Jew...what reward was given to him for this?"

The servants frantically skimmed the page, but found nothing. "It looks like he was not rewarded at all."

"How strange. Perhaps...what's that? I hear something in the courtyard."

"The servants scrambled to the window. Someone was walking through the courtyard! In the moonlight, they could make out the three cornered hat of —

"Haman, Your Majesty!"

"What could he possibly want at this hour?" The king paused. "Bring him in."

As Haman ascended the staircase, he pondered how to phrase his request. *How about, "Your Majesty knows the filthy nature of the Jews. I can't wait a whole year before the killings begin. May I have His Majesty's permission to hang Mordechai, their leader, on the gallows I have just constructed?" Or maybe, "When Mordechai the Jew refuses to bow down to me, he is flagrantly rebelling against the the king's authority. If the king agrees, I will have Mordechai hung for his atrocities."*

"Haman!" called out Ahasuerus before Haman had a chance to say anything. "What perfect timing! There's something I just wanted to ask you. What do you think I should do for someone I really wish to honour?"

Honour, thought Haman, *He must mean me, who else would it be?*

"Only the very best," answered Haman. "The man the king wishes to honor should be dressed in regal robes, and paraded through the capital city on the king's personal horse. Leading the horse should be one of the king's nobles, who should call out, 'This is what is done for the man whom the King wishes to honour!'"

In his head, Haman could already hear the music, the fanfare, the boisterous cheers of the watching throngs.

"What a great idea!" replied the King. "Quickly, take the royal robes. Get the horse. And personally parade through the city... Mordechai the Jew, who saved my life!"

Haman's jaw dropped. *Now is probably not the time to bring up the gallows,* he thought miserably, as he contemplated the humiliation that lay in store for him.

"But...but..."

"I don't want to hear anything, Haman. It was your idea. Please arrange the parade. Now. Good night."

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Students, health, tzedakah

ATHLETES BACK DIABETES RESEARCH: The athletic council at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's North York campus raised $1,455 for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation during a recent week-long program of fitness appraisal and health awareness that featured daily sports programs and nutritious snacks.

HEARTY JUMPERS: Classes 1C and 2A at Netivot HaTorah Day School took part recently in the school's annual Jump Rope for Heart to benefit the Heart and Stroke Foundation. Pictured with the students are Grade 2 teacher Joyce Krasman, back row third from left, and gym teacher Lilliane Rende, back row third from right, as well as parent volunteers and foundation liaison Linda Donaldson, back row second from right. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

Mazon offers gourmet response to hunger

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Mazon Canada, A Jewish Response To Hunger's eighth annual fundraiser, An Evening of Kosher Delicacies and Wine Tasting, is set for March 8 at the Capitol Event Theatre.

Formerly called the Kosher Gourmet Gala, the event features kosher chefs and wine merchants who offer guests the opportunity to sample kosher cuisine.

Each of the 10 food stations will be paired with a corresponding wine, allowing people to maximize the gourmet experience, says Shira Lester-Cohen, Mazon executive director.

Featured at the evening, chaired by Mazon national president Tammy Anklewicz, will be Brick Brewery, Caterers York, Cravings to Go, DSM Foods, Eventfull Specialty Event Bars, Grafstein Wines, GMB Culinary, Guilt Free Cookies, Mazel Wines, Metropolitan Ice, Once Upon a Cake, Paradise Banquet Hall, Park Toronto, Simcha Wine, Strub Pickles, Taam Tov, Windsor Arms Hotel and Zuchter Berk Creative Caterers.

For the first time, says Lester-Cohen, there will be entertainment at the gala, including live music by Paul Gelman and Jordan Clapman, "modest" belly dancing by Mayada's Belly Dance, and psychological illusionist Thomas Baxter.

About 20 children are also involved in a "surprise" event, she says.

"Our decorator, Ian Whitaker, has donated his time, and with all his work, the gala will have a very elegant feel to it."

Not only is this Mazon's major fundraiser, says Lester-Cohen, it is an opportunity for kosher caterers and wine merchants to give something back to the community because all wine and food is donated.

Representatives of three of Mazon's recipient agencies – it donates about $500,000 to agencies across the country – will say a few words, says Lester-Cohen, "because we want to remind people what we are all about.

"When they make a simchah, they need to remember those who can't eat. [Their simchah] is an opportunity to symbolically invite a hungry stranger to their table."

Lester-Cohen says their goal is to raise $100,000, which is earmarked for non-denominational agencies including Flemington Public School in Toronto, Loves and Fishes Community Bank Foundation in British Columbia, Maison Shalom in Quebec and Melville and District Food Bank in Saskatchewan.

Tickets are $85 each. For information, call Mazon at 416-783-7554 or go online to www.mazoncanada.ca.

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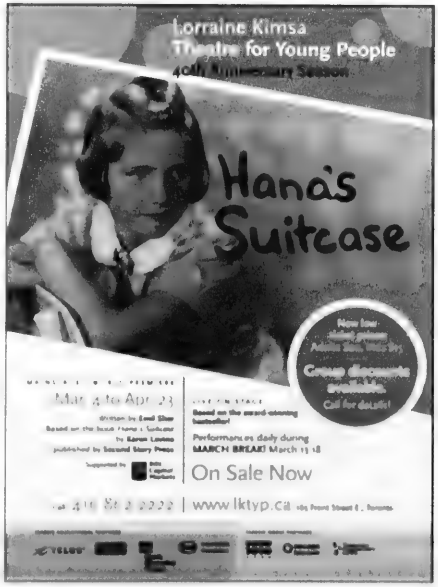

Arts & Travel

Israeli-Palestinian film, culture fest opens

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Toronto plays host to a unique cultural event this week – the first time in which movies by Israeli and Palestinian filmmakers will be showcased in a single program of film, music, theatre and discussion.

Voices Forward: A Festival of Israeli and Palestinian Film and Culture will take place at various venues, including CanStage, the Royal Cinema and the Drake Hotel from March 3 to 5.

Below are previews of three of the documentaries scheduled to be screened at the three-day event. They probably typify its spirit.

* * *

Chaim Yavin, the evening news anchor at Channel One, Israeli state TV, has been a voice of authority in Israel for the past 30 years. Much like former CBS News anchor Walter Cronkite, Yavin is a respected, influential figure.

All the more reason that Yavin's timely, multi-part documentary, *The Land of the Settlers*, caused such an uproar when it was aired last summer on the eve of Israel's historic withdrawal from the Gaza Strip.

Yavin spent 2½ years travelling the length and breadth of Gaza and the West Bank to flesh out *The Land of the Settlers*. This is not objective journalism in the usual sense of the word, for Yavin's message is direct and unambiguous: If Israel truly wants peace, it must dismantle the settlements in the territories and withdraw. If it fails to do so, Israel runs the risk of becoming a binational state, which would doom the Zionist dream.

As Yavin put it in a recent piece in the *Boston Globe*: "Let's not base our existence on the acquisition of more and more land, but on building, within recognized borders, a better society based on true Jewish and universal values: justice, equality, culture, education, human rights."

Although Yavin's point of view permeates this visually appealing and intellectually rigorous film, he draws on interviews with dissenting Israelis who reject his thesis.

An angry Orthodox settler can't understand why he is no longer entitled to live in Gaza. Arieh Eldad, a member of the Knesset, decries the pending disengagement. Noam Livnat, a radical settler, claims that the government is leading Israel to civil war. Rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun argues that the retention of settlements does not conflict with the yearning for peace.

In a particularly interesting juxtaposition, a Holocaust survivor rebukes settlers who compare the evacuation of settlements with the mass murder of Jews, while her son, a settler, criticizes the government for abandoning Gaza.

Yavin talks to several Israeli army reservists, including a colonel from a West Bank settlement, who either oppose the occupation or are ready for territorial compromise, and to a noted philosopher who warns of the consequences of endless war with the Palestinians. He also confronts two Israeli border police officers who have been accused of brutality.

Scenes of soldiers forcibly removing settlers from an unauthorized outpost punctuate the film, giving it the immediacy of a nightly newscast. The impression is heightened by glimpses of Yavin aiming his camcorder at interviewees.

One of them, Haim Hanegbi, is a universalist who expresses support for a binational state and the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in what is now Israel. He fervently believes that if the Israeli government was able to form a close relationship with Germany in the wake of the Holocaust, Israel can surely forge peace with the Palestinians.

Pouring scorn on the notion that Israel's occupation is "enlightened," Yavin is pessimistic about the prospect of Israel reaching an accommodation with the Palestinians. Indeed, he predicts that a third Palestinian uprising is imminent.

* * *

Occupied Minds is about a pair of unlikely colleagues, an Israeli and a Palestinian, both born in Jerusalem, who visit each other's neighbourhoods in Israel and the territories in an attempt "to face the harsh realities of our shared land."

David Michaelis, the son of German Jews, was a television producer in Israel until he moved to the United States six years ago to co-found Link TV, a satellite network specializing in coverage of the Middle East. Jamal Dajani, Link TV's director of Middle East programming, has lived in the United States since 1975.

Michaelis and Dajani, the co-directors of *Occupied Minds*, are committed to finding a peaceful solution to the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. But they disagree on the method. Dajani wants a one-state solution, while Michaelis favours a two-state solution.

Despite their profound disagreement on so vital an issue, they are companionable travellers – paying visits to their respective homes in Jerusalem; travelling to Gaza and Hebron, where tensions simmer; talking to an Israeli doctor injured in a suicide bombing, and stopping at an Israeli checkpoint near Jerusalem.

In addition, they interview an Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade militant who answers their questions in fairly fluent Hebrew; speak to a Palestinian psychiatrist who claims that the current breed of suicide bombers are the sons of Palestinians humiliated by Israeli soldiers in the first intifadah; talk with an Israeli settler who gently suggests that Palestinians should move en masse to Jordan; and they visit the West Bank security barrier, which cuts into the land of a Palestinian farmer.

Occupied Minds scratches the surface of an explosive conflict whose resolution lies far in the distance. Michaelis and Dajani expose us to its dangerous fault lines.

* * *

Knowledge is the Beginning, shot over a six-year period in various locales in the Middle East and Europe, tells the story of an Israeli/Arab youth orchestra founded by Israeli musician Daniel Barenboim and the now deceased Palestinian American intellectual Edward Said.

The film unfolds through rehearsals, concert excerpts and interviews. We learn that the young musicians have great respect for Barenboim, that its Arab members seem to be willing to reassess their jaundiced views of Israelis, and that Said respects Barenboim as a person who can empathize with other people's sufferings.

As for Barenboim, he believes that music can shatter barriers, but this belief carries only so much weight and may be overly optimistic.

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Play shows how food creates community

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

In many respects, food is our lifeline, but it is not only our primary source of physical nourishment. Meals are often the centrepieces of our social gatherings and symbols of our cultures.

Watching people eat – smelling, feeling and tasting their food – and listening to their mealtime discussions would therefore provide insight into their real world.

And that is precisely what *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook* strives to do.

Produced and performed in a documentary-like style, the play explores the lives of everyday people from Israel and the Palestinian territories using their own words, as they prepare food, eat and talk.

Some 85 real people hailing from Gaza, the West Bank, Tel Aviv and other places in the area were interviewed for the production.

None of the people interviewed was seeking power or in power, says director and co-producer Joel Greenberg, 57. "They were all normal people, and that's very important."

Greenberg explains that by focusing on ordinary people, audiences will get a taste of what life is like on the ground in the midst of conflict.

"The people who are interviewed… are trying to find some degree of normalcy," he says.

"[Although they] are struggling, many of them find ways of coping and of moving forward and… not being paralyzed by fear, anger or hatred."

The cast of *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook*.

Despite this, the director notes that some of the characters, who range in age from 19 to 75, have lost loved ones during the intifadah.

A unique aspect of the play is that the food is made on stage, with the intention that the sizzling sounds and wafting aromas will tickle the senses of the audience.

"The food is both a literal and a metaphoric symbol of sustenance," reflects Greenberg, a 35-year theatre veteran who has worked on more than 100 productions and is a drama professor at the University of Waterloo.

"Food creates community and… we are visiting a region where people are all eating essentially the same food."

While some of the dialogue delves into political issues, Greenberg says the play does not attempt to take a particular side, adding that none of the actors is Jewish.

"The writers and directors have done their very best to just present stories without putting themselves in the middle," he says. "Nobody at the end presents a moral or suggests there is an answer. The play is about people doing their best to figure out how to live a normal life, in an abnormal situation."

Written by British playwright Robin Soans, *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook* has already received critical acclaim in England and Los Angeles. It makes its Canadian premiere March 3 at Toronto's Berkeley Street Theatre and runs until April 1.

The play is a production of Studio 180, the company behind two sold-out engagements of the Laramie Project.

For tickets, visit www.ticketking.com or phone 416-368-3110 or 1-800-461-3333.

For more information about the production, visit www.studio180.ca.

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

LODZ GHETTO TO KAFKA FEATURED IN *BRICK* LITERARY JOURNAL

Brick, the Toronto-based literary journal edited by **Michael Redhill**, is known for its diverse range of cultural offerings and contributors, ranging from the celebrated to the obscure. The current issue, for instance, presents pieces that invoke **James Joyce** and **William Faulkner**, along with stories by or about mortals of lesser stature and renown. The implicit assertion is that all are deserving of attention.

Presented in a refreshingly eccentric mix, the two dozen pieces in the current issue are individualistic and intriguing, as usual for *Brick*. But this issue, perhaps for the first time, features an innately Jewish theme. Its several articles of Jewish provenance include Canadian writer **Norman Levine**'s first short story and a portfolio of rare photographs from the Lodz ghetto.

Levine wrote to Redhill offering his story *A Sabbath Walk* in June 2005, less than a week before he died. The well-crafted story is about the persecution of an artist in a small town. Levine wrote it in Cornwall in 1949 and it was previously published in Italy in 1956.

Henryk Ross used a camera clandestinely to capture scenes in the Lodz ghetto during the Nazi regime. *Brick* reprinted nine photos, including the one on its cover of two lovers kissing, accompanied by Ross' explanatory testimony given at the Eichmann trial. "In making life in the ghetto more real to us, in showing us that these people did more than suffer, the photographs give us a new sense of who these people were," Redhill comments.

The issue also presents *The Devil and the Storyteller*, an essay by Toronto writer **Ken Sherman** comparing stories by **Reb Nachman** of Bratslav, **Franz Kafka** and **Bernard Malamud**. According to Sherman, these writers hearken to an earlier age of simpler, more elegant story-telling and more universal themes; and all three draw a similar "father-obstructor" archetype in their fiction.

As well, the three "are all dealing with self-actualization," Sherman told Eye on Arts. "Another thing that links them is that there's a kind of urgency in their stories, a sense that people have souls and that their souls need to be saved or fulfilled."

Other contributors to the Winter 2005 issue include **Colm Toibin**, **Esta Spalding**, **David Sedaris**, **Oliver Sacks**, **Geoff Dyer** (writing on **W.S. Sebald** and **Thomas Bernhard**) and **Eleanor Wachtel**. Order a subscription to *Brick* via the website www.brickmag.com.

* * *

Names in the News: Toronto composer-trumpeter **David Buchbinder** has gained many kudos lately for his debut solo recording, *Shurum Burum Jazz Circus*. Two weeks ago, it was nominated for a Juno Award as best contemporary jazz album and last week it received a similar nod from the National Jazz Awards.

Buchbinder is also up for a Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN) composer of the year award. He is the leader of the **Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band** and founder and artistic director of Toronto's Ashkenaz festival of new Yiddish culture. His 11-piece **Shurum Burum Ensemble** plays Lula Lounge, 1585 Dundas St. W., April 20, 9 p.m. Doors open 7 p.m. 416-588-0307, www.lula.ca

* * *

Purim Spiel: Queen Esther Cabaret: Pomegranate, an all-girl klezmer band with a gay sensibility, performs "dance tunes and campy Yiddish folk songs," and the Winchevsky Wits perform the satirical *Wise Economists of Neo-Chelm* in an upcoming cabaret evening. A fundraiser for the Morris Winchevsky School, the event is themed for both Purim and International Women's Day. $15 at the door. Winchevsky Centre, 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Saturday, March 11, 8 p.m. 416-789-5502.

This wedding snapshot is one of the rare Lodz Ghetto pictures included in the literary journal *Brick*.

* * *

Arts in Brief

- Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People presents *Hana's Suitcase* by **Emil Sher**, based on the children's book by **Karen Levine**. Recommended for ages 10 and up. Previews March 4, runs March 9 to April 23. $20 adults, $15 for children (18 or under). 416-862-2222, www.lktyp.ca
- Stage Centre Productions presents *The Diary of Anne Frank* by **Frances Goodrich** and **Albert Hackett**, starring North York resident **Monica Paraghamian**. $25-$15. Fairview Library Theatre, 35 Fairview Mall Dr. March 9 through 25. 416-299-5557, www.stagecentreproductions.com
- Pianist **Robert Silverman** performs a solo recital of works by **Mozart**, **Chopin** and **Debussy**. Koffler Centre of the Arts, Tuesday, March 28, 8 p.m. 416-636-1880, ext. 228.

* * *

At the Galleries: After an acclaimed tour to the British Museum and New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Canadian artist **David Milne**'s evocative watercolours have returned to Canada. "David Milne Watercolours: Painting Toward the Light" is on view at the Art Gallery of Ontario through May 21.

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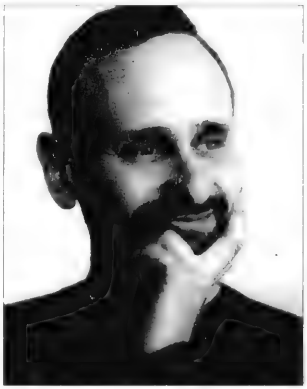
Kafka and Son remounted at the JCC

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

In the famous *Letter to His Father*, celebrated Jewish writer Franz Kafka said that "my writing was all about you."

Indeed, Kafka felt his fiction found its inspiration – albeit a tormented one – from the complicated relationship he had with his father, Hermann.



Alon Nashman

An adaptation of this letter, particularly the father-son dichotomy, is the focus of the one-man play *Kafka and Son*, starring Dora-nominated actor Alon Nashman.

"The play starts with a man in his room writing and then we enter his memory, visiting him at different stages and episodes of his life," says Nashman, 46, who portrays both Franz and Hermann in the production.

"All of the episodes are about some interaction with his father. We are building a flesh and blood picture of this man's life, understanding more deeply the sources of his fiction, because all of his great books are inspired by this relationship."

The Czech-born-and-raised Kafka, who was born in 1883, wrote a number of revered novels, including *The Metamorphosis* and *The Trial*.

A common theme running through his literature were the challenges of power and authority, as well as feelings of alienation and dehumanization in a bureaucratic world.

"He wrote in a way that no one else did," notes Nashman, who first began reading Kafka as a teenager and did extensive research on him to prepare for the play.

"He wrote in a way that was utterly truthful... and there are ways in which you can tell from even the relationship with his father, that there was this pull towards industrialization and bureaucracy, which leads to the dehumanization of people."

Nashman first presented the Kafka play at the Ashkenaz Festival in 2002. Last year, he presented it in a special series of one-person productions at the World Stage festival.

The two Ashkenaz Festival shows were sold out and the World Stage engagement was well received.

So what's it like being a one-man show?

"I compare it to figure skating" notes the 15-year acting veteran, using an analogy to explain the inner workings of flying solo on stage.

"You've got your formative program, the music starts and then you just go, staying very focused."

Nashman expects a varied reaction from audiences, particularly based on their age and stage in life.

"One reaction is that for a sensitive child who wants to create and cares deeply about the suffering in the world, [yet] feels misunderstood by parents and authority figures," Nashman reflects.

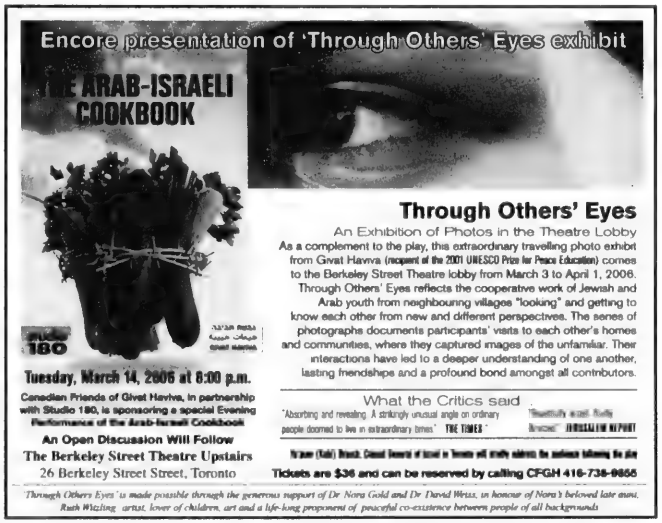
"Then there are those who will experience it more from the father's point of view. For instance, if you have a child who is non-communicative and doesn't seem to be happy in their own skin, it's frustrating. You've given them help and they just won't get it together."

Kafka didn't leave home until after the age of 35 and died from tuberculosis at 40.

But his legacy in literature, especially the observations about industrialized societies, remain highly relevant today, spawning the use of the term Kafkaesque in our modern vernacular.

Kafka and Son runs from March 6 to 18 at the Al Green Theatre in the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre.

Tickets are available by calling 416-504-7529 or online at www.artsboxoffice.ca.


Encore presentation of 'Through Others' Eyes exhibit
ARAB-ISRAELI COOKBOOK
Through Others' Eyes
An Exhibition of Photos in the Theatre Lobby
As a complement to the play, this extraordinary travelling photo exhibit from Givat Haviva (recipient of the 2001 UNESCO Prize for Peace Education) comes to the Berkeley Street Theatre lobby from March 3 to April 1, 2006. Through Others' Eyes reflects the cooperative work of Jewish and Arab youth from neighbouring villages "looking" and getting to know each other from new and different perspectives. The series of photographs documents participants' visits to each other's homes and communities, where they captured images of the unfamiliar. Their interactions have led to a deeper understanding of one another, lasting friendships and a profound bond amongst all contributors.
What the Critics said
"Absorbing and revealing. A strikingly unusual angle on ordinary people doomed to live in extraordinary times." THE TIMES
Tuesday, March 14, 2006 at 8:00 p.m.
Canadian Friends of Givat Haviva, in partnership with Studio 180, is sponsoring a special Evening Performance of the Arab-Israeli Cookbook
An Open Discussion Will Follow
The Berkeley Street Theatre Upstairs
26 Berkeley Street, Toronto
Tickets are $36 and can be reserved by calling CFGH 416-736-8655
Through Others Eyes' is made possible through the generous support of Dr Nora Gold and Dr David Weiss, in honour of Nora's beloved late aunt, Ruth Wiszling artist, lover of children, art and a life-long proponent of peaceful co-existence between people of all backgrounds

Books & Authors

Feeling Jewish in America theme of *Stars of David*

***Stars of David* by Abigail Pogrebin, Random House Canada.**

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

How do prominent Americans such as Dustin Hoffman, Steven Spielberg, Edgar Bronfman, Mark Spitz, Richard Holbrooke and Larry King feel about being Jewish?

That's the question Abigail Pogrebin, a freelance journalist based in New York City, posed to more than 60 Jews who are major players in U.S. culture, business, politics, the law and sports.

Their answers are found in a series of tightly written essays in *Stars of David*, a 385-page book that examines attitudes toward identity and Israel.

Dustin Hoffman, a major Hollywood actor in the 1970s and '80s, grew up in Los Angeles, a city rife with what he describes as "insidious anti-Semitism." His marriage to his second and current wife took him on "a more Jewish path." Being Jewish, to him, is "not losing your humanity... or soul."

Abigail Pogrebin

The theme of exclusion has affected Ruth Bader Ginsburg, a U.S. Supreme Court judge. In her first year at Cornell University, students were assigned to dormitories on the basis of religion. When her mother died, only men could participate in the minyan. Sexism, she says, has kept her from embracing Jewish observance.

Before he wed his current wife, Kate Capshaw, a Protestant convert to Judaism, Steven Spielberg only felt his Judaism when he encountered anti-Semitism. *Schindler's List*, his 1993 film, went a long way toward bringing him back into the fold, but Capshaw's "profound interest" in her adopted faith is what ultimately convinced him to be a practising Jew. Spielberg observes Christmas "because it was a tradition in Kate's family and because it's the one holiday I wished I could have partaken in every year when I was growing up."

James Rubin, a former State Department spokesperson and the husband of CNN correspondent Christiane Amanpour, identifies with the part of Judaism that reaches out to the underdog and the oppressed. He has "an unsentimental" attitude toward Israel, but the Holocaust informs his understanding of world history.

Don Hewitt, the producer of *60 Minutes*, has always felt more American than Jewish and does not observe Jewish holidays. He is Jewish by temperament and likes Jewish food, humour and people. He can't understand why the Jews, "the smartest people on the earth," established a state in the Middle East, "the most hostile place on earth." He adds, "They could have found a better place. They could have gone to Madagascar or something."

Mike Wallace, the correspondent emeritus of *60 Minutes*, goes to bed each night reciting a Jewish prayer. Still, three of his four wives have been non-Jews. He celebrates Christmas and his son, Chris, the host of *Fox News Sunday*, was raised as a Catholic.

Ronald Perelman, the billionaire chairman of Revlon, is one of the relatively few Jews featured in this book who has incorporated Judaism deeply in his lifestyle. He prays every morning, keeps kosher and regularly attends synagogue. He became devout at the age of 18 after taking a family trip to Israel.

As a kid, Edgar Bronfman, the Canadian-born president of the World Jewish Congress and the former president of Seagram's distillery, rejected Judaism because he had an aversion to his domineering father, Samuel. But in his 50s, during a trip to the Soviet Union, he returned to his roots after watching Jews in Moscow defying a ban on worship and observing a Jewish holiday on the streets. Four of his five children have married Christians, but he doesn't blame them: "I didn't give them any Judaism growing up."

Richard Holbrooke, the U.S. envoy to the United Nations from 1999 to '01 and the ambassador to Germany from 1993 to '94, was raised by his German Jewish parents as a Quaker because they did not believe in organized religion. When asked about his identity, he said, "I don't call myself anything." But he freely acknowledges his Jewish background.

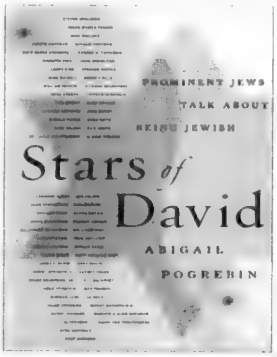
Larry King, the host of CNN's nightly talk show, is culturally and emotionally Jewish, having been turned off religious Judaism in Hebrew school. All his wives have been gentiles, and his current wife is a devout Mormon. They are raising their two children as Mormons.

Mark Spitz, who won seven gold medals in swimming at the 1972 Munich Olympic Games and is now a financial analyst and stockbroker, is consciously Jewish. Claiming that his embrace of Judaism has influenced younger people, he said: "It says that being a Jew is not something that limits you physically and athletically."

Ruth Reichl, the editor-in-chief of *Gourmet* magazine, was raised in an assimilated German family. But her Jewishness is an important component of her personality, though not in a religious sense."It's a great tradition to come from," she said. She feels distant from Israel, having been influenced by her anti-Zionist father.

Shawn Green, the baseball player who played with the Toronto Blue Jays, is not particularly religious. Yet he missed a game in 2001 in deference to Yom Kippur and takes pride in being recognized as a Jewish athlete. He and his Christian wife plan to expose their four-year-old daughter, Presley Taylor, to Jewish and non-Jewish traditions.

Dr. Laura Schlesinger, a radio talk-show host, is half-Catholic, her mother having been Italian. Schlesinger formally converted to Judaism and lived like an Orthodox Jew. But in a postscript, Pogrebin quotes her as saying that, although she considers herself Jewish, she no longer practises Judaism.



The movie actress Natalie Portman, who was born in Israel to an Israeli father (Dr. Avner Hershlag) and an American mother, uses her grandmother's maiden name. The materialism of American Jews alienates her, but as a student at Harvard, she felt herself being pulled toward the Jewish community.

Max Frankel, the former editor of *The New York Times*, escaped from Nazi Germany when he was eight. Having been a refugee, he recognizes the importance of Israel as a haven for persecuted Jews. But he has soured on nationalism as "the curse of our time" and now considers Israel an "artificial state."

Aaron Brown, the former CNN broadcaster, is of two minds about Judaism. As he put it: "There's a theological component, which I don't spend a lot of time with. And then I think there is a cultural, historical part which I clearly embrace, which is an important part of my life..."

It's clear that many of the Jewish personalties Pogrebin interviewed have abandoned their customs, intermarried and do not worry about Jewish continuity. Yet all feel distinctly Jewish, as she does.

"What I do know is that being Jewish is powerful and, in a sense, unavoidable – whether one embraces it or leaves it on the shelf..."

This, indeed, is the impression a reader carries away from these interviews.

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CJN Profile

The Wall producer inducted into hall of fame

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

Bob Ezrin's musical odyssey has truly come full circle.

Singing and dancing as a toddler in Toronto, Ezrin eventually grew up to be a major player in the world of rock, producing mega albums for Pink Floyd, Kiss, Alice Cooper and Peter Gabriel.

After living the high life in New York and Los Angeles, Ezrin is now back in his hometown, where quite appropriately, he'll be inducted into the Canadian Music Hall of Fame on March 2.

"The fact this hónour comes from my colleagues and my countrymen, that's a very special category of people to me," says Ezrin, 56, a father/stepfather of six.

"Since the Juno's two years ago, it seems like the country has just been opening up its arms and welcoming me back."

Ezrin's musical nurturing in Toronto was very much a family affair.

His dad was a savvy bass player, mom played piano and Uncle Sid Ezrin owned a Yorkville club, as well as a formidable jazz collection and a bevy of other musical goodies..

"My Uncle Sid, who maybe had the greatest influence on me… had a basement full of turntables and music equipment," says Ezrin.

"Even at seven or eight years old, I was recording and playing around."

Along with his brothers, Ezrin performed on radio and television as a kid and he refined his musical skills studying piano and guitar.

Music was also a key part of Ezrin's membership in United Synagogue Youth.

The big foray into producing occurred around 1970, when, as a newcomer with the production house Nimbus 9, Ezrin travelled to New York City to take a look at rocker Alice Cooper.

"I basically signed them without any authority," Ezrin recalls.

"Then I had to go quickly back to Toronto and beg for my life because the attitude in the office was that they didn't like Alice Cooper."

As fortune would have it, Ezrin ended up playing with Alice Cooper and in 1971, the hit single *I'm Eighteen* was released.

"Immediately after that… there was a need for another Alice Cooper album and then I got Lou Reed," he says.

"I'm so lucky and I know it."

By 1975, Ezrin recognized there was greater potential to realize his producing dreams south of the border, so he set off to New York.

He later returned to Toronto in 1980, but left again for Los Angeles in 1985.

In between those years, Ezrin worked with many bands and produced some blockbusters, including the classic Pink Floyd album, *The Wall*.

"[Songwriter] Roger Waters wanted to call all of the shots with *The Wall*, but because they were stronger as a group, it was my job to diplomatically move him closer to the centre [of the band]," Ezrin reveals.

"A lot of that had to do with Roger trusting me. It was very important that everyone trusted me and that I was somehow able to have a true friendship with every member of the band."

Ezrin explains that as a producer, it's pivotal to respect and cultivate the diverse personalities and creative geniuses of band members.

"One thing you have to be careful not to do is impose a style or concept on a band," he says.

"In my career, I've been put with artists who have distinct personalities and my job is to remind them that this is what they've done. Inside, there is a spark of genius and I hold that up for them to see like a mirror and say, 'Look, this is you and it's brilliant. Let's make sure everything you do is that good.'"

As well as the people side of things, Ezrin notes he's attained much success as a result of his ingenuity with music technology.

"I was one of the first people to use computer sequencing in the studio," he says, adding that he also helped pioneer the digital revolution.

His technical machinations have led to a number of business ventures, including the founding of 7th Level, a computer software company that put out CD ROMs, and the Internet radio provider Enigma Digital.

Passionately community spirited, Ezrin is involved with several charitable initiatives, including Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation, which supports music education and provides kids with instruments, and Music Rising, which gives instruments to those who lost them during Hurricane Katrina and helps these musicians get their careers restarted.

Now that he's back in Toronto with his wife Jan, Ezrin hopes to groom homegrown talent.

"I'm starting a new company in partnership with some other internationally experienced and successful people who happen to live in Toronto, and it will be dedicated to the development of the next generation of artists," he says, noting the company is still in its planning stages.

Though his trip down the road of rock 'n' roll has taken him to many places, clearly, Ezrin is happy to be home.

"Canadians are embracing me," he says.

"It feels like when your parents call you up and say they're proud of you. It's just fantastic."

For tickets to the hall of fame ceremony, log onto www.cmw.net or call 905-858-4747.

Bob Ezrin

Sonny Goldstein, CFP

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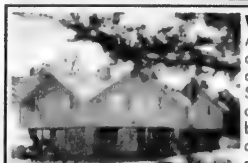

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Arts & Travel

Film chronicles brain-damaged man's progress

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — *Braindamadj'd...Take II* is a reminder that anyone's life can change irrevocably in an instant. It's also a testimonial to the power of the will.

The documentary, which premieres on CBC Newsworld March 14, is an achingly intimate chronicle of how one young man, severely brain damaged in a car accident, defied the medical prognosis.

Almost 12 years ago, Montrealer Paul Nadler, then 30, hitched a ride in Egypt, hoping to get to Sharm al-Sheikh for some scuba diving. In a freak accident, he was thrown from the car and left for dead in the desert. He was found unconscious, without clothes or identification, by UN troops and taken to an Egyptian hospital, and soon after transferred to the Soroka Medical Center in Be'er Sheva, Israel.

The comatose Nadler was given only a five per cent chance of surviving, and if he did, doctors said he would likely recover little of his physical and mental capabilities. Nadler was a television director, best known for making videos for Musique Plus. He is described as having been a brash free spirit, a risk-taker, who loved exotic travel, challenging sports and being with friends, including many women. He had an energy and drive that sometimes overwhelmed colleagues.

All that was lost when the frontal lobe of his brain was smashed.

His quietly determined mother Vera refused to give up on her son, and brought him back to Montreal, to Notre-Dame Hospital. But the doctors here were not more optimistic. Vera and Nadler's father, Arie, convinced the professionals to keep Nadler alive, and stimulated him themselves by playing music and telling him stories. Seven weeks after the accident, he came out of the coma. He recognized his parents, but little else remained of the old Paul.

Paul Nadler expresses the rage and loneliness associated with his long rehabilitation from traumatic brain injury in a solo performance he created.

Braindamadj'd includes footage of the early days of his rehabilitation that spares nothing of Nadler's reduced being. His paralysis was so extensive that he had to be strapped into his wheelchair to stay upright. He stared vacantly and drooled. He had double vision and slurred speech.

But more disturbing than the physical was the change in his persona. He had lost all sense of what was socially appropriate and of judgment; he was prone to angry outbursts and had acquired a maniacal laugh. He was anxious, impulsive and paranoid. He had virtually no short-term memory and couldn't follow instructions.

Very slowly, Nadler began to walk again with a cane, but he refused to adjust to "the new you" that doctors and therapists told him he had to accept. He was told that the progress he had made already surpassed expectations and he would have to adapt permanently to his limitations.

"There was no way I was going to be a vegetable. There was no possibility that I would not talk or move as long as I have my spirit," Nadler says in the film.

His stubbornness probably saved Nadler from living the rest of his life in an institution. Perhaps because his judgment was impaired, he refused to believe he'd never rollerblade again, have a good job and form normal relationships.

His mother took him home, but she recalls in the film that it was, at times, "horrible, a nightmare," because of his behaviour and communication problems.

Two years after the accident, he struck out on his own, finding an apartment, and almost defiantly, one three floors up a winding staircase.

His problems were many, besides restricted mobility and a mind that didn't work the way it used to: he lost friends and people stared at him on the street. He was frustrated and down on himself. "I got tired of apologizing," he says.

For someone who was so gregarious, hardest of all has been the social isolation and lack of intimate relationships.

He and his mother also had to fight for support, going to court, for example, to get an insurance company to pay for a plastic roof on the motorized scooter he uses.

Over the years, Nadler started to resume something resembling a normal life: he went snowboarding and rock-climbing in California, all miraculous achievements.

He went back to school, five years after the accident, to the Université du Québec à Montréal for a master's degree in communications. There he created a solo performance in which he shared his painful rehabilitation through words and movement.

Braindamadj'd, which has an edgy artistic style, is narrated by Nadler, who exhibits a self-deprecating, ironic humour, and includes interviews with his neurologists and rehabilitation therapists, as well as family and friends. One of his neurologists says: "About five per cent of patients [with traumatic brain injury] do more than is expected. Paul is part of that group."

There is a surprise ending to *Braindamadj'd* that Nadler and producer Jonathan Finkelstein of Apartment 11 Productions have asked previewers to keep secret. It can be said that it is a happy outcome in keeping with the film's theme of triumphing over the odds, or what Nadler calls "defining my own limits."

Nadler said in an interview that he hopes the film will raise awareness of traumatic brain injury and challenge assumptions about its victims. Even for those who are not touched by anything so serious, Nadler said he hopes anyone can find inspiration in it. "Don't be afraid to ask for that raise, or to ask that girl for a date."

As for Nadler, his battle to control his own destiny is ongoing. His next goal is to convince authorities to let him have his driver's licence back – and his search continues for someone to share his life with.

Braindamadj'd is being shown as part of CBC Newsworld's new The Lens series, which features innovative personal documentaries by independent Canadian filmmakers. It will be aired March 14 and 18 at 10 p.m., 1 a.m. and 4 a.m. EST.

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Israeli slalom skier Renzhin finishes in top half

By SHIMRIT BERMAN
Jerusalem Post

TURIN, Italy — As the Winter Olympics wound down, the last day of the alpine skiing events was a real celebration. The excitement of the last moments of the Olympics was felt everywhere, as thousands of fans filled the small ski resort of Sestriere, enjoying food, music and the men's slalom competition.

Even the athletes blended with the crowd between the first and the second run. Michael Renzhin, the last Israeli athlete still in Turin – the two ice-dance teams had already left for the United States – completed his last competition and finished in 38th place. His total time after two runs stood at two minutes and 0.73 seconds, 17.59 seconds back of the gold-medal winner, Benjamin Raich of Austria, who also won the giant slalom title.

"I said it before – my goal was to be inside the top 30," Renzhin said after the race, which was held in difficult conditions with snow falling all day long. "So that's pretty close, I guess it was all right. I could have gone faster in my second run.

"I'm still happy with it because many people didn't even finish the race as it was such a hard course. I managed to do it because I kept my concentration."

Many skiers didn't make it down icy course

Renzhin, 28, wrapped a respectable performance for Israel's first Olympic skiing appearance, managing to finish both his races, something many skiers didn't do, and placing inside the top half of competitors in both competitions.

"I got the experience of skiing on hard courses here," he said, summarizing his first Olympics, "and also the feeling of the kind of pressure there is on you in a competition like that."

Aside from Renzhin making personal and national history, the race itself provided a few surprises. Almost a third of the competitors – 30 athletes – did not finish the first run. Among them were the Italian favourite for the gold medal, Giorgio Rocca, and American headline maker, Bode Miller, who returned home without any Olympic medal.

Another American, Ted Ligety, who won an alpine ski gold medal in the first week of the games, was disqualified. Finland's Kalle Palander, who was in second place after the first run, didn't finish the second one and made way for Austria to conquer the podium, with three medalists: Raich won the gold, Reinfried Herbst won the silver and Reiner Schoenfelder took the bronze, edging Kentaro Minagawa of Japan and Sweden's Andre Myhrer by a mere three-hundredths of a second.

Renzhin received vocal support from the crowd, who cheered loudly for all competitors from countries where skiing is uncommon, including Israel and even more exotic locales like Senegal and Madagscar.

There were few Israelis in the 9,000-seat stands, but Israeli delegation officials waved an Israeli flag to show their support for Renzhin.

The skiers had very little time to rest. After Saturday night's closing ceremonies most returned to the competition circuit. Renzhin himself competes this week in Slovakia.

He was given the honour of carrying the Israeli flag during the closing ceremony. "I'm very excited about it," he said beforehand. "Maybe even more than the actual competition. I've never done anything like that before."

Doctor putting together Israeli women's hockey team

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Esther Silver came to the game of hockey kind of late in life compared to most hockey players.

Eight years ago, at 45, the Toronto doctor strapped on a set of blades and ventured onto the ice for some competitive shinny.

She was immediately hooked. She loved just about everything about the sport, so much so that she wants other women, particularly Israeli women, to take it up as well.

Last May, Sergei Matin, the Russian-born oleh who serves as president of the Israeli hockey federation, asked her to organize a women's league and to develop a team that could represent Israel in international competitions.

Like the other hockey enthusiasts trying to build hockey in Israel, Silver hopes her love of the game will pay dividends in the Middle East. Women in Canada and the United States have recently taken to the sport in a big way – it's the fastest growing sport in North America, she said – so why can't Israeli women do the same?

There are already lots of young women playing outdoor roller hockey in Israel, and coupled with the smaller number of girls playing ice hockey in Metulla on Israel's northern border with Lebanon, the nucleus is there for a national program, Silver asserts.

Silver, who lived in Israel from 1969 to 1988 and plans to move back, believes there are already four or five Israeli women who could play at an international level, say the International Ice Hockey Federation's Division IV, the entry point to international women's hockey.

Esther Silver

In addition, there are a handful of women playing college hockey in Canada and the United States at the varsity level who could represent Israel, if they meet the IIHF's residency requirements. A team like that could compete with New Zealand's national women's team, a squad she has played against as a member of the Canadian Moose during an exhibition tour.

Silver also plays goalie for a men's team in the Ontario Hydro League as well as for the D'Oh Boys, a team in B'nai Brith's D Division.

Silver, who lectures on psychological therapy for adolescents and on parenting, gets on the ice four or five times a week. She began her hockey adventure when she signed up to play in a women's hockey league at Chesswood Arena. She liked playing in the net and improved her skills by attending the hockey school run by one-time Soviet goaltending legend Vladislav Tretiak.

She now wears number 20 in homage to her hockey mentor, and she's come to appreciate the sport in a way many Canadian men do.

"It's a great team sport," she said. "It allows people to relieve tension" and it creates a kind of camaraderie many women appreciate. She feels women like her are "hungry" for the game.

Silver, who was in Metulla recently for a friendly tournament, will go back in the summer for a hockey camp run by former Montreal Canadiens' coach Jean Perron, who coaches Israel's senior and junior teams.

"The women will have a camp within a camp," she said, adding it will take at least one year to pull together a national team.

For more information, visit the women's hockey website at: www.niwih.com.

Late-life romance – not always easy

By MICHAEL GORDON

Sam was not happy. He was in the office with his two children to review his Parkinson's disease and angina. He had made the appointment to assess the results of modified treatments for both conditions. He had less chest pain and was walking better, and everyone should have been happy.

The Senior Side of Life

However, during the conversation, the name Sophie came up, and from the children's facial expression and the pain in Sam's voice, it was clear that something was wrong.

Sam had wanted Sophie, his "girlfriend," to attend the appointment, because they spent most of their time together, even though they each had their own apartment.

He told me – and he was clearly also trying to impress his children: "We really like each other, and for me it is like being born again… but my kids are not happy. They don't think she is refined enough, not like their mother, my late wife, who I loved very much."

I could see from the children's expressions that this was a source of consternation. I told them I could not become a family counsellor, but could perhaps suggest that they get help from a third party, such as a social worker. I told them I could arrange such a visit and they agreed to get back to me.

Late-life romance can be very complicated for everyone involved, including the couple who may be charting waters they thought they would never be interested in or able to navigate again.

For children, there may be many personal conflicts to contend with, including personal, familial and financial issues. Sometimes the children may sense something in the relationship that concerns them, and they react in an attempt to protect their beloved parent. Sometimes they react for what would have to be interpreted as selfish reasons or the inability to appreciate the fact that their parent may want and need to engage in a romantic relationship.

It has been well established that an older person may seek, experience, enjoy and benefit from romantic relationships. Yet, it is understandable that children may have difficulty coming to terms with a new person in their family who may interfere with their relationship with their parent.

The challenge for children is to remember that, just as they, in their lives, pursued their romantic relationships, at times without the full agreement of their parents or siblings, their parent has no less a right to do so for himself or herself. If not handled well, opposition to a parent's romantic pursuit can lead to terrible alienation of the family in the future, the last thing a loving family would want.

If there are indeed indications that the object of their parent's romantic desire has some ulterior motive that the children are aware of, it behooves them to let their parent know in as non-confrontational a manner as possible and, if deemed necessary, find ways to protect the parent or at least the parent's assets, should the worst fears prove to be real.

If, on the other hand – and this is the more common scenario – the relationship is the foundation for a loving expansion and enhancement of their parent's life, then the children should be pleased that such good fortune has befallen their beloved parent. Loneliness is terrible, and even the most caring children cannot make up for the absence of an emotional and physical soul mate, one with whom important personal and intimate experiences can be shared.

The challenge for children is to acknowledge and support the efforts and desires of their parents to seek and enjoy, if they so wish, a romantic extension of their lives. They deserve it.

Purim Snowpea-Citrus Salad with Poppyseed Dressing

Poppy seeds at Purin have a special significance. Tradition holds that Queen Esther chose a vegetarian diet including various seeds, rather than eat non-Kosher food in the King's palace.

2 cups fresh snow-peas, ends snapped off
1 cup whole red seedless grapes
1 cup fresh orange sections (2 large oranges)
1 cup fresh grapefruit sections (2 grapefruits)
1 green bell pepper, cut in julienne slices
1 small red onion, sliced into thin slivers
1/2 cup dry-roasted sunflower seeds

1 bottle poppyseed dressing

Combine snow-peas, grapes, orange sections, grapefruit sections, green pepper slices, onion slivers, sunflower seeds in large bowl. Toss salad with 1/2-3/4 cup poppyseed dressing, or to taste.

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Seymour Epstein

Epi on Education

Are we engaging in true talmud Torah?

Some of us who pray on a regular basis have the advantage of knowing the poetry of the siddur deep in our hearts. Of course, there is also the danger that the words become clichés – over-used, abused, and taken for granted in what Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel called religious behaviourism.

Those who don't pray are missing the rhythms of Jewish liturgy in our daily lives, but they have the opportunity to see the prayers of the Jewish people in a fresh light, one that no longer shines for regular synagogue folk.

This thought occurred to me the other day in synagogue as I repeated a line I have said thousands of times, but only then took real notice of.

In the morning service on both weekdays and Shabbat, we refer to an epiphany of Isaiah as he recounted it in Chapter 2 of his book. He envisioned the angels praising God by calling him "Holy, Holy, Holy," an act that was embellished by the rabbis in their version of the same event, which eventually became part of our daily prayers.

"They all accept the rule of the kingdom of heaven, one from the other, granting permission to one another to hallow their Creator."

I realized that, as esoteric as this description is, it is yet another way of describing the act of education. In the same way that we are to imitate God in our limited, earthly fashion, so, too, can we see ourselves as imitating the angels (as it were, our rabbis would add).

We accept God's value system one from the other, lover from beloved, spouse from spouse, child from parents, neighbour from neighbour, teacher from student – and in so doing, we give permission to praise the One who created this universe for us.

Education as acceptance of responsibility and license to praise and thank is a very different notion of teaching and learning than the one we acquire from traditional schooling. It may just be that authentic talmud Torah is not Jewish education as we presently know it.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

Time does not stand still

Recently, I was a guest at a bar mitzvah, one I attended with great pleasure knowing that many of my friends and loved ones would be there. I would be surrounded with familiarity, and this always intrigues me.

URBAN WRITER

Upon arrival, I immediately noticed some people in attendance I hadn't crossed paths with in more than 20 years. (I am amazed whenever I hear or read myself making such statements, as it is clear my history is getting longer). Walking into the hall, it became evident that time does not stand still.

One woman, whom I recall as being adorable in stature and look, had her cute appearance mugged by time. She had morphed into a bubbie and was indeed happy with the persona that comes with it, relaying stories about her grandchildren and stating, "I would be fine if my daughter didn't take them [her grandchildren] home at the end of the day."

I saw a man at the simchah whom I remember as being effervescent in nature. For some reason, the years had dulled his shine and he looked rather tired; his spark had been used up for now and needed to flicker rather than flash. Somewhere in his eyes, however, I detected that warm embrace he was so well known for, and as we parted ways, I sensed, hoped, it would resurface as the years roll on and the time is right.

It was marvellous to meet up with an old friend, someone who had clearly "found himself" with the passing of time. Whereas once this middle-aged fellow would consistently fidget, and find it next to impossible to look into another person's eyes, he was now smiling broadly and a certain comfort was etched into his face. His childlike curiosity was endearing as he authentically asked me poignant questions about my life. Time has been good to him.

It was a true thrill to catch up with a rabbi I had known from my high school days.

This rabbi is a Talmud chacham (a wise scholar) and expressed a look that only a wise man can. He appeared to be youthful, like a 20-year-old versus men of retirement age, and he stood tall and earnest, as though he was in a constant state of wonderment about the people and activities occurring around him. There was glow about him. He seemed to have gotten something that a lot of us miss.

The simchah was classy and earthy. I enjoyed it so much as it gave me the chance to celebrate and reconnect with so many friends and family.

The night also taught me that time does not stand still and that we are changing from moment to moment, in ways that are difficult to see as they happen. But when I stood back, and took the room in, and really looked at this crowd of people that make up my world, it was blatantly evident that we do not remain nubile children only concerned with the number of gears on our bike or where to find a bigger hill to ski down.

In fact, the many experiences that we go through – the highs and the lows – attach themselves to our essence; show themselves through the wrinkles on our faces and our slowed gait. However, this in itself, aging, growing, is a trophy, and if it had a plaque on, it would read: "Well done for discovering the means to get through the challenges; for smiling widely when the good times passed through; for fighting off the pain and suffering, ensuring that your happiness is victorious."

The bar mitzvah was beautiful because a boy became a man, and because a man recognized that he was.

avrum@veahavta.org SUDAN?

Leadership Sinai Presents... A Night in Manhattan

The hippest party in town is back. Leadership Sinai Presents ... A Night in Manhattan will be held at the prestigious Windsor Arms Hotel. This swanky cocktail party boasts The After Midnight Band, an opportunity to buy a "Key to the City" for a chance to win a deluxe trip to New York, a glam Manhattan atmosphere and it will bring together more than 500 young people for an evening of pure fun.

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This Week

National

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Memorial held in Montreal for slain French Jew. *Page 23*

Live & Learn

Education: It's about more than pens and pencils. *Section B*

On Campus

UWO students create human rights journal. *Page 28*

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Hamilton native hosts TVO's flagship show. *Page 38*

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Canada Post Publication Agreement #40030684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

Celebrate – and be resolute!

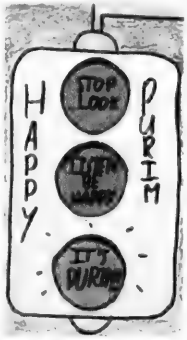
Editorial

It is that time of year, thankfully, when we once again take our cue from our children. As the creators of the artwork on this page, Brodie Kirsh and Eli Minkowitz, remind us, we need to: Stop. Look. Listen. Be happy.

Purim is just around the calendar corner.

In five days, we will be celebrating one of the great survival stories of antiquity.

And, as our sages decreed some two millennia ago, the annual celebration of Purim must be an unreservedly happy occasion.



Eli Minkowitz, Grade 4

It is a religious and historical commemoration comprising four positive parts. We are obliged to:

- listen to the reading of the Scroll of Esther,
- provide some manner of relief or charity to the needy,
- exchange portions of food with members of the community, and
- enjoy a festive meal..

It is not hard to see why the sages would have ordained the performance of these four specific activities to constitute the fulfilment of the religious aspects of the holiday of Purim.

They foster feelings of community.

Together, the acts are aimed at instilling interest in and concern for one another's needs, caring for one another, sharing with one another, understanding that the fate of all often rests with the fate of one and that the fate of one should always be the concern of all.

The Scroll of Esther tells how our fears for our future were assuaged by resolute, bold action by the few and collective, determined action by the many. It is an eerie irony of Purim this year, engendering new fears for our future, that the modern-day descendant of the villain Haman, Iranian President Ahmad Ahmadinejad, repeatedly, noisily, pathologically "seeks to destroy the Jews." (Esther 3:6)

Continued on page 8

Brodie Kirsh, Grade 6

Shabbat Zachor: Tetzaveh
Candlelighting: 6:00
Havdallah: 7:05

Greater Toronto Area

Hamas 'success' may spell Kadima's failure — please see page 32

The News in Brief

CANADA

Kirpan Ruling Praised

TORONTO — Both Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith Canada praised last week's unanimous Supreme Court ruling overturning a Quebec court's ban against Sikh students wearing ceremonial daggers to school. The judgment upheld the right to wear the kirpans, subject to limits to ensure "a reasonable level of safety." CJC president Ed Morgan said the ruling "reaffirmed that freedom of religion is a fundamental value." Allan Adel, chair of B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights, added that such rights are crucial, "as long as they are balanced against other fundamental rights, including the right to safety and security."

Pesach Food to Cuba

TORONTO — Ontario Jews sent kosher for Pesach food to Cuba's 1,500 Jews for the 45th straight year on Feb. 27. Canadian Jewish Congress, Ontario region, and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto kept up a tradition that began with the U.S. embargo of the island nation.

Amazon Pulls Book

TORONTO — Amazon.ca, the Canadian arm of the U.S. online bookstore, has pulled a book by U.S white supremacist David Duke after a complaint by Canadian Jewish Congress. The retailer removed *Jewish Supremacism* after CJC argued it's hateful and is on a list of material banned by the Canadian Border Services Agency.

WORLD

Mayor Stays On Job

LONDON — A judge last week temporarily blocked London Mayor Ken Livingstone's four-week suspension for comparing a Jewish journalist to a Nazi. The Adjudication Panel for England, which hears complaints against local officials, found him guilty Feb. 24 after a complaint by the Board of Deputies of British Jews. He had appealed the suspension, which was to begin March 1. It came after Livingstone last year asked a critical Jewish reporter from London's *Evening Standard* if he was a "German war criminal" and said he was acting "like a concentration camp guard." The mayor is a longtime critic of Israel and said that's the real reason for the complaint.

Shoah Real: Khatami

TEHRAN — In an apparent attack on current Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, his predecessor, Mohammed Khatami, called the Holocaust a "massacre of innocent people, among them many Jews," the BBC reported. Khatami, a relative moderate, added that the Shoah occurred, "even if this has been misused and there is enormous pressure on the Palestinian people." He said: "We should speak out if even a single Jew is killed." Ahmadinejad has drawn criticism for repeatedly denying the Shoah. Also last week, Iran pledged $250 million (US) to the Palestinian Authority. Tehran reportedly did so to offset funding lost after Hamas' recent election victory.

Irving Back At It

VIENNA — Convicted Holocaust denier David Irving repeated that Hitler didn't have a systematic plan to exterminate Jews. Speaking from jail in Austria, he told the BBC that Hitler's own involvement in the Shoah is "a big question mark." He added he now believes some Jews were gassed in the war, but doesn't think many people were gassed at Auschwitz, which he says had only two small gas chambers. Irving recently received a three-year term for saying in a speech and interview in Austria in 1989 that Auschwitz had no gas chambers. Both he and prosecutors have appealed.

Not Guilty Plea

MOSCOW — A Russian man suspected of attacking worshippers in a Moscow shul pleaded not guilty last week to attempted murder. Alexander Koptsev, 20, told a judge he's not guilty because the Criminal Code was "written by Jews and the Jewish Mafia." Prosecutors classified the Jan. 11 attack, in which eight people were injured, as attempted murder and attempt to cause injuries because of ethnic or religious hatred. The maximum sentence is life in jail.

Natives, Jews Urged to 'Help Heal the World'

VANCOUVER — Jewish and native leaders discussed residential schools, discrimination and future opportunities for joint dialogue in a recent teleconference convened by the B.C. non-governmental organization Worldviews Strategies.

Led by Canadian Jewish Congress' Pacific region chair Mark Weintraub and Chief Robert Joseph of the Gwa wa enuk First Nation, the teleconference also included representatives of European and North American social justice NGOs, and the federal and all provincial governments.

Weintraub said Jews and natives "have a deep friendship that stems from common historical narratives, determination and hope in the face of pervasive and institutionalized racism and a connection to land that permeates our ancestral culture."

As natural allies, they can work together "to help heal the world," Joseph added.

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The Canadian Jewish news

Vol. XXXVI, No. 11 (1,738)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation 42,245 copies
Total paid circulation 41,398 copies

CCNA verified circulation Feb. 9, 2006

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada $35.95, 1 yr. incl. GST. $63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST.
U.S.A. $100 U.S. funds, 1 yr.
All other countries $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr.

Postmaster: Please return 2985 and changes of address to Toronto office

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.

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U.S. 'will always be by Israel's side,' Clinton says

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

The United States' relationship with Israel will be "solid for a long time to come," former U.S. President Bill Clinton told supporters of the Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies in Toronto on Sunday night.

"No matter what happens, we will always be there by Israel's side," the 42nd American president told some 1,800 people attending the sold-out Spirit of Hope Benefit at the Toronto Performing Arts Centre.

"We're not about to allow Hamas or anyone else to destroy Israel."

In a 40-minute extemporaneous talk that was warmly received, Clinton touched on many topics, including the Middle East, the growing interdependence of the world, and the deadly riots that followed publication of Danish editorial cartoons depicting the Muslim Prophet Muhammad.

Among those is attendance were Ontario Attorney General Michael Bryant, Toronto Mayor David Miller, federal NDP Leader Jack Layton and Ontario Opposition Leader John Tory.

Clinton said he "sympathized" with the reason Palestinians voted for Hamas in recent parliamentary elections because the average Palestinian is worse off now than a decade ago.

"They cast a vote for something more immediate and tangible. I get that. But that doesn't mean we can ignore a core commitment to terror and the destruction of Israel."

Former U.S. president Bill Clinton [*CJN* file photo]

Clinton earned applause when he said the west should suspend financial aid to Hamas until it renounces terror and recognizes Israel. Democracy, he said, "is more than about winning a race. It's also about the rule of law, minority rights and the renunciation of extra-legal violence against civilians."

But there's reason for hope, he said.

The former president cited a poll taken one week after the election that showed 73 per cent of Palestinians wanted Hamas to renounce terror and 82 per cent wanted it to make peace with Israel.

"These are big numbers," he said. "Most Palestinian people want to work this out."

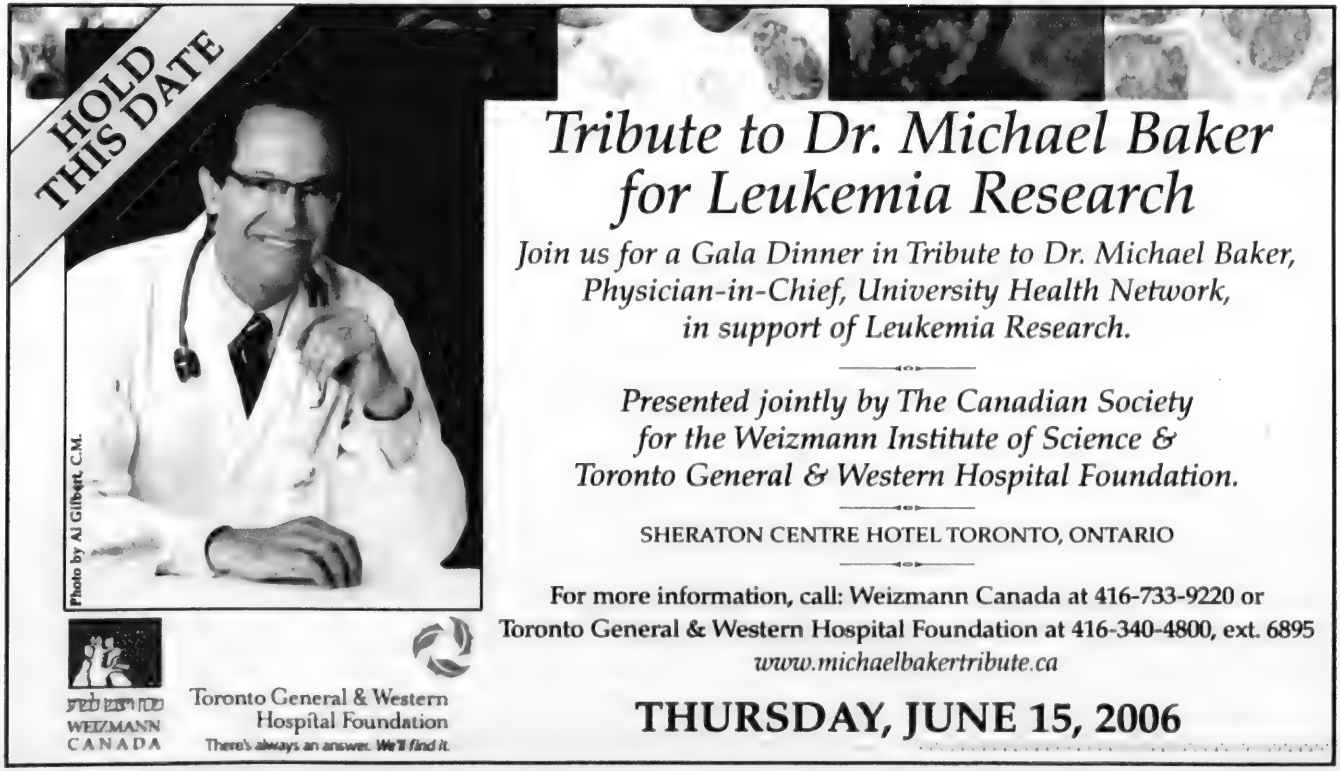
Only four per cent wanted *sharia* law in the territories, he noted.

Hamas' offer to have international humanitarian aid monitored should also be spurned, Clinton said.

"It's like saying, 'I'll spend your money and I'll get somebody else to buy guns and make bombs.' That's a bad deal. I support the position of all governments who decline to participate in this."

The "whole purpose" of the peace process is to guarantee both sides security, and "we can't go down that road unless that's part of the deal."

Continued on page 22



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Greater Toronto Area

The truths that we must tell

From the editor's desk

Emmanuel Navon is a senior fellow at the Institute for Policy and Strategy at the Interdisciplinary Center in Herzliya. He also lectures in the political science department of Tel-Aviv University and has taught public administration at Bar-Ilan University.

He thinks, teaches and writes a great deal about Israel's foreign policy, political philosophy, international economy, terrorism and the media.

Soon to be published by the Institute for Policy and Strategy are his *The War of Ideas Over the Arab-Israeli Conflict: A Guide to Israel's Advocates* (with Rahel Machtiger), and *Soft Powerlessness: Arab Propaganda and the Erosion of Israel's International Standing*.

In his writings, Navon reflects on the success of the malevolent, anti-Israel campaign of propaganda that has been cleverly waged throughout the world in the past decades but especially in this very young 21st century.

The success of that campaign, alas, is most painfully wounding on campuses in Europe and North America, albeit perhaps, not as sharply on the campuses in Canada. A recent study by Hillel in the United States, for example, found that advocating for Israel was the least popular cause among Jewish youth on American campuses.

A working paper of Navon's theories concerning the success of Arab propaganda and the erosion of Israel's international standing was distributed at the Herzliya Conference this past January. It was written before the victory by Hamas in January in the general Palestinian elections. But the international reaction to Hamas' electoral victory has been very instructive and an unhappy confirmation of Navon's conclusions.

Completely disregarding or explaining away Hamas' hallowed, hard-core purpose of destroying the Jewish state, as a nettlesome detail of its out-of-date mission statement, some non-Arab countries – Russia, Turkey and South Africa, for example – have already rushed to confer legitimacy upon the regime/political party/terrorists.

News commentators and pundits are so frequently repeating Hamas' "demands" upon Israel that soon those demands will become the "new norm" in the Middle East debate. They will form a new starting point and a new base of reference in the competing claims of the Mideast conflict. And since Hamas' election came in a thoroughly democratic process, no less so than the democratic processes in Israel, many individuals will simply accept the new norm and Hamas in that norm as a morally and politically equivalent regime to that of the government of Israel.

"The war launched by the PLO [Palestine Liberation Organization] against Israel in September 2000 had two objectives," Navon writes. "To exhaust and demoralize Israeli society… and to invite international pressure and intervention by presenting Israel in the foreign media as the powerful and ruthless aggressor of a powerless and desperate people. The first objective has failed; the second has succeeded – especially in Europe."

With laser precision, Navon dissects, defines and discusses the elements of the anti-Israel propaganda war. He concludes the analysis thus: "When people who are not versed in the history of the Middle East hear lies repeatedly, they start believing them. As [Joseph] Goebbels said, and as the Palestinians understand, 'Propaganda must… always be essentially simple and repetitious… it must confine itself to a few points and repeat them over and over.' Propaganda can be effective only if it is based on spreading and repeating the same disciplined message. Israel should obviously not spread lies and myths but the very opposite: it should repeat the same truths over and over again. Arab propagandists are not embarrassed to lie; Israel advocates should not be embarrassed to tell the truth. It is precisely because Arab spokespersons sound like broken records that they are getting their message across. Pro-Israel activists should do the same with the truth.

"Basic and redundant messages on the Arab-Israel conflict could take as a model the 'Seven Truths' developed by Dr. Tal Ben-Shahar from Harvard University and from the David Project:

Truth 1: *Arab rejectionism.* The conflict is about Arab rejection of Jewish sovereignty and freedom in the Middle East.

Truth 2: *The suffering.* The Arab regimes are responsible for the suffering of Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Truth 3: *Immoral equivalency.* While Israel is committed to democracy and individual freedoms for all its citizens, Arab countries are oppressive dictatorships, disrespectful of basis human rights and guilty of apartheid on the basis of ethnicity, religion and gender.

Truth 4: *Population patterns.* With the rise of modern Zionism, Jews returning to Israel purchased and cultivated land, attracted mass Arab immigration and improved the living conditions of Jews and Arabs.

Truth 5: *Arab anti-Semitism.* There can be no peace in the Middle East as long as the regimes, the media, the mosques and the schools incite violence and teach hate.

Truth 6: *The need for a Jewish state.*

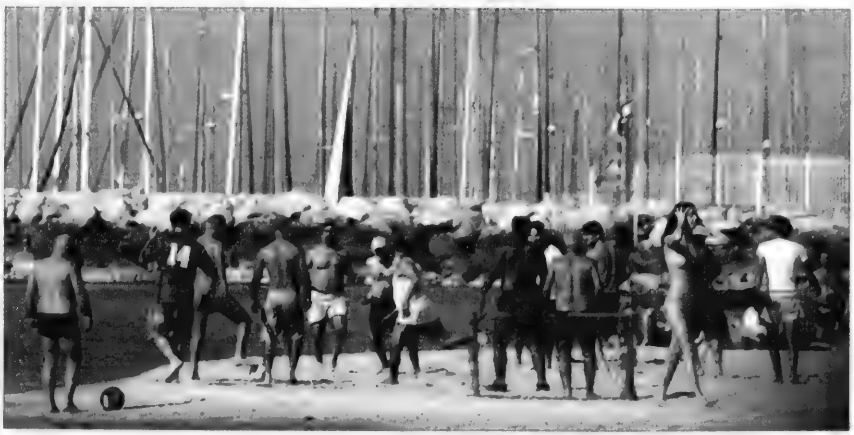
To secure the basic rights of the Jews in the Middle East, Israel must remain a Jewish state.

Truth 7: *Making the world a better place.* Israel, though constantly forced to fight against those bent on its destruction, focuses on creation, working toward progress and betterment of lives around the world.

These are truths we must all tell.

— MBD

See JN



FEBRUARY IN TEL AVIV: While most Canadians were contending with cold, ice and snow last month, people in Tel Aviv were contending with a different sort of weather. [Israel Sun photo]

Canadian gov't urged to make Darfur a priority

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Canadians Against Slavery and Torture in Sudan (CASTS), a grassroots advocacy organization, is urging the Stephen Harper government to make intervention in the Darfur region of Sudan a foreign policy priority.

"We need [Prime Minister] Harper to exercise more forceful leadership internationally to bring an end to the atrocities in Darfur," states a letter to CASTS supporters from Norman Epstein, founder of the organization.

The letter asks CASTS supporters to call on the prime minister, Foreign Minister Peter MacKay and local MPs to use Canada's "international influence to save the people of the Darfur region of Sudan, where genocide has been underway since 2003.

"It is estimated that 350,000-400,000 people have died, 10,000 more continue to die every month and 2.5 million have been displaced," the letter states. "The Janjaweed militias burn and bomb villages, systematically rape women and young girls, abduct children and destroy food and water supplies... Since the Khartoum (Sudan) regime is complicit with the militias, it cannot be relied upon to protect the people of Darfur."

Epstein believes Canada can take a leading role in mobilizing the international community to intervene to save the Darfur refugees, many of whom languish in camps in neighbouring Chad.

He said he is heartened by a recent statement by U.S. President George Bush, who called for a more "muscular" intervention in the region under United Nations auspices, including a bigger role for NATO. And he pointed to developments at the UN, where the Security Council directed Secretary General Kofi Annan on Feb. 3 to begin contingency planning to turn the 7,000-man African Union (AU) force into a UN force double that size.

The AU force is not equipped or trained to protect the refugees displaced by the Khartoum-supported militias, Epstein stated.

Meanwhile, the *Washington Post* reported that four U.S. military planners were sent to the UN to assist in organizing military options for the AU forces on the ground. The move came after Bush, who has called the atrocities in Darfur "genocide," concluded peace talks were going nowhere and the AU force was unable to protect refugees.

Around the same time, two U.S. senators, Republican Sam Brownback and Democrat Joseph Biden, said they planned to introduce a resolution in Congress calling for NATO troops to help the AU stop the killing in Darfur.

Sudan, however, opposes expanded international intervention. The *New York Times* reported Sudan is lobbying other countries to oppose replacing the AU force with UN troops, including a veiled threat of an Al Qaeda attack on UN soldiers in Sudan if they come.

Even possible UN sanctions are being resisted by three key states: China, Russia and Qatar, all members of the Security Council.

Epstein said "there's a realization that current policy has not accomplished much... Canada certainly has to do more to be forceful in ensuring intervention happens."

Epstein said he expected broad political support for Canadian involvement in an intervention force, adding Canada's contribution might be limited to several hundred soldiers and logistical support.

CASTS is urging the federal government to use its influence to urge the UN to invoke Chapter 7, a mandatory resolution that would authorize the use of force to disarm the Janjaweed; as an alternative, CASTS is encouraging Canada's support for an international military force with the mandate to disarm militias.

Epstein suggested one of the lessons of the Rwandan genocide was that failure to intervene could lead to regional instability and a spillover of violence to neighbouring countries. He pointed to Congo, a neighbour of Rwanda, where three million have died in sectarian violence.

Western nations, he conceded, were hesitant to send their soldiers into harm's way in Rwanda. When 10 Belgian soldiers were killed, "Western nations retreated.

"We need a paradigm shift," he continued. "We need to make up our mind as an international community to intervene.

"Are we going to sit back and allow defenseless civilians to be slaughtered? If we are, we have to ask, what kind of humanity do we represent if we abdicate our responsibility to protect the weak?"

Correction

The article, "Israeli dance festival for children at York U" (*CJN*, March 2), gave an incorrect phone number for tickets for the Rikudiyah. The number is 416-636-1880, ext. 364. We regret the error.

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Family of Alicia Ross lends her name to fundraiser

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When her daughter, Alicia Ross, went missing last summer, the people of Thornhill came through for Sharon Fortis in uncounted ways.

Now, Fortis and her husband, Julius, want to give something back to the community that supported them.

On March 11, the Fortis family will join the family of Greg Rogers, Ross' onetime boyfriend who died in an accident in 1999, to sponsor the second annual Greg Rogers Memorial Hockey Game.

Rogers played for the Thornlea Thunder when he was a student at Thornlea Secondary School. The game, between Thornlea Thunder alumni, and York Regional Police, will be followed by a post-game Monte Carlo fun night. Proceeds from the events will help fund a scholarship named for Alicia Ross and Greg Rogers, which goes to college and university students who hail from Thornhill.

Response to the fundraiser has been remarkable, Fortis told *The CJN*. The game, which begins at 5 p.m. at Thornhill Community Centre (Bayview and Green Lane) is almost sold out, she said, 10 days before the puck drops.

The post-game fun night at Le Parc (8432 Leslie St.) begins at 7 p.m. and features a buffet dinner, charity Monte Carlo and other entertaining events.

Fortis said sponsors have been generous in providing prizes for the auction and silent auction. Participants will be issued "funny money" to play the various games, and the money can be used to bid on prizes such as Toronto Raptors and Toronto Maple Leafs memorabilia, restaurant meals and shopping coupons.

The Raptors, she said, have donated a package that includes a tour of the team's dressing room, the opportunity to shoot hoops in a pre-game warm-up and platinum tickets.

Fortis said the fundraiser "started out small" but quickly took off. She was approached by the Rogers family and by Phil Barski and Ron Kuperberg, two of Alicia's and Greg's friends. Alicia was part of the committee last year that organized the first memorial game, and the organizers hoped that the Fortises would participate in the 2006 version.

The Fortises agreed, and once they lent Alicia's name to the event, "It just got insane," she said.

Fortis said that when Alicia's death was confirmed about a month after she went missing, people who had volunteered to help "were in limbo." When the fundraiser was announced, "people said 'Yes, now we can help.'"

Alicia's scholarship will be allocated by Fortis and her husband to a candidate based on criteria other than marks, she continued. Key factors will be a strong work ethic, dedication to the community and whether the student had to overcome an obstacle.

"We're looking for a person who falls between the cracks, a diamond in the rough," she said.

For more information about the scholarship or the fundraising event, visit www.aliciaross.ca or www.grsf.ca.

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Jews urged: Be 'vocal locals'

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Members of the Jewish community should actively challenge unbalanced media coverage of Israel, says the senior foreign press co-ordinator of the Israeli Prime Minister's Office.

Urging Jews to be "vocal locals," David Baker said, "You can help us by challenging media bias and distortions."

In a recent talk at Beth Shalom Synagogue, Baker, in his third visit to Toronto in 16 months, set out steps on how to file a complaint about unfair reporting.

Phone an editor at a newspaper and explain the grievance, but do not engage in media bashing, "which is the worst thing you can do," he advised.

Contribute original articles to the local media, write letters to the editor, and use the resources of the Israeli consulate, Baker added.

The international media has an "insatiable but legitimate appetite" for Israeli news, he said, adding that, for journalists, Israel is a goldmine.

According to Baker, Israel's prominence in the media outweighs its size: Some 400 foreign correspondents are based in Israel, and only Washington and Moscow have bigger press corps.

One thousand reporters poured into Israel to cover Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's incapacitating stroke on Jan. 4, and as many as 2,000 arrived to cover Operation Defensive Shield in the West Bank in the spring of 2002, Baker said.

During Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza last summer, reporters received unprecedented access to almost everything they requested, he pointed out.

Baker acknowledged that "biased" reporters covering Israel are in a minority, but he said there are correspondents who have preconceived notions about the Arab-Israeli conflict.

As well, some reporters emphasize Palestinian casualties in the intifadah and virtually ignore the killings of Israelis, he noted.

Still others have a "knee-jerk tendency" to zero in on the "juiciest" or most sensational aspects of a story, while ignoring measures Israel takes to head off terrorism, he observed.

Nevertheless, the vast majority of reporters "know what the score is," and know that it starts and ends with Palestinian terrorism, he claimed.

Baker said Israel craves peace and wants to live in harmony with its Arab neighbours.

Describing Canada as "a valued friend," Baker said, "We share common values. We're very good friends and enjoy a healthy relationship."

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Greater Toronto Area

School boards limit access to controversial book

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

School boards in Ottawa, Windsor and Niagara Region are joining the York Region District School Board in limiting access to a controversial children's book on the Mideast conflict that critics say demonizes Israeli soldiers and glorifies suicide bombers.

The District School Board of Niagara announced last week it had advised teachers, principals and librarians that the book, *Three Wishes, Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*, may not be suitable for students in grades 4, 5 and 6. While the book will remain in the district's library inventory, children who request it may find the librarian directing them to other books. The librarian might also inform the student's parents about the book's sensitive contents before providing it, the *St. Catharines Standard* reported.

In the capital region, meanwhile, the Ottawa-Carleton Catholic School Board decided it would not stock the book and won't make it available to students who request it.

The Greater Essex County District School Board decided to allow the book to remain on library shelves, but it's restricting access to it to students in Grade 7 and up. David Lynn, superintendent of education for the Windsor-area board, told the *Windsor Star* "some of the comments [in *Three Wishes*] would be somewhat disturbing to a student who doesn't understand the context of what the children in Israel and Palestine are experiencing."

The country's largest board, the Toronto District School Board, announced it is considering a recommendation that would require students in grades 4 and 5 to present a parent's note indicating they are aware their child would like to read *Three Wishes*. The book would remain available without a note to students in Grade 6.

The moves came after Canadian Jewish Congress distributed a letter to school boards across the province raising concerns that *Three Wishes* is inappropriate for youngsters in grades 4 through 6.

The book is one of 10 non-fiction nominees offered to students by the Ontario Library Association (OLA) as part of the prestigious Silver Birch Award recreational reading program. The books in the Silver Birch program are not part of school curricula, but are made available to students on a voluntary basis as part of an after-school reading program. Students in grades 4 to 6 vote on their favourites at the end of the program.

Three Wishes, by anti-war author Deborah Ellis, is largely based on conversations with Israeli and Palestinian children. Concerns were first raised about the book by York Region teacher Sarah Burakowski, who said it demonizes Israeli soldiers and presents suicide bombing as a viable life choice.

The York Region school board agreed to remove the book from the Silver Birch program, but when concerns were first raised some six weeks ago, the Toronto board said it would not follow suit.

On Feb. 8, Congress sent a letter to the OLA and to school boards in Ontario outlining in detail its concerns about passages in the book – particularly the background and contextual material provided by Ellis. The letter said, "we do not believe that this particular book will serve to advance student comprehension in any meaningful way" but may serve "only to demonize both sides as murderous and irrational."

In one passage, a Palestinian girl, Wafa, 12, said, "Killing an Israeli will make me feel glad. It will make me feel strong."

She added: "I am tired of them making me feel small and weak. I want to feel strong and proud."

Another Palestinian girl, Maryam, 11, said "there are women martyrs who do the suicide bombings. They are very brave… I have only one wish. I would like to go to heaven. Maybe in heaven there is happiness after we die. Maybe then."

Salam, the 12-year-old sister of suicide bomber Aayat Al-Akhras, who killed herself, a security guard and 17-year-old Rachel Levy at a Jerusalem market, said she would have made her sister a special breakfast on the day of her attack, had she known about it.

Len Rudner, director of community relations for Congress, said, "I think we have made some progress… We don't go in there with unreasonable positions. Boards see us as partners rather than as adversaries."

CRAZY HATS: In conjunction with Rosh Chodesh Adar, Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School Grade 3 students, from left, Emma Miloff, Natalie Cappe, Kate Brooks and Margaret Rose, celebrate in their crazy hats.

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Finding courage in community

Continued from page 1

A world without Zionism seems to be Ahmadinejad's key foreign policy objective. He encourages, supports, instructs and funds terrorists to kill Jews. And, of course, he is desperate to build nuclear weapons with which he would try to wipe out the Jewish state.

On the Perspectives page in this issue, Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz tells of the newly formed Coalition on Iran, an ad hoc group of activists worried about the dangerous regime in Iran.

Just as Mordechai in his day urged Esther "not to remain silent," Rabbi Steinmetz in our day urges readers of *The CJN* not to remain silent, to come together in defence of the sovereign Jewish state's right to live, to become involved in communal efforts to stop Ahmadinejad "before it is too late."

Strong currents of anti-Israel and anti-Semitic sentiments are coursing through the Middle East and even through parts of the West. Jews will have to withstand the inevitable shocks. We have done so in the past, as the Scroll of Esther chronicles. And we must do so now, in the manner in which the Scroll of Esther teaches us.

In performing the four community-building mitzvot that the rabbis decreed for this joyous holiday, we feel with, for and part of the Jewish people. And as part of this remarkably achieving, remarkably engaged, ancient-modern people, we find courage too, for as Mordechai also told Esther, "relief and deliverance will surely come."

Even as Jewish communities across the world, and especially in Israel, prepare to withstand the inevitable attempts to inflict harm upon our people, we must also turn our attention to those rabbinically encoded cues from our happily insistent children.

Stop. Look. Listen. Be happy. It's Purim.

Correction

Two assertions in the editorial last week (March 2), *The issue of fairness*, were incorrect.

We wrote that Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada that refuses to extend any funding to non-Catholic, faith-based schools. But this is also the case in the Atlantic provinces.

We also wrote that non-Catholic, faith based schools seek funding only for the general, non-religious portion of their schools' program.

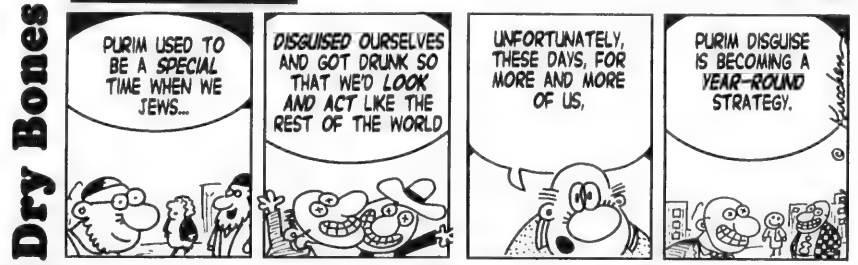
However, after the editorial was published, *The CJN* was advised that the coalition for fair funding of non-Catholic, faith-based schools is indeed seeking funding treatment from the government of Ontario equal to that of the Catholic schools.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• Quebec unveiled a plan to sensitize the province's francophone majority to the needs of Quebec's ethnic and anglophone communities, and to create a rapprochement between the groups. The goal was integration, not assimilation, said Jaques-Yvan Morin, minister of cultural and scientific development.

• Recently released Soviet Refusenik Iosif Mendelevich made a surprise visit to a Canadian Mizrachi convention in Jerusalem. He was greeted with tears, applause and singing.

Editorials & Letters


Dry Bones
PURIM USED TO BE A SPECIAL TIME WHEN WE JEWS...
DISGUISED OURSELVES AND GOT DRUNK SO THAT WE'D LOOK AND ACT LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD
UNFORTUNATELY, THESE DAYS, FOR MORE AND MORE OF US,
PURIM DISGUISE IS BECOMING A YEAR-ROUND STRATEGY.
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Day school system in crisis

It has been recently asserted by community officials that Jewish education in Toronto is thriving. The assertions were that enrolment is on the increase and that more than 50 per cent of the Jewish community is involved. Unfortunately, the failure to make a distinction between supplementary and day-school education streams renders these statements dangerously misleading. While each stream has an important place in the structure of our community, all is definitely not well with Jewish education in Toronto.

The day school system in Toronto, our most effective promoter of Jewish continuity, is in a state of crisis. Fees are poised to cross the five-digit mark this year for elementary schools, not to speak of high schools. Non-wealthy families who persevere find themselves under increasing economic strain, while others opt out or are turned off from even considering day school education (thereby increasing the numbers in supplementary schools). Consequently, several day schools are suffering from declining enrolment. Complicating matters is the utter refusal of the Ontario government to acknowledge the long-standing inequity in educational funding in this province. All of this points to a situation that is in dire need of a remedy.

Statements that cloud these issues promote complacency about the current state of the day school system. This only delays the urgent communal action that is required to work toward solving this festering problem, which seriously threatens our community's continuing strength into future generations.

Jerrold Landau
Toronto

* * *

Futile to negotiate with Hamas

The Islamic terrorist organization Hamas, an arm of Sheik Ahmad Yassin's Islamic Association, had its beginnings in the late 1970s as part of an Israeli attempt to encourage the rise of a religious alternative to the Palestine Liberation Organization. It was a group devoted to benevolence (with Israeli funding), and adopted a slow approach to Islamization of the region through rhetorical battle and indoctrination. The Islamic Association graduated from benevolence to terror as Yassin forged a new branch, named Hamas, devoted to undermining the peace process with suicide bombings of civilian targets.

As fundamentalism began to ferment within Hamas, extremism ruled. It was in charge of most Palestinian educational and social-aid institutions, and it spoon-fed ideas of hatred and destruction along with Pablum to children in nurseries and grade schools.

The group has created an anti-Western society and is a strong adherent of *sharia* law. In the short time since the Palestinian legislative elections, it has eliminated some of the rights that women enjoy in democracies. It also released more than 50 prisoners from an international prison in Jericho, many of whom were incarcerated for murder. With Hamas' benevolent indoctrination and the swindling ways of the previous Fatah government, it was easy for Hamas to be democratically elected.

It would be futile to negotiate with enemies who are intractable in their determination to destroy Israel. Hopefully, the United Nations and the European Union will not again become emasculated appeasers.

Harry Grunstein
Hampstead, Que.

* * *

Dry Bones

Group opposes Israeli government policies

The lives of Jewish Canadians, as well as the lives of Israelis, have been adversely affected by the policies of various governments of Israel. Despite growing international opposition to these policies, Israel continues to pursue a primarily military strategy while claiming to speak in the name of Jewish people around the world. Jewish Canadians have not been given an opportunity to discuss these issues, nor have we been able to make our views known, except for media, groups and committees that have been marginalized.

It is time for those of us who have a different vision to come forward publicly to present our views. We need to explain to the Canadian government that Jewish Canadians do not speak with one voice about current Israeli policies and that thousands have grave doubts that until now have been muted. We have joined together to create a cross-Canada alliance of Jewish anti-occupation forces prepared to present our position within Canada's Jewish community and before the general public.

Canadians, especially Jewish Canadians, seeking a peaceful resolution to the Israel-Palestinian conflict should no longer remain silent in the face of Israel's actions in the occupied territories. Israel is taking over increasing amounts of land that the Oslo accords had envisaged for the creation of a Palestinian state. Though declared illegal by the International Court of Justice, the separation barrier continues to encroach on Palestinian municipalities, thereby making the creation of a viable Palestinian state impossible.

We urge Jewish Canadians to take a greater role in supporting and promoting a peaceful and just resolution to the conflict.

Michael Benazon
Michael Mandel
plus 30 other signers
Alliance of Concerned Jewish Canadians
Montreal and Toronto

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Stand up to a modern Haman

By RABBI CHAIM STEINMETZ

Rabbi Steinmetz is a monthly columnist with The CJN. *Because of the importance of this essay, we depart from our normal practice of not printing essays by our regular columnists.*

It seems that the most important question on the world stage today is how do we defend civilization against tasteless cartoons? And while the world is busy searching for protection from hazardous drawings, European Union bureaucrats are looking for new ways to revive medieval blasphemy laws.

Jack Natovitch, Grade 2

Unfortunately, the international community is asking the wrong questions, and the answer to two more important ones – would he, and could he? – may change the course of world history.

The "he" I'm talking about is Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

It's easy to dismiss the ultra-conservative Iranian regime led by Ahmadinejad and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. Their public pronouncements are at times bizarre and ridiculous. Khamenei believes the West is trying to destroy Iran with miniskirts. When a plane crashed in Tehran last December, killing 108, Ahmadinejad said: "But what is important is that they have shown the way to martyrdom which we must follow." And the country's official press agency, IRNA, reported a year-and-a-half ago that a woman in the southeastern Iranian city of Iranshahr "gave birth to a live gray frog accompanied with mud."

Yet the Ahmadinejad regime's bizarre beliefs are precisely why the world must ask the question: would Ahmadinejad use the nuclear weapons his country is thought to be working hard to produce?

Ahmadinejad is drawn to violence. He reportedly started his political career in 1979 as one of the hostage takers at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran (though Iran denies this). When the Tehran stock market plummeted after his election, he told his cabinet, "If we were permitted to hang two or three persons, the problems with the stock exchange would be solved forever." And in his world, the pinnacle of life is death. He constantly extols martyrdom, and once remarked, "Is there art that is more beautiful, more divine and more eternal than the art of martyrdom?"

Ahmadinejad follows a radical theology. He follows an extremist Shiite view that believes in "Mahdaviat," preparing the world for the 12th Mahdi, a saviour who according to Shiite belief will bring the end of times. Mahdaviat is an obsession of Ahmadinejad's. As Tehran's mayor, he built an avenue to welcome the Mahdi, and he has recently allocated $17 million (US) to build a mosque in honour of the Mahdi. When he addressed the United Nations last September, Ahmadinejad ended his speech with a prayer for the coming of the Mahdi.

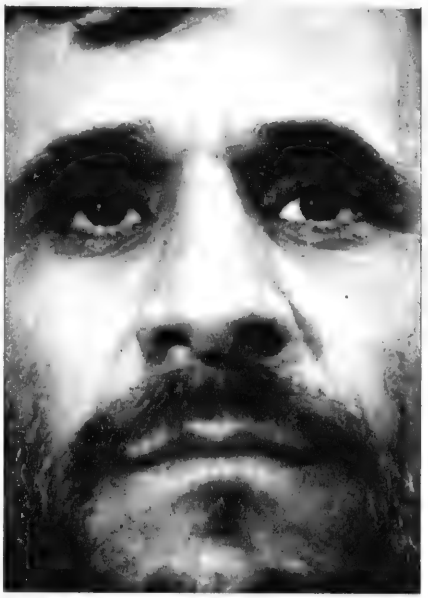
These beliefs are dangerous. As Scott Peterson of the *Christian Science Monitor* points out, "this presidential obsession with the Mahdaviat yields a certitude that leaves little room for compromise." And of course, preparing for the Mahdi means getting rid of what Ahmadinejad calls "the oppressor world," namely Israel, the United States and the West.

Ahmadinejad hates Jews and Israel. He is the world's most prominent Holocaust denier, and Holocaust denial is now a staple of Iranian media. Recently, Iranian state TV has included "news" reports affirming the veracity of the blood libels and the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. Last December, he sponsored a conference on a "world without Zionism," in which he called for Israel to be "wiped off the map." In addition, he made it clear to the attendees that "this goal is attainable."

Maclean's magazine got it right when it called Ahmadinejad "the scariest man on earth." There is no question that this radical, violent man who hates Israel and the West would not hesitate to use nuclear weapons to achieve his goals. Indeed, a recent report from Iran on the website of the Middle East Media Research Institute, a media watchdog, reports that a new *fatwa* has been issued by influential Iranian clerics stating that "*sharia* [Islamic law] does not forbid the use of nuclear weapons."

It's clear that Ahmadinejad would use nuclear weapons. The only question left is could he use them?

Unfortunately, Ahmadinejad may have a nuclear weapon sooner than you think. His government has recently resumed uranium enrichment and will no longer allow snap International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspections of its nuclear facilities. And recently, Ali Larijani, the secretary of the Iranian Supreme National Security Council, stated that Iran is already capable of conducting a nuclear reaction. Iran is not all that far away from a nuclear weapon.



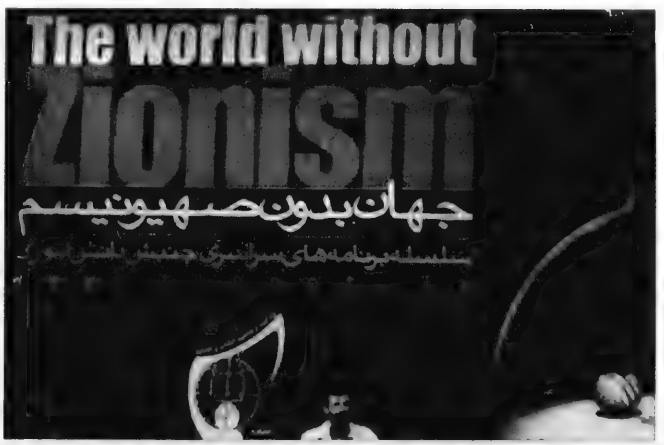
Unquestionably, time is short. Unfortunately, the attention span of most Canadians is even shorter. Much like a pre-9/11 Osama bin Laden, Ahmadinejad is unknown to most Canadians. It's time for us to speak up, create international awareness, and stop the scariest man on earth.

To this end, four concerned activists, Itay Gadot, Rabbi Reuven Poupko, Prof. Gil Troy and I, have formed the Coalition on Iran, an ad hoc group of activists concerned about this dangerous regime. We are organizing rallies on March 14 in cities across Canada. If you are interested in organizing a rally in your community, contact Gadot at info@betar.ca.

On March 14, we celebrate the Jewish holiday of Purim, a day that recalls when another man from Persia, the viceroy Haman, had his plans to destroy the Jews thwarted.

Ahmadinejad is a modern-day Haman. There's no question he would use nuclear weapons to achieve his goals. Let's make sure we stop him now, before it's too late.

Rabbi Steinmetz is spiritual leader of Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem in Montreal



In an eerie echo of the Jew-hater Haman, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has made the destruction of Israel one of his country's key foreign policy objectives.

Getting beyond survival

Torontonian Jim Lederman is the longest-serving foreign correspondent in Jerusalem. He is an astute observer of contemporary politics and a brilliant analyst. In a recent lecture in Jerusalem, he reported on research by the World Values Survey, in which scholars from all over the world, including Canada, are involved.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

The research suggests that focusing on survival often makes us turn a blind eye to corruption, mismanagement, fraud, etc. People who feel threatened are prone to compromise, or ignore altogether, values they normally hold dear. Fear that we may not survive tends to blunt our moral sensibilities.

That is why, in Lederman's understanding, Israeli politicians campaigning ahead of this month's Knesset elections have little to say about such issues as corruption in high places and the alarming rise of poverty in their midst, which are some of the blights on Israeli society. Instead of offering solutions to these and similar issues, they try to frighten voters by declaring how vulnerable Israel's security will become if their opponents win.

That is also why, according to Lederman, ostensibly religious leaders in Israel have been convicted of acting illegally, because they felt that their way of life was being threatened by the secular state. They seem to believe that cutting corners is legitimate when it comes, for example, to diverting state money to their own yeshivot.

The argument doesn't only apply to Israel. The so-called war on terror seems to absolve U.S. President George W. Bush and his allies of dealing with issues such as poverty, pollution, AIDS in Africa, and even state-sponsored torture.

Similarly, when Canadian politicians felt threatened by the prospect of Quebec sovereignty, one of the results was the sponsorship scandal. And in the recent election, party leaders tried to warn the public of all sorts of dangers if their opponents were elected.

I have a particular interest in this research, because for many years I have repeatedly expressed discomfort at the frantic stress on Jewish survival to the virtual exclusion of other urgent issues in Jewish life. My first book (*Beyond Survival*, 1982) was an attempt to challenge the survivalist formula put forward by the late Emil Fackenheim. Since then, I have written and spoken about the menacing effect of organizations in the Jewish world that seek to frighten us by arguing that we are about to disappear from the face of the earth because of anti-Semitism, assimilation and Arab aggression.

This doesn't mean, of course, that Jewish survival is assured. But it does mean that to make it the principal issue of Jewish concern threatens it because it ignores other Jewish core values. And it doesn't seem to imbue young Jews with loyalty and allegiance, whereas emphasis on Judaism's moral teachings does precisely that.

The only negative thing about going to Dal

My three years in Halifax have been great, and there are few negatives that come to mind when I think of my home away from home.

However, three years of constant travel back and forth from Toronto to Halifax, and vice versa, has distorted my once-glowing perceptions of travelling by airplane.

Matthew Pottens in Halifax

Prior to starting at Dalhousie University, a young Matthew Pottens was absolutely delighted by the thought of flying like a bird thousands of feet above the ground. Now, when I think about flying, I think of injured knees (which I'll explain later), awkward social encounters, constant pain in my ears, and the ever-entertaining taxi drivers who welcome you back to Halifax by driving you home in cabs plagued by the sweet smell of tobacco and whiskey.

Feb. 24 marked the end of Dalhousie's reading week, which meant that Sunday, Feb. 26, was "fly back to Halifax day." I arrived at the airport, said goodbye to my parents, and walked up to the check-in counter. Which leads me to my crucial tip for potential or current Dalhousie students, one that's crucial to ensuring a comfortable flight: request a seat in the emergency exit aisle, which is like sitting in business class but paying for coach.

Other aisle seats are every inexperienced or non-sleeping traveller's favourite spot, but I can tell you from a sleeper's perspective that most aisle seats are sources of pain. There have been many occasions when I have started to fall asleep, and right when I begin to think that the flight could turn out to be perfect, a flight attendant comes speeding down the aisle with a giant drink cart that smashes directly into my knee-cap. I scream out in pain to let her know of the trauma I have just experienced, and I remove my knee from the now-dented drink cart. I give the flight attendant the bitterest look I can muster, but she continues down the row without apologizing.

Another disheartening thing about flying in and out of a university town like Halifax is the social interactions you encounter on board the plane. I almost always know someone on my flight, though I rarely know them as more than an acquaintance. But the most awkward of all interactions is when the one person you recognize is someone you used to go out with. A friend of mine had the ultimate pleasure of sitting next to a woman on one flight, during which the following words from her were the only ones they exchanged: "I know you, you know me, and that's all."

When it comes to actually getting home, everyone has a special taxi guy whom they consider to be "their guy." What makes the person special is his willingness to accept $10, or even $15, less than the average driver. But I've come to realize that choosing a taxi driver is like choosing a restaurant. If you're willing to spend some dough, you will likely enjoy a quality meal. In contrast, if you chose to go cheap on a cab in Halifax, you'll get what you pay for.

In other words, if you're taking the guy who charges $15 less, you're more likely to encounter a man who just left a bar, smokes a cigarette with the window open during the harshest of winter nights, and has a handful of stories that would scare the pants off any tough guy.

I recall driving home after one flight with "my taxi guy." We would pass nice landmarks that I once thought were beautiful, and the driver would say, "You see that bridge? That's where my best friend jumped off of. Yup, that was Charlie." On the the next corner was another nice spot. "You see that park over there? My buddy John got shot for the first time over by that tree."

While getting to and from Halifax is an inconvenience, I truly love the city, and I'd recommend Dalhousie to students across Canada, and beyond.

Taking time to save time

It was a moment in time, too swift to measure, when I knew something had gone wrong.

I was running for a bus, something I usually don't do, since I know it's both unnecessary and dangerous. On this particular day, the bus in question was an express and would have saved me 15 minutes on my way home.

Gershon Richter in Winnipeg

I was running on uneven ice, and as I neared the bus, my foot hit the ground at just the right angle to cause an injury. My foot twisted onto its side as I stepped down on it. I felt a strange sensation, not quite pain. I knew that I had hurt my foot, but I kept moving toward the bus, except now I was more stumbling than running. Long before I could come near it, the bus drove away, mocking me with its exhaust.

Although initially I couldn't feel how badly I was hurt, later I could not walk or move my ankle (which swelled to what seemed like the size of a small beluga whale) for the next two days.

Hopping around my messy room was like navigating a small obstacle course, and the hallway that leads to the rest of the house might as well have been the Swiss Alps. I couldn't go to school, I couldn't leave my room without great effort, and I couldn't move my ankle without pain. Even a week later, walking is still painful, and my ankle throbs after only 10 minutes of standing. In trying to save 15 minutes, I completely wasted two days of my time and put myself in pain for much longer.

Everywhere we go, we see people rushing. I can't understand the madness of those who speed and drive aggressively just to save a few minutes on a trip. A single accident would occupy them for at least as much time, and give them just as much stress, as they might save by speeding. I've also never understood people who feel the need to rush and keep looking at their watch, as if the 10 extra seconds gained from rushing will ever become useful to them.

> *'I can't understand the madness of those who speed and drive aggressively just to save a few minutes on a trip'*

Then again, I never thought I was the kind of person to rush blindly for any reason, yet here I am with a sore ankle.

I ran for the bus because I never thought I might get hurt. It never occurred to me that I might be in pain for weeks afterward. The idea was so far-fetched that I never factored it into my split-second decision to run for the bus. On some level, I knew that what I was doing was dangerous, but I never connected that theoretical danger with real-life experience. I knew the fire was hot, but I'd never touched it myself.

Now, after being injured, I realize how it has changed my viewpoint. I needed to learn something, to make the danger real to me. To truly understand our actions, we must make a tangible connection between cause and effect – a connection that is most strongly made through experience. I will never again run on ice, just as most people who have been in car accidents later drive more carefully (and some become uncomfortable driving altogether).

These experiences may be traumatic, but they are in the end beneficial to us. They are the formative experiences of our personalities, the lessons we learn throughout our lives that let us adapt to changing circumstances. To use a cliché, they "build character."

My injury has taught me to approach every situation analytically, to think like a chess player – several moves ahead. Every little action has a reaction, and only careful planning and consideration can help us properly weigh the risks we face in everyday life.

We can't dodge all of life's dangers, but we can be confident in knowing that anything we experience helps us better deal with the future.

The Kirshner File

Sectarianism hobbles Iraq's rehabilitation

Three years ago this month, an allied force spearheaded by American troops invaded Iraq in a bold bid to reshape the Middle East. The aims of the ambitious operation were three-fold: to unseat Iraq's brutal dictator, Saddam Hussein; to convert that long-suffering country into a showcase of Arab democracy; and to bring Iraq into the Western sphere of influence.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

The "shock and awe" invasion, a textbook example of military planning and efficiency, was completed in three weeks without major casualties.

At first blush, the invasion seemed like a resounding success. Saddam's Baathist regime, a bane to its neighbours and a curse to many Iraqis, fell without a whimper. The moment of collapse was captured in television footage of euphoric Iraqis pulling down a typically grandiose statue of Saddam in a Baghdad square.

But three years on, Iraq is far from "fixed."

Although Iraq is gradually moving toward a form of parliamentary democracy and slowly rebuilding its shattered infrastructure, it is beset by a crisis of profound proportions, and years may elapse before it is resolved.

Tribal sectarianism, pitting the majority Shiites against the Sunnis, threatens to tear Iraq asunder. Larry Diamond, a former high-ranking U.S. official in Iraq, has written that Iraq is heading toward a Lebanon-style civil war. The situation is so serious that the U.S. ambassador in Baghdad, Zalmay Khalizad, recently issued a dire warning. Declaring that sectarianism is "the fundamental problem" in Iraq, he said that an Iraqi government dominated by sectarian interests would lose U.S. support.

The minority Sunnis, having dominated Iraq since time immemorial, fear that the provisions in the new constitution will grant too many powers to autonomous regions and leave Iraq's oil wealth in the hands of the Shiites in the south and the Kurds in the north.

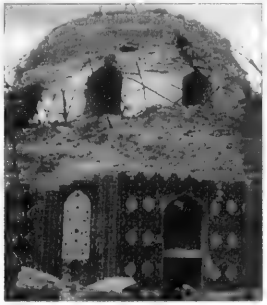
In light of last December's parliamentary election, during which a coalition of Shiite parties won 128 of 275 seats and thus became the largest single bloc in the legislature, the Sunnis also fear that their privileges will vanish and that they will be reduced to second-class citizenship.

Voicing misapprehensions about the constitution, a Sunni spokesman, Sheik Yahya Ibrahim al-Batawai, denounced it as a "Jewish constitution" and claimed that it would divide Iraq along sectarian and ethnic lines.

Though alert to Sunni alienation, the Shiite leadership is standing firm, having vowed not to give in to their insistent demands to revise the constitution. But otherwise, the Shiites have been flexible, having invited Sunnis to join a national unity government and asked junior officers from Saddam's old army to return to the ranks, a concession at odds with a U.S. directive that purged the military of Baathist members and sympathizers.

Despite these concessions, the Sunni-Shiite divide remains wide and deep. To the Sunnis, the Shiites are essentially agents of Iran and the Kurds are basically secessionists striving for statehood. To the Shiites and the Kurds, however, the Sunnis are diehard Baathists whose sole goal is to regain power and subjugate them once again.

These simmering mutual suspicions have exploded into an orgy of violence. Sunni and Shiite militias have targeted each other's communities and neighbourhoods, attacking mosques, schools, hospitals and markets, and thus exacerbated the tensions. The bombing of a venerable Shiite shrine in Samarra on Feb. 22, an incident that touched off a cycle of unprecedented sectarian violence, was symptomatic of the grave ethnic troubles that beset Iraq today.



The ruins of the Shiite shrine in Samarra

Yet Shiites and Sunnis are in agreement that the United States and its allies should pull out as soon as possible. Last November, in a rare show of unanimity, Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish leaders called for a timetable for the withdrawal of foreign forces.

For now, the United States has no intention of withdrawing. Its strategy is to placate the disaffected Sunnis so as to squelch the current insurgency and thereby stabilize Iraq. Two months ago, the United States' outgoing operational commander in Iraq, Gen. John Vines, said that the largely Sunni insurgency can be contained or crushed if Sunni politicians are politically empowered and included in the new cabinet. As he put it, "I think the nature of the government will determine the level of violence."

The insurgency – led by former Baathist officials and army officers and buttressed by Islamic foreign fighters from as close as Saudi Arabia and as far away as western Europe – has grown increasingly violent, sophisticated and resilient. Much like Afghanistan at the height of the Soviet era in the early 1980s, Iraq has become a magnet for Muslim fundamentalists challenging U.S. hegemony in the Mideast and working for the establishment of Islamic governments in the region. This development is probably the greatest unintended consequence of the war.

Insurgent attacks against U.S., British and Iraqi troops and convoys have dramatically multiplied since 2003 and now occur at a rate of 50 to 100 a day. The body count of U.S. soldiers killed in action reached the symbolic 2,000 mark last October and, as of last week, had climbed to almost 2,300. More than half of all U.S. military deaths in 2005 were caused by homemade bombs planted along roads and highways.

Compared to previous conflicts, from World War I to Vietnam, U.S. casualties in this war which is costing Washington a staggering $5 billion (US) per month – have been fairly minimal. But the mounting toll is definitely eroding American backing for the war. John Murtha, a hawkish congressman, has called for an immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops. President George W. Bush has brushed aside the notion of "artificial timetables."

Victory, if it is possible, may be far off. As Gen. George Casey, the top U.S. commander in Iraq, has pointed out, the average counterinsurgency in the 20th century lasted nine years. "There is no reason that we should believe that the insurgency in Iraq will take any less time to deal with," he observed.

In a concerted attempt to break the back of the insurgency, the U.S. has launched a series of offensives aimed at gaining control of cities like Falluja and Najaf – where Sunni and Shiite uprisings occurred two years ago – and cutting off the flow of foreign fighters streaming into Iraq through Syria and Iran.

A good many of the rebels have been killed, including Abu Azzam, a lieutenant of Abu Musab al Zarqawi, one of the leaders of the insurgency. But the insurgents keep popping up, attacking allied forces and supply lines, severing oil pipelines and blowing up themselves in suicide bombings that have wreaked a trail of destruction and havoc throughout Iraq.

As part of its counterinsurgency strategy, the U.S., aided by its European allies, is building an Iraqi security force capable of dealing effectively with the insurgents. Washington's assessment is that Iraq will need 325,000 soldiers and police officers to cope with the insurgency, but some analysts claim that the Iraqis remain years away from achieving that pivotal objective.

Even if the Iraqis themselves can take responsibility for protecting and stabilizing the country, American fighter and reconnaissance aircraft will be required to continue flying missions over Iraq for an indefinite period, according to Gen. John Jumper, the former commander of the U.S. Air Force.

Sunni support for the insurgency is not the United States' only problem. The pro-Iranian renegade Shiite cleric, Moktada al-Sadr, whose Mahdi Army has battled the Americans, is a destabilizing force, being hostile to the United States. Since he controls the largest bloc of seats in the Shiite alliance, he cannot be ignored. In a recent visit to Iran and Syria, Sadr expressed solidarity with these countries. The question is whether Sadr's influence can be kept at bay by moderate Shiites.

Reconstruction is another problem. Washington has allocated $25 billion (US) to improve vital services from sewage to electricity. But in some Iraqi provinces, projects have slowed or stopped because of insurgent attacks. In other cases, gross understaffing, a lack of technical expertise and bureaucratic infighting have hampered efforts.

In defending his Iraq policy, Bush has described it as a blend of idealism, pragmatism and flexibility, and promised to be steadfast: "We will stay in the fight until we have achieved total victory over the forces of tyranny and terrorism."

In promoting U.S. aims in Iraq, Bush has invoked Israel. As he said last December, "Israel's long-term survival depends upon the spread of democracy in the Middle East."

For a variety of strategic reasons, Israel has a definite interest in an American success in Iraq. But what counts now, at this crucial juncture, is whether sectarianism can be overcome so that the deadly insurgency can be defeated.

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Jewish Toronto

This edition of Jewish Toronto is devoted to the outstanding programs offered by Jewish Family & Child Service, a UJA Federation & United Way partner agency, which enhances dignity and opportunity for thousands of community members.

JF&CS Chaplaincy Services delivers taste of Pesach to institutions

Residents and inmates reconnect with Jewish identity

By ROCHELLE KAHN
Jewish Family & Child Service

Director of Chaplaincy Services for Jewish Family and Child Service, Rabbi Ronald Weiss is a very busy man. But each year at Passover, Rabbi Weiss bites off even more, delivering a taste of Pesach to long-term care residents and correctional facility inmates from Kingston to Kitchener, Penetanguishene to Hamilton. "For those living in an institutional setting, the sense of isolation from their heritage can be especially strong," Rabbi Weiss said, "and it's even more powerful during the holidays. JF&CS works hard to ease that familiar feeling of being a stranger in a strange land – and what could be more poignant than being away from one's family and loved ones at Pesach?"

As the Jewish population grows across the Greater Toronto Area, so does the number of those institutionalized and requiring Jewish outreach. JF&CS is committed to extending spiritual and religious care to all and meets the ever-growing demand with creative solutions to service delivery. Together with coordinator of chaplaincy Services Laila Clein Friedman, Rabbi Weiss has developed partnerships with caring individuals, synagogues and community organizations willing to lend a hand. For example, JF&CS coordinates training and supervision of volunteers who bring Pesach food to residents and organizes model seders for them. In places where communal seders are not often possible, like Ontario correctional facilities, Rabbi Weiss arranges kosher for Passover meals for all Jewish inmates and facilitates Pesach observance for those who wish to celebrate.

"What we do connects those required to live in non-Jewish institutions with a former time and place in their lives, a time and place they often feel was better," said Rabbi Weiss. "It goes beyond a matter of dignity; it restores their identity, their sense of who they are as Jews."

JF&CS Chaplaincy Services is committed to making this irreplaceable connection throughout the year as well. Rabbi Weiss remembers visiting a long-term care facility on a Friday afternoon a number of years ago for a Kabbalat Shabbat program. Early on, the residents were given a chance to light Shabbat candles. An elderly woman, confined to a wheelchair having had both legs amputated, quietly raised her hand and wheeled herself forward. "She covered her head with her shawl," Rabbi Weiss recalled, "recited the b'racha and started to cry. Embarrassed, she turned to me with a shy smile and said that this was the first time, since she had come to the nursing home, that she was able to light candles as she had done all her life before. Every one of us shared her tears."

With the help of funding support from UJA Federation, JF&CS is expanding its professional chaplaincy staff in those institutions that have a significant Jewish population.

Jewish Family and Child Service offers many rewarding volunteer opportunities that require a minimal time commitment. "You can play a significant part simply by donating one hour a week for a visit," Clein Friedman urged. As Rabbi Weiss continued, "Spending that small amount of time, providing weekly human contact and friendship to someone in a long-term care facility, has an immeasurably positive impact on everyone involved." If you have some time to donate or would like to know more about Chaplaincy Services volunteer opportunities at JF&CS, contact Laila Clein Friedman at 416. 638. 7800, ext 287.

Rabbi Ronald Weiss, director of Chaplaincy Services (l) prepares to deliver Passover outreach to institutions, with the help of community volunteers and Laila Clein Friedman (r), coordinator of Chaplaincy Services.

UJA's One Cold Day warms up to Big Brothers

JF&CS Big Brothers shared their heartwarming experiences with more than 70 participants at the recent Hands on Toronto (HOT) *One Cold Day* program. Hands on Toronto is a UJA Federation of Greater Toronto Young Adult program that provides hands-on assistance to community members. HOT co-Chair Tracey Steyn wore two hats that day, speaking on behalf of HOT and also from her own personal experience as a Big Sister. Daniel Kozlov became a Big Brother last year but had one himself, growing up. "Fifteen years later," he said, "we are still very close and I speak with him twice a week."

Currently, there are 15 boys on the Jewish Family and Child Service waiting list for a Big Brother. If you would like to learn more about how you can join this meaningful program, contact JF&CS coordinator of volunteer services, Andrea Pines at 416.638.7800, ext 266.

(L to R) Robert Velensky, Tracey Steyn and Daniel Kozlov urge volunteers to join the JF&CS Big Brothers / Big Sisters program.

New JF&CS Speakers Circle has a lot to say

Trained speakers available for community programs

Domestic violence. Jewish poverty. Couples communication. Child abuse prevention. Bullying. The changing family in separation and divorce. Bereavement. The challenging teen. It reads like a menu of some of the hottest "hot button" issues we confront as a modern society. In fact, it's just a small sampling of the compelling topics that the new Jewish Family and Child Service Speakers Circle is ready to explore with community groups seeking dynamic and informative programming.

"Jewish Toronto looks to JF&CS for insight and information and we take our role in building awareness seriously," said Dr. Richard Cummings, JF&CS executive director. "That's why we've enhanced our existing speakers program and created the JF&CS Speakers Circle."

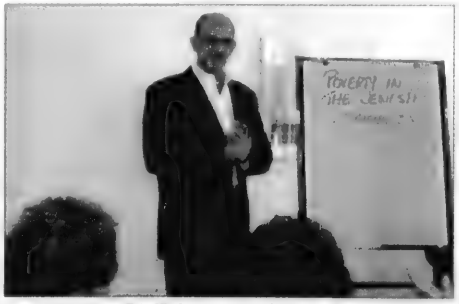
This vibrant extension of the agency's educational capacity will ensure that many kinds of programming options are available on a wide array of subjects, all delivered by expert JF&CS professionals and trained lay leadership representatives.

"Schools, synagogues, service organizations and other interested groups are invited to choose single-night programs or multi-session workshops, for large-scale community events or smaller audiences," said Dr. Barbara Bresver, chair of the JF&CS Speakers Circle. "Complementing a comprehensive and growing selection of suggested topics, Jewish Family and Child Service staff is happy to work with any group to customize a program to suit each user's particular needs."

Jewish Family and Child Service knows that it takes a well-informed community to successfully support its more vulnerable members. Eric Kirsh, supervisor of the JF&CS Financial Assistance and Rehabilitation Program and a veteran speaker for the agency, agrees. He underscored the great opportunity the JF&CS Speakers Circle has to sensitize people to the significant, and often uncomfortable, realities within the Jewish community.

"As Jews in the GTA, we shy away from accepting that contemporary social problems exist in the Jewish community," Kirsh said. "It's hard to admit that we have poverty and abuse in our own backyard, but we do."

To discover how you can connect with the JF&CS Speakers Circle, visit www.jfandcs.com or call Rochelle Kahn at 416.638.7800, ext 259.



Eric Kirsh zeroes in on the complex challenge of poverty facing Jewish Toronto

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Family Resource Centre helps York Region families

Mixing family fun with Jewish tradition

By ROCHELLE KAHN
Jewish Family & Child Service

There's nothing unusual about young children spending the morning in make-believe play. But what's happening at the York Region Family Resource Centre (FRC) is truly remarkable.

It's Friday morning at the FRC in the Promenade Mall and two toddlers are playing house, as children are known to do. But one child has been raised in an Orthodox home, steeped in ritual and tradition, and the other is from a secular family with limited connection to Jewish practice. Together, they are setting the table in their playhouse for Shabbat, as their mothers look on and chat about typical parenting concerns.

If not for the FRC, how would these families have ever come together to exchange ideas, stories and friendship?

"Not only is the Family Resource Centre a vital hub of Jewish and family life in York Region," explained supervisor Fran Chodak, "it's often an entry point for members of our community to connect with the broader Jewish world."

The Family Resource Centre is a partnership between the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre (BJCC) and Jewish Family and Child Service, supported by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. Since opening its doors in 2000, the need for the Family Resource Centre Services has exploded, reflecting York Region's booming stature as North America's fastest growing Jewish population.

"We have a huge Jewish community north of Steeles and there is nothing else that supports families of children aged newborn to five years in an inclusive, accessible and supportive environment," said Gail Gould, assistant executive director, Bathurst Jewish Community Centre. "Last month," Chodak reported, "we had 740 children enjoy our facilities during the 19 hours a week we're open. If we could finance it, we'd love to extend our hours further and welcome more than our typical 20 to 30 families a day."

Little friends at York Region's Family Resource Centre prepare for Shabbat together.

The Family Resource Centre offers quite an enticing family participation package. At no cost, members can access the toy library and parenting resources, in addition to receiving discounted rates for all JF&CS Jewish Family Life Education and Group Counselling programs. More than half of JF&CS Family Life Education groups explore key parenting issues.

Would you like to be part of our FRC Family? Find out how at www.jfandcs.com or call Fran Chodak at 905. 882.8509

Professional counselling at JF&CS offers added benefits

Attitudes toward seeking professional counselling have come a long way. Today, counselling is highly regarded as a positive and empowering choice in learning how best to effectively manage the challenges and complexities of modern life. "We've accepted its value," observed Ron Cohen, counselling coordinator for Jewish Family and Child Service. "We understand counselling as a way of taking charge of our own circumstances, by actively exploring better ways to cope. The results can be very strengthening for a family, couple or individual, enabling effective problem-solving and improved communication. The skills learned through counselling," he continued, "help people better understand and handle everyday situations as they arise."

Ron Cohen, JF&CS Counselling Coordinator helps a client learn new problem-solving skills.

Jewish Family and Child Service has been a trusted counselling resource throughout its 135 years of service to the GTA Jewish community. As a dynamic, multidisciplinary agency, JF&CS is in a unique position to offer added benefits to counselling clients. While counsellors work privately with families, couples and individuals in confidentiality, they are backed up by the collective experience and insight of the entire range of Jewish Family and Child Service professional staff.

"Beyond that support, our counselling staff is tuned into all the specialized JF&CS Family Life Education and Counselling Groups programming," explained Debra Feldman who supervises the counselling services. "They are well positioned to identify clients who could benefit from assistance in other areas, or in need of specialized follow-up in a group setting, and act as a conduit to everything else JF&CS provides."

Cohen suggested that, while people come to counselling for many different and compelling reasons, they share a common desire to feel heard, understood and safe. "To consistently provide that is not only my job; it's my work ethic and the professional culture of JF&CS."

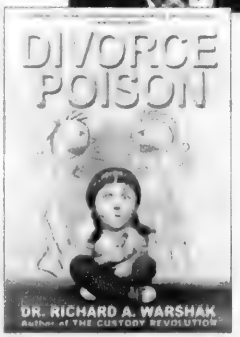
Families, couples and individuals turn to JF&CS for counselling to learn how to manage everyday life concerns such as sadness, communication difficulties, family tensions, job stress and anxiety. To find out more about counselling at Jewish Family and Child Service and how you can access help, please call our Intake Department, 416.638.7800. Additional information is also available at www.jfandcs.com

JF&CS sponsors high conflict symposium for mental health professionals

Children caught in the crossfire of divorce and separation. It's a regrettable reality in the changing dynamic of many modern families, but what's most unfortunate is that it doesn't have to be part of the picture at all. Effectively protecting our kids from their parents' conflict is the theme of the second annual professional symposium on high conflict divorce, led by Jewish Family and Child Service in conjunction with the High Conflict Forum.

Divorce Poison: Clinical and Legal Considerations in working with Families of Alienated Children will pick up where last year's celebrated, first-ever symposium for high conflict families of divorce and separation left off. The forum brings together the entire spectrum of involved professionals, from lawyers and judges to mental health workers, child welfare agencies to psychiatrists, mediators to police.

The April 26 event, which will offer advanced training to professionals in supporting kids in difficult divorce situations, features renowned clinician, research psychologist and author Dr. Richard Warshak.



JF&CS presents renowned author and research psychologist Dr. David Warshak at Divorce Poison symposium.

"Truly hearing a child's voice in custody decisions is a complex matter. I think we've understood the benefits of listening to them, more clearly than we've understood the hazards," noted Warshak. "As professionals, we don't necessarily recognize when a child has been set up to act as an advocate or an adversary in a high-conflict divorce."

Warshak is encouraged by opportunities, like the JF&CS-led symposium, to build heightened professional awareness. "There's a problem when kids take sides on behalf of one parent against another," said Warshak. "For their own long-term best interest, they need to know it's unacceptable. Parents must understand that fostering this kind of discord not only hurts the child, but everyone connected to him or her."

Howard Hurwitz, chair of Divorce Poison and director of Children's Services at JF&CS, commends the more than 30 agencies and over 400 individuals who have already committed to take part in Divorce Poison. "Last year's high conflict symposium was a resounding success and delivered a clear message. We need to better train members of our profession to respond to the growing needs of children in high conflict situations," Hurwitz said.

The closing portion of the program will present a panel of professionals who will address issues raised by Dr. Warshak's material and focus on key points relating to Ontario children and families.

Following the one-day forum, findings will be compiled and a report will be available to the community on the JF&CS website, www.jfandcs.com

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to 416.638.7800 or info@jfandcs.com

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Conservative scholar: halachah inherently flexible

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

What sets the Conservative movement apart from Reform Judaism is the former's commitment to the halachic system, says Rabbi David Golinkin. "What sets us apart from Orthodoxy is that we believe Halachah is inherently flexible."

Rabbi Golinkin, the American-born president of the Schechter Institute in Jerusalem, disagrees strongly with his New York-based colleague Rabbi Neil Gillman, a philosophy professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary, who said at the Conservative movement's biennial convention in December that Conservative Judaism should "abandon its claim that we are a halachic movement."

Rabbi Golinkin, the law committee chair of the Rabbinical Assembly in Israel, teaches Talmud and Jewish law (Halachah) to rabbinical students at Schechter's seminary, which trains Masorti rabbis, and has lectured widely in North America on Halachah.

His most recent project was the editing of *Responsa and Halakhic Studies*, a 30-year-old book by the late Rabbi Isaac Klein, which was recently rereleased.

"If the Conservative movement abandons its claim to be a halachic movement, it really has no reason to exist," said Rabbi Golinkin in a phone interview prior to his recent visit to Toronto, where he was scholar-in-residence at Beth Tzedec Congregation and keynote speaker at the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism's Torah in Toronto program.

The responsa in Rabbi Klein's book "remind us that it's possible to be flexible and lenient within the halachic tradition," said Rabbi Golinkin. "Many of Rabbi Klein's responsa are lenient, but they're based on sources, not on his personal opinion or public pressure."

Through his experience both at Schechter and on the lecture circuit, Rabbi Golinkin – who has been teaching for about 25 years – said he has found the younger generation of rabbinical students to be somewhat more interested in Halachah than some of the previous generations.

Also, whenever he speaks to lay audiences in North America about Halachah, he finds "a great interest both in approach and in the specific topics."

He believes that if Halachah were truly irrelevant to Conservative synagogue members – of whom only a small percentage keep kosher and are Shabbat observant – they would have joined Reform congregations instead.

"But there are some 750 Conservative synagogues in North America, some 50 in Israel, about 50 in South America and Europe, and now there is [a presence] in Australia, so there are people who are choosing Conservative Judaism because we're different from Reform.

"Does that mean all Conservative Jews live a halachic lifestyle? No, unfortunately, not yet." However, he noted, he doesn't believe the situation implies a lack of understanding of the importance of Halachah.

The level of observance among Masorti Jews in Israel, particularly in Jerusalem, is much higher than that of their counterparts in North America and elsewhere, he noted. At one Jerusalem congregation he cited, almost all the congregants walk to shul on Shabbat and almost all of them keep kosher.

BEAUHEART BALL: BBYO held its annual Beauheart Ball last month. The evening began with a beautiful *Havdalah* that ushered in the new week and then teens from across the Toronto area danced the night away. Pictured, from left, are beaus and sweethearts Julie Ostroff, Mica Goldstein, Daniel Sugar, Jordana White, Edan Kelner, Miriam Ehrlich, Sharon Markowski and Tyler Berman.

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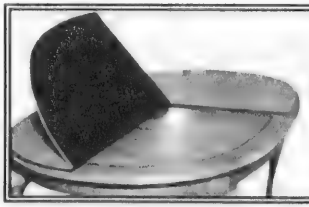

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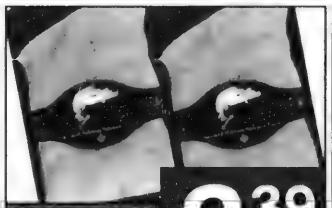

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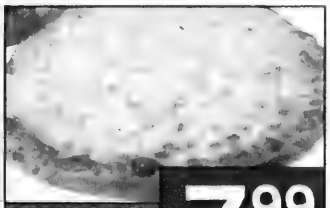

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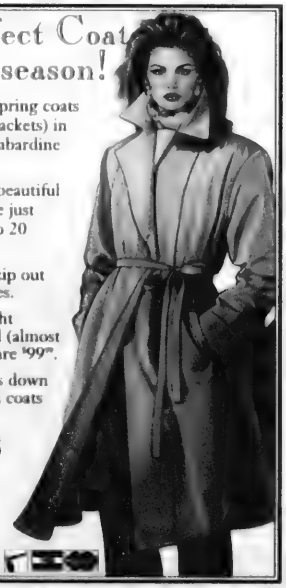

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Jewish Life

More tales of old Toronto

By ZE'EV GLICENSTEIN

Roots & Remembrance

It's been about a decade since zealous language inspectors in Quebec forbade the importation of some kosher-for-Passover foods because of improper French labelling, thus launching Montreal's infamous "Matzah-gate" controversy.

While perusing the *Toronto Star*'s "Pages of the Past" searchable database, I noticed that Toronto also had a "Matzah-gate" controversy. Nearly a century ago, in 1909, zealous police officers climbed a ladder to a second-floor rear window and raided the National Matzo and Biscuit Company. Several employees preparing dough for baking were busted for violating the province's "blue" Sunday laws.

"Mayor thinks the Police are Too Severe," the *Star* reported, indicating mayor Joseph Oliver's disapproval of the police action. "My own opinion is that the police department should be more tolerant in cases of this kind, and I think some arrangement should be made whereby the police should not interfere in the case of Jewish bakeries," Oliver said.

In 1908, a "small-sized riot" occurred in the city's labour bureau, where workers lined up daily for jobs. Aggravated at being repeatedly passed over, some Jews created a "little rumpus" and one was arrested. In court, bureau officials admitted they routinely excluded Jews, under orders from above.

"Park Commissioner Harris told me that he would rather do without Jews on the Riverdale work than to use them," a city bureaucrat admitted. "He says they are not fit for the work, so lately we have been trying to sandwich in a dozen English, Irish or Scotch between the gangs of Jews and Macedonians."

The charges were dropped and the judge ordered that workers be hired on a more equitable basis in future.

A century ago, Rabbi Solomon Jacobs provided a strong defence against a reckless assertion that wife-desertion was rife among the Jews in the downtown Ward neighbourhood.

"In the Ward, there are Catholics, Presbyterians, and members of all other denominations," Rabbi Jacobs noted. "But why should the poor Jew always be dragged into discussions of this kind? As soon as I read Miss Cook's statement, I at once communicated with the heads of the different charitable institutions of the city. They told me they were not cognizant of one case of wife-desertion among Jews."

Sometimes referred to as the city's "foreign quarter," the Ward (bounded by Yonge, Queen, University and College streets) presented special challenges to census takers in 1911. Many residents were reluctant to answer questions, and those who did often had a poor grasp of English and were anything but precise. The enumerators were exasperated.

"He knows that he was born 'in the Old Country,' but just when or where it is difficult to say. He knows that he came to Canada 'in a big ship,' but that was years ago, too. Of English months he has but little idea: something happened 'in the summer' or 'in the winter'… His youngest child was born in Toronto. Good, here is something tangible at last, but when? In Purim. What is Purim?"

The *Star* offers many such tableaux, but space allows for just one more, "Death-Bed Divorce," which consists of a single sentence:

"That the Jewish race still adheres to the letter of the old Mosaic law was made evident in a recent religious divorce granted by Rabbi [Jacob] Gordon at a death-bed in the Western hospital, where, at mutual request, Mrs. M. Cohen was divorced from her dying husband in order that she might escape the tenets of a creed which provides that when a husband of the race dies childless the widow must marry the deceased's brother, that the family might be continued."

This 1912 report adheres to the paper's frequent characterization of the Jews as a colourful foreign element of ancient and exotic provenance.

Moroccan independence

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the arrival of the first Moroccan immigrants in Canada. The following column is part of a series

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

Through A Sephardi Window

Arguably, Christopher Columbus' planting of the Spanish flag on the shores of the Americas was the moment that ushered in the era of European colonization of the New World. From this point onward, Europeans would view the entire world as their very own – as both their privilege and their opportunity. From India to Indo-China, from the Americas to Africa, the various governments of Europe came calling.

Whether their intentions were benevolent or imperial is an endless debate. For better or for worse – and indeed, most probably for a good measure of both – the white men of Europe came to rule the dark-skinned men of far-off lands. Whether by invitation or by imposition, for export or for exploit, the Europeans had arrived.

North Africa, and Morocco in particular, became the stomping ground of not one, but two foreign powers: France and Spain. The northern coastal region came under Spanish jurisdiction, while the bulk of the area to the south came under French administration.

The process was gradual, and started with concern and interest, followed by varied forms of assistance, then the advancement of money in the form of loans that Morocco had no hope of ever repaying. The country, in essence, became collateral for this money.

Two key things contributed to the Moroccans' rejection of France's occupation. One was World War II. While in Morocco, the French conscripted entire legions of Moroccans to help in their war effort. Arabs who helped liberate Europe while fighting side by side with the Allies subsequently returned home and brought with them the realization that it was they and their country that were in real need of liberation – from the French!

Secondly, the French, emboldened by the Allied victory against the Germans, exiled the nationalist king of Morocco, Sidi Mohamed the Fifth, along with his entire family, to the island of Madagascar. In his place, they appointed a puppet king.

Sidi Mohamed, of blessed memory, was a most beloved and benevolent king. For the population, this situation was intolerable. There was an uproar, and chaos reigned in the streets. The French soon recognized their misstep and retreated.

The king was allowed to return. France would facilitate Moroccan independence and the two countries, Morocco and France pledged to remain on amicable terms.

In the end, it was not anti-Semitism, pogroms or any such oppression, nor was it the search for adventure or fortune, that brought Jewish immigrants to Canada. Instead, it was Moroccan independence.

After years of European colonization of Africa and years of social upheaval and political instability, Morocco was independent. But the Jews had always favoured the European presence and viewed it as progressive, enlightened and full of opportunity. Now, as they saw their country reverting back to a Muslim state, foreboding and uncertainty were the order of the day. Rumours were rampant, among them that all young men would be forcibly conscripted into the king's newly formed army.

Fortunately, these fears never materialized. Morocco remained, as it does to this day, a tranquil island in a turbulent pan-Arab sea. It is tolerant of, and welcoming to, Jews. Nevertheless, the tide of emigration had begun, a tide that would not stop. Hundreds of thousands of Jews would leave.

Today, only a few thousand remain, and they live in relative safety and prosperity.

New Age on the Internet

Books
Bernard Baskin

Kabbalah: A Very Short Introduction **by Joseph Dan, Oxford University Press.**

Connecting to God: Ancient Kabbalah and Modern Psychology **by Rabbi Abner Weiss.**

Kabbalah is now a major industry. Who would have believed it? In recent year celebrities such as Madonna, Britney Spears and Paris Hilton have made news for studying Kabbalah's teachings, learning Hebrew and donning red string bracelets to protect against the evil eye. Even Target stores, riding the red-string fashion trend, briefly carried the bracelets last year but pulled them after Jewish groups complained.

In many cities across North America, ordinary people, their curiosity piqued, have started Kabbalah study groups, taking Kabbalah lessons online and celebrating Jewish culture.

Kabbalah is thought to offer the secret to achieving joy and fulfilment, offering a definitive answer to that universal question: What is my purpose in life?

Books about Kabbalah abound. Some are scholarly and erudite, others lack authenticity and read like candy for the eye.

Joseph Dan is a professor of Kabbalah in the department of Jewish thought at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the author of numerous books on Jewish mysticism.

In this short introduction to a complex and many-sided subject, he points out that hundreds of Internet sites are dedicated to New Age-type presentations of various world-views that claim to be kabbalistic. Most of them are Christian, but many of them are propagated by Jewish writers.

They serve groups and circles of adherents, spread all over the globe. Most of the material is a combination of apocalyptic speculations, astrology, and alchemy; one of the central concepts attributed to the Kabbalah is that of reincarnation of souls, and another is the cosmic harmony among the various aspects of the universe and the divine realm.

The author provides a succinct overview of Kabbalah's historical background, including groups in ancient and medieval Judaism, the expansion of Kabbalah studies under Isaac Luria in the 16th century and its place in Chassidism, Christianity and "new thought." The book covers the ancient and main works: *Sefer Yezira* (*The Book of Creation*), *The Book of Bahir* and *The Zohar*.

In *Connecting to God*, Weiss, a distinguished rabbi, marriage and family therapist and popular lecturer, explains the major teachings of Kabbalah, showing how the 10 Sefirot, or divine emanations, including love, wisdom, understanding and empathy are building blocks of divine energy. He writes that the ancient truths of the Kabbalah are the bridge between psychology and the quest for spiritual meaning.

Rabbi Weiss shares 28 stories of individuals, couples and families who, under his guidance, used kabbalistic exercises along with contemporary psychological strategies to "liberate themselves from their self-defeating ways of being." Many readers may see aspects of their own life stories in these retellings.

This is a serious study with much helpful information about Kabbalah. But the elaborate structure the author has erected about the Sefirot and their intimate relation to various parts to the human body appears contrived. Moreover, some of the accounts of psychological healing seem to have only limited relationship to the power and teaching of Kabbalah.

Hamantaschen on the web

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Purim is almost on our doorstep and, if we are lucky, so too will be baskets of mishloach manot, the ready-to-eat treats that are exchanged on the holiday. Occupying the premier place in those baskets are hamantaschen, the triangular cookies said to be reminiscent of the evil Haman's pockets or perhaps his odd-looking ears.

Sure, you can prepare the old standbys filled with prunes or poppy seeds. But why not be daring and go for cream cheese or chocolate peanut butter or some of the more than 60 other recipes at the Jewish-food HAMANTASCHEN archives? **[http://tinyurl.com/hedos]** (By the way, if you're planning on leaving some hamantaschen on MY doorstep, I think I'll pass on the beef-and-onion-filled variety. **[http://tinyurl.com/k4ahd]**)

Just because you are watching the calories or have a food sensitivity doesn't mean you can't indulge in a hamantasch or two. This low-fat recipe only uses only two tablespoons of oil. **[http://tinyurl.com/mwvpz]** If you cannot tolerate wheat gluten, here are a couple of recipes you can try out. **[http://tinyurl.com/hcrsc]** Jewish Friends with Diabetes have directions for low-carb hamantaschen. **[http://tinyurl.com/g7bm8]** JewishVeg.com has a vegan recipe that calls for lecithin flakes, almond milk and flax seeds. **[http://tinyurl.com/gb69m]**

The popular children's song *Ani Purim* expresses the wish that the holiday could be celebrated monthly. **[http://tinyurl.com/z6ajb]** Amy Sara Clark has put her finger on an interesting – and troubling – phenomenon: the availability of hamantaschen year-round, even in non-Jewish bakeries. Cookbook author Joan Nathan says the growing popularity of hamantaschen is "like getting challah all days of the week," she says. "I don't want to get challah all days of the week. I want it on [Shabbat]." **[http://tinyurl.com/p6e4f]**

There is a well-known tradition on Purim to become so intoxicated that you no longer know the difference between the righteous Mordechai and the evil Haman. But could you unknowingly get a different kind of high by indulging in too many poppy seed hamantaschen? After all, poppy seeds are used in the creation of opium. That's what investigators in Oregon wanted to find out (although they used bundt cakes rather than hamantaschen in their 1992 study.) According to the abstract at the *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, you can munch away with a clear conscience. "All of the urine specimens were found to be opiate positive shortly after consuming the cake; however… no subjects were found to exhibit symptoms of opiate impairment." **[http://tinyurl.com/g9t64]**

When it comes to Jewish cooking, quality is important but let's not forget about quantity. Cake specialist Ron Ben-Israel thought he had baked the biggest hamantasch. Measuring more than 2½ feet along the length of the triangle's walls and almost two feet tall, the pastry fed 400 hungry guests at the party thrown by Chabad on Washington Square. **[http://tinyurl.com/zepsb]** Little did Ben-Israel know that his creation was dwarfed by the work of the students at Shaare Shamayim-Beth Judah synagogue in northeast Philadelphia. Their treat weighed in at 738.5 pounds, measuring 20 by 20 by 20 feet. **[http://tinyurl.com/fxu9a]** In the case of that huge hamantash, the students chose to fill theirs with pie filling.

Deborah Biskin has written a charming memoir about the day she and her daughters stumbled upon the best ingredient of all for their hamantaschen. **[www.jewish-holiday.com/hamantaschen.html]**

"I suggested we use the traditional prune and poppy fillings, but Rachel and Jessica crinkled up their noses. I then hit on it: 'How about chocolate?' Hours later, piles of hamantaschen were strewn around the kitchen, some sticky with filling that leaked out the sides, funny looking. I felt a sense of pride. My girls and I were actually doing a mitzvah together. Our results certainly were not esthetically or gastronomically perfect, but it came from the heart. I now realize that the flavour of the fruit or type of jam filling is irrelevant. The best hamantaschen in the world are those filled with love."

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com

שיעור מיוחד

גידי קורן וחברים

יעקת חמאס

החמאס זכה בבחירות דמוקראטית ברשות הפלסטינית. הארץ ועקת חמס, ואין כמעט מנהיג בינלאומי, כולל אלה שלא ממש אוהבים את ישראל, שאינו מתנה תמיכה או תמיכה בממשלת חמאס, בהכרת החמאס בזכותה של ישראל כמדינה ובביטול הטרור. בישראל התגובה הטבעית היא של פסימיות מוחלטת, והדבר מובן מאליו. אבל יש גם קולות אחרים שמן הראוי להקשיב להם. בכתבה שפרסמה בטורונטו מוכיח אורי אבנרי שנס עם ארגון אש"ף לא הסכימה ישראל לדבר לפני 25 שנה עקב היותם טרוריסטים.

יד על הלב- אני מאמין שרק ממשלת חמאס יכולה לעצור את הטרור, בדיוק כמו שרק אריק שרון יכול היה לפנות את סיני ואת עזה.

בעוד אש"ף בשלטון- קל מאוד היה לחמאס למקם את עצמו כארגון לוחמי חופש אנטי ממסדי, וכל חישג טרור שלהם החלש את אש"ף. עכשיו, מרגע שממשלת חמאס ותשבע- כל מעשה טרור של החמאס יזקוף אוטומאטית להכרזת מלחמה של מדינה אחת נגד שכנתה. בתנאים אלה-יכול צה"ל לעשות כל דבר, כולל חיסול ממנהיגי המדינה הפלסטינאית. אין לי ספק שבחמאס יודעים זאת היטב. רק אחמוד נדע שהחמאס מתכוון לשחרר את רוצחו של השר רחבעם זאבי. נשיא הרשות הפלסטינית (שמתנגד לחמאס) הצהיר בצניעות שאין הוא מתנגד לשחרור הרוצח, אך אין לו ספק שמסוק אפאצ'י ישראלי יחסל אותו.

יתכן מוזר- פלסטין, אחת מהמדינות העניות בעולם תפסיד עכשיו חלק גדול מתמיכתה הבינלאומית, ויקשה להאמין שבלי שינוי עמדה בנושא הטרור הם יצליחו להתקיים כלכלית.

על כן אני רואה את בקעה הטרורה הזאת, אולי, בצורה בלתי צפויה- הנסיעה היחידה לסיים את הטרור. אבל שישאר ביניכם.

לקראת פורים-תמן תחדש

באיראן, הרי היא פָּרָס התרכית יש עכשיו נשיא לפי מיטב המסורת של מגילת אסתר: שונא ישראל, מכחיש שואת, תומך בטרור בינלאומי. אפשר לצעוק: תראו איך העולם הפך לאנטישמי. אבל כן אני רואה את בקעה הטרורה הזאת. אולי, בצורה בלתי צפויה- הנסיעה היחידה לסיים את הטרור. אבל שישאר ביניכם.

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פתח באשוויץ-דברים בשם אומרם

היטה דבריו של העיתונאי הספרדי סבסטיאן רודריגו בעיתון יומי בברצלונה:

"הלכתי ברחוב בברצלונה וגיליתי אמת מחרידה: אירופה פתחה באשוויץ. הרגנו שישה מיליון יהודים והחלפנו אותם בעשרים מיליון מוסלמים. באושוויץ שרפנו תרבות, מחשבה, יצירתיות, הרסנו את העם הנבחר, באמת נבחר, כי הם הולידו אנשים גדולים ונפלאים אשר שינו את העולם. תרומתם של האנשים האלה מדגישת בכל תחומי החיים: מדע, אמנות, מסחר בינלאומי ומעל לכל-מצפון של העולם. אלה האנשים ששרפנו, תחת העמדות פנים של סובלנות, ומכיוון שרצינו להוכיח לעצמנו שרצאנו מגחלת הנאציזם, פתחנו שעריהם לעשרים מיליון מוסלמים אשר הביאו עליהם טפשות ובורות, קיצוניות דתית ואי סובלנות, פשע ועוני הנובעים מאי רצון לעבוד ולקיים את משפחותיהם בכבוד. הם הפכו את הערים היפהפיות שלנו לעולם שלישי, טובעות בזוהמה ופשע. הם מסתגרים בדירות שקיבלו בחינם מהממשלה ובוזזו הם מתכננים את הרצח ההמוני של מאזרחיהם התמימים.

וכך לדעת מהלנו החלפנו תרבות בשואה פסטנית, כשרון יצירתי בכישורי הרס, אינטלגנציה בפינוי רעיות קדושות, חסרנו את רדיפת השלום של יהדות אירופה תכונתם לקות לעתיד טוב יותר לילדיהם, היצמדותם הנחושה בחיים כי החיים קדושים, באלה אשר תרים אחר המוות, באנשים אשר נכלים בתשוקת המוות לעצמם ולאחרים, לילדיהם ולילדינו. איזו טעות נוראה נעשתה על ידי אירופה האשמלה".

לצערי הרב-זה, אין אני מקבל רבים מדבריו של רודריגו. כמו כל הכללה, זהו מעניש מוסלמים רבים. אבל יש בדברים ללמד על הלך הרוח באירופה. אין ספק שהמוסלמים הם השנוא ביותר שיכולה אירופה לקבל, אבל שישאר ביניכם.

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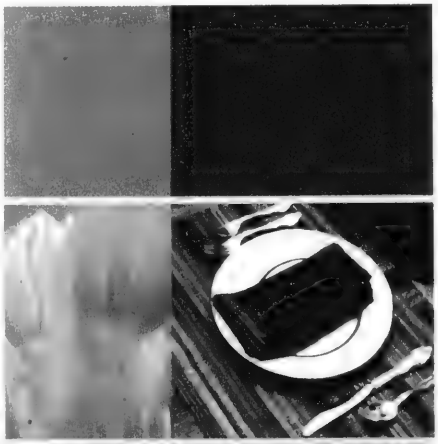

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Coast to Coast

Gesher on Ice creates winter camp experience for youth

By BARBARA SILVERTSTEIN
Special to The CJN

There was a party mood when Camp Gesher youth convened at the Borochov Centre in Tornto for an out-of-town retreat last month.

Piles of backpacks and sleeping bags sat in the parking lot as the campers hugged and kibbitzed, oblivious to the cold. The group was bound for Gesher on Ice, a fun-filled weekend at the camp run by the labour Zionist youth movement Habonim Dror.

This annual Shabbaton-like retreat at the camp, about an hour's drive north of Belleville, is usually geared to Gesher Campers or local Habonim Dror youth group participants. However, this year, Gesher on Ice was also part of a joint outreach program for Jewish youth in small communities sponsored by Gesher and Regional Jewish Communities of Ontario (RJCO).

This was the first time Gesher campers and staff hosted an RJCO youth group, said Daryn Epstein, co-ordinator of community services and youth outreach for RJCO, noting that a total of 35 young people participated, nine of whom were part of the RJCO group.

He explained that RJCO, a department of United Israel Appeal Federations Canada, runs outreach programs for youth and adults in small towns "to bring Jewish life to these communities."

An RJCO group of about 30 youths from Guelph, Kitchener Waterloo, Barrie and St. Catherines have been together for some three years and Gesher on Ice was "a great opportunity for them to make new Jewish friends," said Epstein. "For some of the children in this group, the weekend was the first time they were in a totally Jewish environment.

"It was a very positive experience. The RJCO kids integrated well with the Camp Gesher kids. Everyone felt comfortable. The RJCO kids led the *Havdallah* service. It was really beautiful – outdoors under the stars."

The weekend introduced the RJCO group to Jewish camping and Zionism, he continued. "The Jewish camp environment is one the most positive ways of developing Jewish identity among youth."

Getting his youth group better acquainted with the Gesher campers was very important because the RJCO kids will join some of the Gesher group for the annual summer trip to Israel organized by Habonim Dror North America, Epstein said. "Gesher on Ice was an opportunity for RJCO kids to meet and network with other Jewish kids travelling to Israel to help ensure the success of the Israel trip."

Habonim Dror was the "logical partner" for the Israel trip because Gesher does a lot of outreach to small communities in Ontario," he said. "Gesher has a strong base of campers from small communities. Some kids from the RJCO group are already attending the camp."

He said there is also a "natural fit" between RJCO and Camp Gesher because Omer Eshel, the shaliach for Camp Gesher Habonim Dror also works for RJCO, and the two groups have partnered in several outreach initiatives to small communities.

Joint fall weekend seminars where Gesher brings a large contingent of campers from the big centres to interact with their counterparts in smaller towns have been very successful, Eshel said.

"At the fall seminar in Barrie, we hosted a Shabbat dinner for the Barrie community to introduce Gesher to the community."

Eshel, who has been the shaliach for almost three years, helps manage the camp in the summer and oversees the Habonim Dror youth group during the school year.

He pointed out that Gesher also runs programs independently of RJCO, and that this outreach activity preceded his terms as shaliach. "Camp Gesher started 4½ years ago to bring Zionism to the small communities. We're the only Zionist organization that does outreach to the small communities."

He stressed that the Camp Gesher brand of outreach makes a big impact. "When we do the seminars, we take the large groups of kids from Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal and they bring the camp experience to small communities.

"It's very rare for these small towns to see a group of 80 Jewish kids in their community."

It's a win-win situation, he added, because Gesher's partnership with RJCO also boosts enrolment at the camp. "Today, the second-largest group of kids coming to Gesher are coming through RJCO as a result of the fall seminars. They quickly feel a part of the camp community.

"Gesher is a big *mishpachah* so the kids feel very welcome. When we bring the kids together, there is openness and acceptance. That is what has attracted the RJCO kids to enrol in the camp."

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Jacob C. Langer, MD, Chief, Pediatric General Surgery, Hospital for Sick Children and Rachel Spitzer, MD, Resident in Obstetrics and Gynecology, University of Toronto

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Coast to Coast

Dialogue group handles fallout from cartoons

By ABIGAIL CUKIER
Special to The CJN

HAMILTON — Members of the Committee for Hamilton Arab, Muslim and Jewish Dialogue believe they have prevented angry protests in Hamilton over the reprinting of Danish cartoons of the Muslim prophet Muhammad.

Committee member Lorne Finkelstein said last month's decision by the Calgary-based *Western Standard* magazine to reprint some of the cartoons was the committee's first "real crisis," and proved the group is having a positive effect.

The committee, which started up last September and grew out of the controversy surrounding Hamilton Police Chief Brian Mullan's trip to Israel last year with other Ontario law enforcement officials, aims to promote understanding and respect between Hamilton's Arab, Muslim and Jewish residents.

After news broke of the reprinted cartoons, Ali Cheaib, president of the Hamilton Council of Canadian Arabs and a member of the dialogue committee, asked Finkelstein to call an urgent meeting of the group. Hussein Hamdani, a committee member and chair of the Ihya Foundation, asked him to make a public statement condemning the cartoons' publication. (The *Jewish Free Press* in Calgary also reprinted some of the Danish cartoons.)

Javid Mirza, another committee member and president of the Muslim Association of Hamilton, said members of Hamilton's Muslim community reacted negatively to the fact the *Western Standard*'s publisher, Ezra Levant, is Jewish.

"Some said, 'See, look what he did, see,'" Mirza said. "I had to point out to them that most of the mainstream media did not [reprint the cartoons].

"Because of the group, we were able to speak with each other and defuse tensions in the community. It had a profound effect within the community having someone from the Jewish community standing right beside them."

Mirza said Gerry Fisher, executive director of the UJA Federation of Hamilton and also a member of the dialogue committee, sent him statements from Jewish organizations opposing the decision to reprint the cartoons, which Mirza sent as a mass e-mail to hundreds of people in the local Muslim and Arab communities.

Popular CHML radio talk show host Roy Green had Finkelstein, Cheaib and Mirza on his show to discuss the issue.

Finkelstein noted that when they met in the station's lobby, there was no tension or anger among the three men, despite the controversial issue.

"I said I certainly support a free press, but a free press with caution when it comes to insulting other people," Finkelstein said. "But I also said that throughout the Middle East, there are horrific anti-Semitic cartoons and rhetoric, and I have yet to hear Muslim or Arab leaders come out and say this is not acceptable.

"I would condemn any purposeful incitement, but would expect reciprocity."

Although the committee had agreed the three would not discuss events in the Middle East, Finkelstein said he noted that such items are easily accessed in Canada via the Internet.

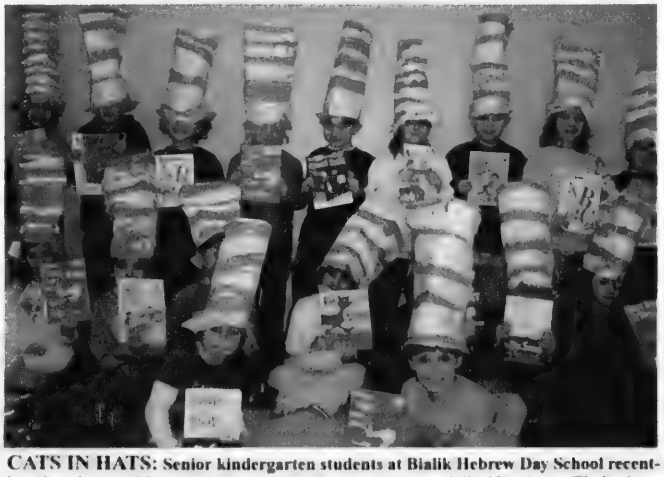
"On air, Ali agreed there was no room for purposeful insulting of any religious group," Finkelstein said. "Javid agreed and condemned the protests in other countries over the cartoons."

The men told Green they were sure the group had helped to defuse tensions over the cartoons.

"If we hadn't had this relationship, hadn't built up this dialogue, I don't know what would have happened, but I think it's possible there would have been protests at [the offices of] Jewish organizations," Finkelstein said.

He acknowledged that members of Hamilton's Jewish, Muslim and Arab communities have expressed skepticism about the group, but he is proud of it, especially after it handled its first major issue.

"This is an example of how it's working," Mirza said.



CATS IN HATS: Senior kindergarten students at Bialik Hebrew Day School recently enjoyed an exciting week immersed in their "author study" of Dr. Seuss. Their classroom was filled with a multitude of Dr. Seuss books and the children were involved in shared, guided and independent reading.

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We thank all applicants for their interest; however, only those considered for interviews will be contacted.

Coast to Coast

Israeli truckers recruited to drive in Manitoba

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — David Shapiro is one of more than three dozen mainly Russian-born Israeli truck drivers who have recently been recruited to fill the large demand for drivers in Manitoba.

Shapiro is originally from Azerbaijan. He immigrated to Israel 15 years ago with his family when he was still in his teens. He and his wife, Ilana, had been living near Netanya and have been in Winnipeg for the past six months.

Shapiro said he was a truck driver in the army and later drove for Taavura Ltd., Israel's largest trucking company. Most recently, he was a driver for Tnuva, the Israeli dairy co-op. A friend told him about the job opportunities in Winnipeg, which is home to several sizeable trucking companies.

Israeli truck driver David Shapiro and his wife Ilana.

The man behind the drive to bring Israeli truck drivers to Canada is Bulgarian-born Lubo Todorov, the founder of two-year-old Ideal Driver Training.

"It is becoming increasingly difficult finding younger Canadians who want careers in the trucking industry as drivers," said Todorov, who isn't Jewish. "I researched the best countries for sourcing new drivers according to certain criteria."

They include familiarity with winter driving conditions – most of the Israelis he's recruited once drove in Russia – as well as experience in different geographical areas. Other criteria include being eligible to drive in the United States (the destination for 90 per cent of Manitoba loads), reasonable English skills and knowledge of North American trucking equipment.

"The best sources for drivers according to our criteria were Israel and Germany," Todorov said.

Todorov does his best to prepare his foreign-born prospective new drivers before they arrive in Canada. He provides the recruits with driver handbooks with Russian translations so that they can study for the tests they have to pass here before they can go to work in the industry. He also encourages them to learn English, and he takes care of the immigration paperwork beforehand.

In the case of Shapiro and some of the first group of drivers, Todorov did interviews over the phone and assessed their driving by watching a video that Shapiro's wife, Ilana, took of the group.

But not all the Russian-born Israeli drivers that have contacted Todorov have come to Winnipeg through his efforts.

Leonid Levin came here on his own in mid-January to look for work with a trucking company.

Levin is originally from Belarus and went to Israel 14 years ago at age 29. He started driving trucks in Belarus, and in Israel he worked for a couple of different trucking companies. His wife and three sons are still in Israel. He is scheduled to take his road test this month, after which Todorov will put him in touch with prospective employers.

Todorov also noted that he is working closely with Winnipeg's Jewish community to help the newcomers adjust to life in Manitoba's capital.

"We have a very good relationship with the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg," he said. "We had a table at the community's job fair in the fall and the community sends us clients, too."

"The Jewish community has been very helpful," Shapiro agreed.

"They helped us find an apartment and I am a member of the Rady Jewish Community Centre."

For Winnipeg's Jewish community, which is trying to grow its population, Russian-born Israelis have become the largest source of new immigrants in the last year, as immigration from Argentina has largely dried up since the economy in that country stabilized.

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Coast to Coast

'Everyone has a story,' broadcast veteran says

By REBECA KUROPATWA
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — Sylvia Kuzyk, a news anchor and weather reporter for CKY, Winnipeg's CTV station, was one of the first women broadcasters in Manitoba and Western Canada.

Today, she is the host of CKY's *News at Noon*, and also reports on local entertainment and the weather on the station's *News at 6*. She got her start working for Winnipeg's CKY-TV in 1974 as a weather newscaster.

Kuzyk spoke last month about "Living in the Public Eye," as part of the "Conversations" lecture series hosted by the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba's Women's Endowment Fund.

From left, CKY news anchor Sylvia Kuzyk is seen with Marilyn Prober and Susan Kay, co-chairs of the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba's "Conversations" speaker series.

"Although youth has always been highly regarded, I am lucky to work with people who also see the value in experience, commitment and involvement," Kuzyk said. "Instead of aging, I would describe the theme of tonight's lecture as growth and development. It more clearly demarks the requirements of time, effort and involvement.

"I've been part of the CTV, formerly CKY, news team, for the duration of my television career," she added. "This is something I take great pride in."

Kuzyk told the audience that despite being in the public eye, she is innately private and shy, and has been from a very early age. "When I immigrated to Canada with my family [from Germany] at about the age of six, I didn't know the English language yet. I felt intensely shy and just wanted to disappear from my teachers. I couldn't stand in front of the class to speak."

She said she became a nurse, got married and had her daughter, Vanessa. "I stayed at home with her for the first three years of her life."

Then, she said, "I decided to take a theatre course. My shyness began to transform into something else. I began to discover how to be myself."

Kuzyk noted that her "first couple of years as a weather broadcaster were very difficult. I remember just shaking when that camera turned on. It was horrible. Not only was I balancing a career and family, but also that old spectre of my reservedness, shyness and lack of confidence made it so hard.

"Particularly when you are faced with a challenging situation, all of your old insecurities come flooding back. It wouldn't get any better until I realized that it is futile to try to make everyone happy. The key, I discovered, is to like and accept who you are, yourself. It was only then that I could relax a bit and go forward."

Something else Kuzyk said she learned "is that everybody has a story to tell.

"I met a woman whom I had at first only spoken to over the phone. During one phone conversation, she told me that she is a quadriplegic and had been living at the Misericordia Hospital [in Winnipeg] for the last 25 years. She had two daughters, and one day, she had a car accident that landed her in the hospital. She and I became friends, and I would go and visit her at the hospital. She has since passed away."

Asked for her thoughts on the controversial Danish newspaper cartoons of the Muslim Prophet Muhammad, Kuzyk said, "It is sad, seeing all of the pain, suffering and killing that happens because of religious extremism. Some subjects, although I might risk sounding anti-freedom of expression, should be kept out of the news."

But, she added, "it's important to have honest, objective news."

Kuzyk said she "greatly values family, friends and community... I wouldn't be who I am today without that support."

She calls Winnipeg her hometown and feels that "knowing your roots, who you are, where you came from, and maintaining interconnectedness are so important. A couple of years ago, my mother passed away. This has taught me, even more, how important it is to treasure each moment."

Kuzyk has been active in several charitable causes, including the Central Speech and Hearing Clinic, the United Way and Easter Seals. Among other honours, she was the recipient of the public service award from the Kidney Foundation of Canada, the John Alexander Media Award from the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada in 1994, the Manitoba Volunteerism Award in 1996, the YM/YWCA Women of Distinction in Media and Communications Award in 2004 and the Broadcasters Association of Manitoba's Excellence Award in 2005.

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Coast to Coast

Hamas may not be Israel's biggest problem

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Hamas' victory in the recent Palestinian parliamentary elections has opened the door to increased Iranian intervention on Israel's doorstep, according to *Winnipeg Free Press* columnist Sam Segev ("Rice finds defiance in the Mideast," March 1).

Given Iran's determination to pursue a nuclear weapons program in defiance of the international community, and given repeated declarations of its feverishly anti-Semitic president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to "wipe Israel off the map," such increased Iranian involvement is seen by many analysts as dangerously destabilizing.

"According to Israeli intelligence sources," Segev writes, Hamas' "political" leader Khaled Meshal "has formed a 'strategic alliance' with Iran. In return for non-recognition of Israel and continued terrorism against the Jewish state, Iran will provide Hamas 'unlimited' financial and military assistance via Syria and Lebanon's Hezbollah." Segev also notes that Iran continues with Syria's help to supply arms to Hezbollah and to "pro-Syrian Palestinian terrorist groups in South Lebanon's refugee camps."

Hamas' election victory has emboldened Syria's President Bashar Assad. In January, Ahmadinejad met in Damascus with Hamas leaders, including Meshal, pledging his support for Palestinian "resistance" (i.e. terrorist) groups.

Late last month, Meshal met again with Ahmadinejad in Tehran. Ahmadinejad, along with Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, promised to fund a Hamas-led Palestinian government in the event that the United States and the European Union cut off funds.

Citing an interview with Meshal published in the Feb. 28 issue of the London-based Arabic daily *Al-Hayat*, Segev noted Meshal's continual refusal to recognize Israel's legitimacy and to disarm. The most Meshal is prepared to offer is a "long-term" ceasefire with Israel in return for Israel's total withdrawal from the West Bank, along with Israel's acceptance of the "right of return" of Palestinians to Israel – a non-starter for Israel.

Meshal's rejectionist declaration came just days before he was scheduled to travel, as the head of a Hamas delegation, to Moscow to meet with high-ranking Russian officials who were trying to reassure the West of their confidence in being able to prevail upon Hamas to "moderate."

As of this writing, the Hamas-Russian meeting is mere days away. Yet it would almost certainly defy everything Hamas officials have been saying to assume that Russia will have any success in moving the group to conform to the preconditions set out by the international Quartet (of which Russia is a member, along with the United States, the United Nations and the European Union) for negotiations with Hamas.

What Russia is really aiming at, many believe, is to develop its own influence in the Middle East against that of the United States at a time when U.S. power in the region seems to be faltering.

In the meantime, Iran's ambitions continue to grow, not only with Syria and Hamas, but also in Iraq, where it reportedly continues to consolidate its influence in the Shiite-dominated south.

Segev observed that with Iraq "facing civil war and a possible disintegration into three separate ethnic entities" – Sunni, Kurd and Shiite – Iran was able to orchestrate the recent visit to Damascus of the radical Iraqi Shiite militia leader Nokteda al-Sadr. His mission? According to Segev, it was to lay "the grounds for a future Syrian-Iraqi rapprochement."

In short, the rise of Hamas has occasioned or been accompanied by the strengthening of the Iranian-Syria-Hezbollah alliance and the forging of a possible new one, an Iranian-backed Iraqi-Syrian relationship.

Israel is confident it can deal with a Hamas-led Palestinian government. More troublesome is what's developing elsewhere on its borders.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Clinton 'shocked' by riots in Muslim world over cartoons

Continued from page 3

Clinton, who was president from 1992 to 2000, said he was "shocked and profoundly disappointed" over recent riots in the Muslim world in response to the Danish Muhammad cartoons, not because he doesn't believe in freedom of the press, "but because I would never do anything that blasphemes someone else's faith."

He said the first person who called him to speak out against the cartoons was Edgar Bronfman, head of the World Jewish Congress.

Clinton said the caricatures were a "perfect opportunity" for dialogue with Muslims, but one that was "colossally blown."

He also noted a rise in Muslim-on-Muslim violence, beginning with last November's deadly bombings of hotels in Amman, Jordan, where "100 per cent of the victims were Muslim."

Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the Sunni leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq, took credit for the blasts, and Clinton said the act was an expression of a basic disagreement al-Zarqawi has with Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

He said al-Zarqawi intended to launch a new front in the war against infidels by first killing all Shia Muslims and moderate Sunnis, then training his bombs on the West.

Clinton had kind words for Canada, calling it a "fully textured democracy."

Turning to Iran, the former president said there are "no easy options." Iran is much bigger and much more powerful than Iraq and represents a "very dangerous situation," he said.

Western powers "have to be very firm but also not confuse the legitimate desires of the people in Iran to improve their lives with the illegitimate desire of the president to deny the historical reality of Holocaust.

"In other words, this is not going to be an easy walk into the future."

On the other hand, Clinton believes the 21st century will be less bloody than the 20th was.

"We have to be faithful to our values, be realistic about understanding where people are coming from [and] and always be willing to put ourselves in others' shoes."

> ***Iran is much bigger and much more powerful than Iraq and represents a 'very dangerous situation'***

But he warned against religious extremism.

"All these people who are using religion as an excuse to give them political power and legitimize terror, every one of them is committing a fundamental error.

"Whether you're a Jew, Muslim or Christian, particularly if you're part of the monotheistic tradition, it is a heresy to claim to be in possession of the absolute truth. If you're in possession of the absolute truth and you can turn it into an absolutely true political program, which gives you heaven on Earth, what do you need God for?"

Rabbi Marvin Hier, dean and founder of the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center called Clinton "a great friend of Israel and the Jewish community."

Clinton, it was noted, presented famed Nazi hunter Simon Wiesenthal the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2000.

Organizers said the evening raised $1.3 million for Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

Montreal Jews voice outrage at Halimi memorial

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — As thousands took to the streets of Paris Feb. 26 to decry the anti-Semitic murder of Ilan Halimi, more than 400 like-minded Montreal Jews gathered the same evening in anger and sorrow to voice their solidarity with the Jews of France and their own outrage over the brutality of the crime.

In the presence of French Vice-consul Denis François, Rabbi Reuben Poupko of Beth Israel Beth Aaron Congregation asked a standing-room only audience at the Gelber Conference Centre rhetorically whether Chirac helped stoke a culture of anti-Semitism that led to the killing by honouring Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat throughout his "life and death."

"We have a right to know whether he created a climate where Jews can be murdered," Rabbi Poupko said angrily. "We have a right to ask that question."

Rabbi Poupko received a standing ovation after his remarks.

Halimi, 23, was abducted for ransom by a gang that tortured him for more than three weeks before leaving him to die manacled beside some train tracks near Paris.

After initially hesitating, French officials now call the crime an act of anti-Semitism. French President Jacques Chirac, Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin and Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy have all done so.

The gang, named the Barbarians, reportedly kidnapped Halimi because he was Jewish and they thought his family would have money. According to some reports, he was the sixth Jew targeted by the gang in eight abduction attempts.

Last week, Youssouf Fofana, the gang's alleged leader, admitted he took part in kidnapping Halimi, but said he didn't kill him. He spoke from jail in the Ivory Coast, where he fled after the murder.

Organizers of the Montreal memorial had to search for extra chairs after at least 400 people – double the expected number – turned up for the service, which was organized jointly by Canadian Jewish Congress, Quebec region (CJC-Q), and the Communauté Sépharade Unifiée du Québec (CSUQ).

The predominantly francophone audience lit candles, stood for a minute of silence, and remained hushed as psalms were recited. They reacted with applause as Jewish community leaders and politicians denounced the crime and called for renewed vigilance against anti-Semitism and all forms of racism and intolerance.

One of the speakers, Laval West Liberal MP Raymonde Folco, noted that her own family was "ravaged" during the Holocaust, and she rued the fact that humanity has yet to learn to live "side-by-side" in mutual respect and tolerance.

"If I had to write a letter to Ilan's parents, it would be to express the hope that Ilan's life will not have been in vain," she said.

Folco also said it's not enough to treat the "symptoms" that led to this type of crime, but also the "root causes."

She said in addition to the tragedy that befell Halimi and his family, "we also have the tragedy of the lost dreams of the family of the youths who committed such a crime."

In an interview, Rabbi Poupko scoffed at the "root causes" notion, characterizing Halimi's alleged murderers as Muslim extremists who quoted the Qur'an over the telephone to his family while they held him captive.

"Everyone knows suicide bombers do not come from the poor," he said *The CJN*. "We're fighting against something bigger here than unemployment."

In his remarks, Elie Benchetrit, the CSUQ's public relations director, said that since the second intifadah began in 2000, European anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism have gradually increased, and have been part of a movement to delegitimize Israel and the Jewish people.

"The death of young Ilan should serve as a necessary wake-up call to all those who share the values of tolerance and respect and on which the future of our civilization depends," Benchetrit said.

Rabbi Jacob Levy, of the Congrégation sépharade Beth Rambam, saw the crime as a return to the "gloominess and darkness" of the Middle Ages.

But while those responsible should face quick and severe justice, "there should be no violent words, burned down mosques, or anti-Muslim slogans," Rabbi Levy said.

Others speakers included student Ilana Chriqui, whose voice choked as she spoke of Halimi's suffering, which she said "transcends imagination."

The perpetrators sought to strip Halimi of his dignity, but in fact, she said, addressing the perpetrators, "you had none of your own."

She vowed that Jews "will not give up" and "not be silenced" in their quest to live in a world marked by tolerance and human understanding.

"The world promised us 'Never again,' but we know that promise was hollow," she said.

Omission

The story "Israel could use a constitution: ex-MK" (*CJN*, Feb. 23) failed to mention that the New Israel Fund of Canada was the primary sponsor of Naomi Chazan's lecture at Temple Sinai. *The CJN* regrets the error.

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In the article "Mazon offers gourmet response to hunger" (*CJN*, March 2), L'Echaim Caterers was not included in the list of caterers. *The CJN* regrets the omission.

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On Campus

Sexuality, Jewish ethics discussed at Hillel

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

About 10 students gathered last week to discuss Jewish ethics and sexuality to kick off Jewish Pride Week at the University of Toronto.

Rabbinical student Judith Levitt, 29, from the Leo Baeck College Centre for Jewish Education in the United Kingdom, led the first session in the lecture series for Jewish students, which was organized by Hillel of Greater Toronto and held at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life.

"I wanted to give people a forum to talk about the values in a Jewish environment, in a non-judgmental environment, where they can be honest and open about the reality of their life, but still consider Jewish values," Levitt said in an interview with *The CJN*.

She added that while there may be a lot of information about Jewish sexuality, most of it is very traditional and it's mostly aimed at educating teens.

Levitt said there isn't enough information for Jewish adults who want to explore their sexuality, and she hoped her discussion, titled "Sex and the Sabbath," would address issues that are not often talked about.

The students spoke candidly about the issue of Jewish ethics, intimacy and sex, and shared with the group their struggles of trying to incorporate each into their lives.

"I think there is a level of intimacy within ethics," said one of the students in attendance. "Let's say you tell someone, 'I love you and I want to have a relationship with you,' and then you have sex with them and the next day, you say, 'I'm not really into you.' That's not very ethical. You're taking advantage of someone."

He said that people should give their partners the same respect they would give anyone else.

"Any relationship between two people is a microcosm of people's relationships with everybody," he said.

Another student added that the way you treat your significant other says a lot about the kind of person you are as a whole. If you're not going to be respectful to your partner, you probably won't be respectful to other people in your life.

"You can't separate one thing from the other. You are either respectful all the time or you're not."

Levitt said the way to a fulfilling, respectable sex life is to include Jewish morals and ethics into decision-making.

"If Judaism is central to someone's life, it will be central to the decisions they make sexually," said Levitt, who will be returning to study in the United Kingdom next year.

She said that her motivation to run the session was to inform Jews that they don't have to give in to societal pressures to have casual sex, and that they can apply Jewish morals when making decisions about sexuality.

"What I would really want to do is encourage people to consider something more meaningful than what mainstream TV and mainstream culture are presenting. I don't want [to tell people] this is the way you need to lead your sex life, but I want people to think about what is meaningful and well thought out."

She said while each situation differs from another, when entering a sexual relationship, it's important to consider how to treat your partner with respect.

"Sex can be very impulsive, and so it is important for all of us to be thinking about these things if we find ourselves in this situation."

Levitt added that she feels people need to place more significance on sex and not be so flippant about the act.

"Elevating sex so it becomes something holy, and God is present [is very important]."

Learning how to treat a partner is one thing, but people must also know how to stay true to themselves, she said.

"You need to listen to yourself if you've got doubts or you're feeling uncomfortable in any way. You need to respect yourself... To check in with the other person and communicate – make sure there is a dialogue between the two of you, that you feel safe and comfortable with the person you're with and with yourself."

Other lectures included in the series which ran from Feb. 27 to March 3, were "Our ResponsABILITY: Darfur," by Avrum Rosensweig, and "An Advertising Guru's Journey Through Kabbalah," by Syd Kessler.

The Canadian Jewish news

Section B

LIVE & LEARN

Grade 7 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School perform a "shtetl wedding." [Jonathan Weinbaum photo]

Students at Leo Baeck Day School's Holy Blossom campus sport clown noses at a recent assembly. The Grade 8 class organized a tzedakah project that raised almost $2,000 for the therapeutic clown program at the Hospital for Sick Children. [Barry Weinberg photo]

From left, Rena Strauss, Yael Lewis, Kinneret Witty, Jordana Ansel and Leora Strauss learn how to build chains and make friends during creative playtime in their senior kindergarten class at Netivot HaTorah Day School. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

Laura Nahmias, a Grade 5 student at the Montessori Jewish Day School, holds a newborn duckling after anxiously awaiting its arrival.

From left, Avraham Arrobas, Haim Mamann and Yehoshua Bendayan, senior kindergarten students at Or Haemet Sephardic School, enjoy their Reading Day activities.

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Speaking of education…

Editorial

People often ask where we get the ideas for the articles we write.

Many of the articles in this supplement were percolating for months, sometimes in the form of intense, ongoing discussions like the ones that relate to the future of Jewish day schools.

Others, like the role fun plays in the classroom, have seeped into our consciousness more gradually. After hearing the occasional report about classes that were both memorable and effective because of an unexpectedly playful component, we thought it might be – well – fun – to explore this topic.

Likewise, the appropriateness of taking students out of their peer group to better meet their individual needs arose repeatedly in interviews and casual conversations over the past year. Although the "peer group" article deals with elementary and high school students, adults readers may find themselves thinking about their own life changes, or be inspired to enrich their familiar environment.

Educators often talk about fostering a lifelong love of learning, and about teaching students, not curricula. We hope that this supplement will contribute, at least in a modest way, to your own lifelong learning, and provide ideas that will contribute to memorable discussions.

–F.K.

Federation task force looks at support for day schools

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Longtime community volunteers Morris Perlis and Lou Greenbaum have been asking a lot of questions about Jewish day school education recently.

The co-chairs of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's task force on Jewish education are leading a small committee of about half a dozen people in an effort to study the role of the federation in how it funds and supports day schools.

Committee members have already spoken to representatives of 17 local Jewish day schools and have started to contact people from other communities – mostly in the United States – about their experience being involved in the day school system, said Perlis in a recent interview, explaining that Toronto is "fairly familiar" with the Canadian approaches.

"We're looking at the money being spent, and trying to see if in fact there are other kinds of models for funding. Are there ways of being more effective and/or more efficient in spending in support of Jewish education?… Can we get as many young children as possible in day school?"

Although Perlis was reluctant to discuss specifics of the task force's work, he said he was hopeful that it would "come up with a thoughtful series of alternatives to be considered, to see how funding might be even more effective than it is already.

"We're trying to be proactive and look at the big issues of the community for the future," he said.

"There's a great belief in the value of Jewish education and certainly of day school… We want to see if there are ways to increase the number of kids who go for day school education in a cost-effective way, and see that as many families as possible can afford it."

Toronto currently has 11,130 students in Jewish day schools. Of the UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education's annual $12 million budget, approximately $8 million goes toward tuition subsidies.

The number of students in the system overall has been "fairly stable," said Perlis, noting that a decrease over the past year or two at the elementary level was attributable to demographics (fewer children of that age than in previous years) and was anticipated in the results of a demographic study done for the federation three years ago.

"The high school level has been strong and consistent," he noted.

The task force expects to finish its research by late spring, but its impact will not be immediate, as next year's BJE budget will already be set, said Perlis. Also, the results will have to be analyzed and discussed, he added.

Extracurricular activities are a family affair

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Extracurricular activities, especially those that take up to 15 or 20 hours a week, are a family affair, agree a number of Toronto-area mothers.

"I'm committed to supporting my daughter – I support her passion," says Gloria Riesel, whose 15-year-old daughter Jordana dances "at least" 15 hours a week.

Jordana, who does jazz, acro dance, ballet and tap, began dancing at age four. She has danced competitively for 10 years, and has participated in a number of competitions in Canada and the United States.

A highlight of her "career," says Riesel, was a trip to Miami to take part in the Orange Bowl Parade. "It was a commitment, though. We had to pay for travel expenses, hotel, food, costumes and the entry fee. She has to love it."

A challenge for Jordana, says Riesel, is keeping up with her Grade 10 schoolwork – she attends Westmount Collegiate Institute in Thornhill – "but she manages. She does homework during lunch on dance days, and sometimes she's up until midnight. It's working though – she's an honour-roll student.

"School is a priority, but dance has given her the ability to manage her time. When you enjoy something, there is always time.

"What she has missed, though, are a lot of social functions [such as] family dinners, birthday parties and bar mitzvahs. She never complains. It's her dream, and I'm behind her."

Riesel says, however, that is she is realistic about Jordana's future in dance. "At this point I'm taking it year by year. If schoolwork ever falls behind, we'll re-evaluate.

"She's still a 15-year-old girl. When she takes off her dance costume and makeup, she's an ordinary teenager. Things could change."

Rebeca Bookman, left, and her mother Karen

Meanwhile, she says, the dance community is like her family, says Riesel. "I've made good friends. We see each other socially because we have a lot in common – we're committed to dance."

Rebeca Bookman, 15, a Grade 10 student at Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT), has also been dancing since she was four years old. She now does ballet and tap about six hours a week, and spends another six pursuing such interests as school theatre.

"I did do competitive dancing for two years but gave it up because I decided that ultimately, school is more important.

"If I have a lot of homework, I stay home from dance. It's not the other way around."

She was inspired, she says, by Betty Oliphant, co-founder of the National Ballet School. "She said [in her autobiography *Miss O, My Life in Dance*] that she was interested in starting the school, because when she was a dancer she missed too much school for dance. She didn't want that for others.

"I always kept that in mind. It's important to dance, but it's also important to keep things in perspective.

"I have one friend whose mother wants her to try out for the National Ballet School, and my friend always worries about her weight even though she's thin.

"Others don't come home until 11 p.m. from rehearsals, and only then start their homework. I don't want that."

Rebeca's mother, Karen, says she's proud of her daughter for making such a decision. "The most important thing is that dance should be fun. If it gets out of hand, it's not fun any more."

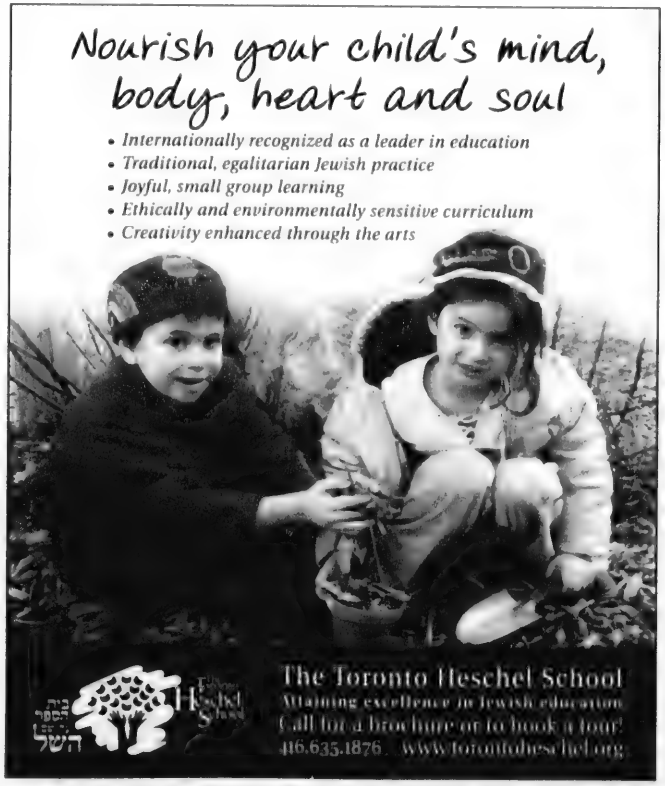
Nancy Green, whose 14-year-old son Mathew plays AAA hockey in Richmond Hill, says "hockey is definitely a priority right now. Mathew is on the ice at least five times a week, and that often includes evening trips to Barrie, Peterborough or Orillia."

She's fortunate, she says, that her husband is as committed as her son. "I just couldn't do such driving, but if Mathew wants to play, a parent has to commit as well."

A Grade 9 student, Mathew keeps up with "most" of his homework, says Green, but "isn't a strong student in the best of times. I don't believe he'd be doing much more work even if he had the time.

"I support the hockey because it keeps Mathew busy and focused on something worthwhile. At that age, a lot of his friends go to the mall or the corner store and hang out."

Like Riesel, however, she does say that she'll take it year by year. "He won't stop playing, but if he can't keep up with school, we'll think about dropping back to play A or select hockey."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When do academic needs outweigh benefits of staying with peers?

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

When Kupperman was only 13 when his parents brought him from Israel to Canada to study at York University, where he is now an undergraduate majoring in mathematics.

Although he misses his friends in Israel and is in touch with them daily, there was no question that his educational needs had to be met and could not be met locally, said his mother Sara.

"If you have a child that wants to go after his heart and his talent, you have to let them do it," she said. "I would tell people whose kids don't feel stimulated at school and who don't enjoy being there to look for a different place. Don't just settle and say, 'Maybe he doesn't like the subject.'"

Chen says the ideal situation would be to take university classes in the afternoon and stay with same-age friends in the morning, but that option isn't always available.

"When you're a kid, you want to be with your own age, unless you're extremely bored."

In university, his older classmates are initially surprised when they find out how old he is, but then "they forget about it," he said.

When things go well, students like him come to see some of their classmates almost as "older brothers," he said.

He would suggest that young students who are very advanced academically, and considering the type of move he made, try out some classes to see whether they are a good fit academically, and get to know some students who are in the class.

"Don't rush. Try it out, but don't automatically say yes or no."

* * *

The key for parents who must decide whether or not to remove a child from his or her peer group – for whatever reason – is to "really listen" to what their children are saying, according to Joanne Foster, gifted education consultant for UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education (BJE) and co-author of the award-winning *Being Smart about Gifted Children: A Guidebook for Parents and Educators*.

Foster, who also teaches educational psychology and gifted education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, said that "if you can accomplish what you need to in terms of being able to give a child an appropriate program that addresses their strengths, weaknesses and interests while keeping the child in an inclusive setting where they're with friends and people they're comfortable with, I don't see the point in pulling them out."

Chen Kupperman

But if a child is not "happily productive" or functioning well, then steps must be taken either to train the teacher to meet special needs within the classroom context – an area Foster specializes in, in her work with the BJE – or to "rethink the placement," she said.

Often, she said, students thrive in a new environment that better meets their educational needs. But for others, being in their own neighbourhood or staying at a particular Jewish day school is the right answer, provided the teacher can offer what is needed academically, she said.

"It's a case by case basis."

Foster suggests that parents ask themselves questions like the following before deciding to remove a child from his or her peer group:

- How resilient is the child?
- What sorts of buffers are in place? Will they be moving with a friend, for example?
- Is it a transition time in any case (for example, if children are going into Grade 1 or starting junior high)?
- How willing is the child to do this?

The issues should be discussed among parents, teachers and children, she said. "You want everybody to be on board, so it becomes a positive kind of situation. There has to be a lot of support for a child around the adjustment process. You want to make sure the expectations are reasonable, so that the child doesn't all of a sudden go into a situation and find it really daunting – that they can't keep up with the workload, for example.

"You also want to make sure that the new environment is going to be one where there are other people they can connect with, who have shared interests."

To facilitate the adjustment, she advises that parents remain attentive to clues such as changes in eating and sleeping patterns, or other behavioural indicators that might result from difficulty in adjusting to the new situation.

Acceleration is a good way for some children "to move forward intellectually and feel good about themselves instead of being bored and frustrated," said Foster.

According to a recent study (*A Nation Deceived: How Schools Hold Back America's Brightest Students*, available online at www.nationdeceived.org), academic acceleration is "the easiest and most effective way to help highly capable students."

Continued on page B5

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Live & Learn

'Consider whether child is in the right school or program'

Continued from page B4

The study, which refers to 18 kinds of acceleration, said that accelerated students feel academically challenged and socially accepted.

* * *

For Jennifer Gould Keil, a 38-year-old journalist in New York who skipped two grades ahead by the time she was in Grade 2, there was never an issue about not being with children her own age when she was growing up in Toronto.

"I was so young, it wasn't difficult. I looked like the kids who were two years older, and I was never friends with kids my own age."

She suspects, however, that it is easier for girls to advance a grade or two, particularly when they become teenagers and may be interested in dating.

"I'm so glad that I did it, because I wouldn't have had anything in common with kids my age. It kept me stimulated, and not bored."

* * *

Clinical psychologist Alan Bardikoff, who also does educational assessments, says the advantage in accelerating children at a young age is that they have more time to adjust.

Students who skip from Grade 6 to Grade 8, for example, have "one less year of figuring out teenage challenges before they're thrust into a very different environment where they are expected to be more independent and do more work. Also, they're often looking at each other through different lenses, and [may be] attracted to each other physically and emotionally."

But, said Bardikoff, the criteria for advancing or holding back a student is "always dependent upon the individual's circumstances."

He is "probably more comfortable" with the idea of advancing students, compared to holding them back a year, because of possible self-esteem issues.

Sometimes, for example with young children born in December who may not be ready to proceed to the next grade, holding them back a year "makes a lot of sense," Bardikoff said.

But in the older grades, "one has to consider whether an extra year really means getting something different, or whether it means repeating the same experience.

Jennifer Gould Keil

"I will ask a parent to consider whether their child is in the right school or program. More isn't necessarily better."

* * *

In high school, now that the OAC year has been abolished in Ontario, some parents are concerned about whether their children are ready for university at a younger age than previous freshman students.

At the same time, students and their parents may be reluctant to put university off a year while classmates are proceeding to campus.

"In the public school system, many high schools encourage students to consider taking [an extra year]," said Bardikoff.

Also, he added, because there is less flexibility in the current curriculum, students must make choices at the end of Grade 10. "If they make the wrong choices, they need to reconsider taking an extra year or half year to make up what they've missed.

But even for students going to university at the same time as their friends, the peer group may be a significant consideration.

Educational consultant Judy Libman of Ambitions Educational Consulting said it's "not that rare" for students to not even consider a university that their friends are not going to.

"I do worry that students are so risk-averse that they narrow down their options, [particularly if] they won't try things based on their own interests.

"In some cases, they aren't sure what their own interests are, but they find that group comfort zone and it doesn't always fit."

In the Jewish community, Libman said, "most kids want to be in a place where they'll have some kind of Jewish social life, which I think is important."

But there are "good schools that Jewish kids won't consider going to," among them universities with "thriving, small Jewish populations."

She encourages students to think about university as a place where they will be challenged with new ideas and meet people who are different from them.

HANDS-ON SCIENCE

Dayna Goldhar, left, and Jenna Zucker, Grade 5 students at Associated Hebrew School's Neptune Drive campus, make ice cream as part of a science experiment.

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Salary seen as a major factor in retaining Jewish teachers

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Rising tuition and declining enrolment are not the only problems facing North American Jewish day schools.

The recruitment and retention of teachers is also becoming more of an issue, as young Jewish educators are opting to take higher-paying jobs in administration or other fields.

Rabbi Dan Rand, managing director of Aish Toronto, is a former full-time teacher at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto who still teaches a one-hour class three times a week.

He said his salary was one of the major reasons he left CHAT six years ago, after teaching for three years.

"It is definitely an inhibitor for someone with a big family, unless your wife is working too," he said, adding that pay increases for teachers "would be a great step in the right direction."

"They want to be on par with what public school teachers make, and at the same time they want someone totally committed to Judaism."

He said it's easier for a secular teacher to live on a $70,000 salary, because they may not keep kosher, have a big family with four to six kids, and observe all the holidays.

"I've seen very good, young teachers that end up leaving because the pay is too low," Rabbi Rand said.

Donald Sylvan, president and COO of the New York-based Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA), said low pay is just one of many factors keeping good, young Jewish educators away.

"Prestige is part of it, [as are] financial remuneration [and] stability of benefits. If we could solve these three problems, we'd be in good shape," Sylvan said.

"These are critical factors in understanding what the problem is. We've got an idea of what the factors are, and we're working on addressing them," he added.

Three years ago, people from academic agencies around the world gathered at a summit in Florida to talk about recruiting and retaining Jewish teachers.

In April 2003, the Covenant Foundation and JESNA launched the Jewish Educator Recruitment/Retention Initiative (JERRI) to recruit Jewish educators, change the culture and structure of the education system, and research and understand the challenges in recruiting and retaining teachers.

Western communities fund prospective Jewish teachers

While low pay, lack of job stability and few or no benefits are three of the main reasons educators opt to leave the Jewish education system, Sylvan said accommodating teachers is also important.

"We don't always treat teachers the right way," he said.

In response, JESNA and the Covenant Foundation have created mentorship programs in hopes of "nurturing new teachers correctly," by partnering them with more experienced teachers who can show them the ropes and make them feel comfortable, Sylvan said.

Rory Paul, head of school at Gray Academy of Jewish Education in Winnipeg, which has students in junior kindergarten through high school, said that in response to the challenge of finding young, qualified Judaic studies teachers, his school has started encouraging students to enter the field.

Five years ago, the Jewish communities of Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver and Edmonton formed a Western Canadian coalition that provides Jewish students with scholarships to York University's Jewish education program – on the condition that upon completing the program, they teach at one of four Jewish day schools in Western Canada for a minimum of two years.

This year, however, the coalition didn't get enough funds from donors to send a student, Paul said.

He believes that part of the reason few students opt to become Jewish teachers is because their parents discourage them from doing so.

"The parental mindset is that children should be pushed into traditional professions, because teaching is seen as a pseudo-profession."

He said his school has managed to hold on to its Jewish educators with benefits and comparatively high salaries that average $70,000 "which is high in Winnipeg dollars" – but he worries about replacing teachers who will soon retire.

"As our teachers age and retire, replacing them will be an onerous task. With a small Jewish population, we have less to draw on," Paul said.

Paul sees the problem as a North American one, and he is taking it upon himself to "create a school environment that will entice teachers to want to be a part of Jewish education."

Rabbi Rand said the key to improving the Jewish school system and addressing the shortage of Jewish educators is to increase wages.

"They will always be able to fill the ranks, but will they be getting the best quality? The question is, how important is the quality of education to the community?" Rabbi Rand said.

"If you want sterling education, you have to pay for it. Jewish teachers are very dedicated, but you are obviously going to get better quality if you pay for it."

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Congress developing strategy to lobby for school funding

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The next provincial election in Ontario is scheduled for October 2007, and there's a good chance that funding for independent religious schools will be a hot-button campaign issue.

Soon after being elected in 2003, Dalton McGuinty's Liberals repealed the Equity in Education Tax Credit introduced by the previous Progressive Conservative (PC) government – going so far to make the decision retroactive. In recent weeks, Ontario PC leader John Tory has restated his commitment to finding a way to help parents with children in independent and private schools.

The issue is one of "fairness... for independent schools," Tory told reporters at a policy conference last month in Niagara Falls.

Ontario holds the distinction among all Canadian provinces of funding the schools of one religious group Roman Catholic – while refusing to fund the schools of all other religions, including Jews, Protestants and Muslims.

In the 1996 "Adler" decision, the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the constitutionality of the funding practice, but the High Court also stated there was nothing to prevent the government of Ontario from funding the schools of other religions as well.

Canadian Jewish Congress joined a number of Jewish parents at the Supreme Court in arguing for equity in education funding, but the community's political lobbying efforts go back even further. For decades, Jewish leaders have described public funding for Jewish day schools as one of the most important issues facing the Jewish community in Ontario, and various organization over the years have lobbied a succession of Ontario governments on the issue.

Last fall, Canadian Jewish Congress' Ontario region, which has been the organized community's main advocacy voice on the issue, hired Jesse Guberman as an education policy advisor with the mandate of putting together a long-term strategic plan to advance the community's position on funding.

Guberman said he is still in the midst of his work. "There is a strategy taking shape, but it's not one we're releasing yet," he said.

In the few months he's been on the job, Guberman has consulted with "stakeholders" in the current system – schools, parents, former Congress staff familiar with the issue, the UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education (BJE) and federated Jewish communities in Ontario that provide some funding to local Jewish schools. (Tuition fees are the main source of funds. They can range from about $10,000 to $15,000 per student at Jewish day schools in Toronto).

There are something like 45 Jewish schools in Ontario that would benefit from government funding, and all were invited to a mid-January breakfast meeting at the Congress' offices in the Lipa Green Building. Representatives who couldn't attend were linked up by teleconference, Guberman said.

Guberman acknowledges that trying to create a consensus among so many diverse institutions and individuals has been difficult. "If we can get buy-in on our strategy and some general ideas on what that strategy will look like, then we can move forward," he said.

There is a general agreement that a long-term solution to funding difficulties could be addressed through government funding, but how to advance that agenda is still up in the air. In addition, any solution to the community's funding woes must be a long-term one. No one wants to see a reprise of the Liberals' gutting of the previous government's funding plan and all the hardship that created, he said.

Guberman said the Liberals and New Democrats appear philosophically opposed to government funding, and based on the attitude of Ontario voters, it doesn't appear they will pay a political price for that position. But he's hopeful a solution can be crafted that addresses the parties' concerns.

One of the attitudes that will need to be addressed is one often expressed by the provincial party leaders, who contend that public education must remain their top funding priority, he noted.

"We have to find a way to engage the general public on this and show we want fairness when it comes to education in this province," Guberman said.

The current practice should offend Ontarians' sensibilities on questions of fairness and equity. "It's about [government] treating our children as second-class citizens when everyone should be treated equally," Guberman said.

Canadians hold dear the values of fairness, inclusiveness and diversity, yet "by funding other religion, are you supporting the values of diversity we all purport to embrace?" he asked.

Guberman said when the consultation process concludes, the community will co-ordinate its efforts with other communities that are also eager to see a change in the status quo.

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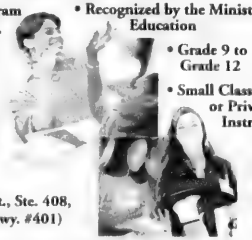
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Day schools face rising costs – and expectations

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The most recent edition of *Our Associated Press*, the newsletter of the Associated Hebrew Schools' parent teacher council, features two items that reflect not only the situation at that particular Jewish day school, but point to front-burner issues in the field of Jewish education today.

The first, and most prominent, is news of a "momentous" – and unspecified – donation by philanthropist Gerda Frieberg to provide tuition subsidies.

The other item – an eye-catching little feature called "Parking Lot Rumour" – pits "rumour" against "reality." In this case, the rumour concerns Associated "losing students to other schools at a very high rate."

The newsletter categorically states that the rumour is false. For the 2005-06 school year, it says, the school's retention rate rose by nearly two percentage points, to 94 per cent, over the previous year.

Attracting and retaining students, and the related issue of how to ease the tuition burden on parents, are perhaps the two biggest challenges facing administrators at Toronto's Jewish day schools.

"I believe that contrary to the United States, [in Canada] cost is at the forefront of a larger percentage of families who are interested in the day school system, but are not in it at the moment," said Mark Smiley, Associated's director of education.

In Canada, he said, Jewish day schools were viewed for a long time as "Jewish public schools," but for a number of reasons, including the "spiralling costs" of day school education, Smiley thinks that era is coming to an end. "I believe parents are expecting higher standards, smaller class sizes and many of the amenities of independent schools."

In the United States, many Jewish day schools no longer see public schools as their main competition, he noted. Instead, they are competing with local private schools, said Smiley, an Associated alumnus who headed a day school in Michigan before returning to his hometown in 2003.

Paul Shaviv

Yet, despite what some see as pressure on Jewish day schools to be more like pricier private schools, accessibility is still an important issue for the organized Jewish community, as it is at schools such as Associated and the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto.

High school tuition at CHAT is $15,150 this year. At schools such as Associated, Bialik Hebrew Day School, Eitz Chaim Day School, Leo Baeck Day School and Netivot HaTorah Day School, annual tuition hovers around the $10,000 mark for students in elementary and middle school. The Toronto Heschel School, which boasts small classes and an arts-based program, is more expensive, with tuition ranging from $12,500 in the lower grades to $13,000 at the middle school level.

CHAT, with more than 1,400 students at two campuses, "never turns down a student because of genuine inability to pay," says Paul Shaviv, the school's director of education.

The school recently launched a legacy endowment fund, "one of whose long-term aims is to help fund tuition assistance through endowment income."

A UJA Federation of Greater Toronto task force is studying how to best support Jewish day schools in order to maximize the number of students who are able to attend them. (Please see story on page B2.)

Of the BJE's annual $12-million budget, approximately $8 million goes toward tuition subsidies.

The subsidy application process, however, is not ideal.

Rabbi Eliot Feldman, vice-principal of the Toronto Heschel School, went through it as a parent.

"I educated four kids, and all were on tuition assistance, because I could not afford to send the kids to the schools I taught at," Rabbi Feldman said. "While the schools were very nice, it's not pleasant to have to put your finances in front of someone else."

Affordability is "a huge issue," especially for the middle class, said Lucy Cohen, head of school at United Synagogue Day School.

As a firm believer in the value of Jewish day schools because of the "work-study ethic" fostered there and the integration of Jewish and general studies, Cohen believes it's important for community and schools to work together to reach out to families whose children are not getting a Jewish education.

Private donations like Frieberg's to Associated may be the way of the future for Jewish schools. A recent $15-million (US) gift to the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School in suburban Washington, D.C., announced in January, set "a new bar for investment in day schools and for reasons to invest," Rabbi Joshua Elkin, executive director of the Project for Excellence in Jewish Education, told JTA at the time. The gift included $10 million for educational programs and a $5 million matching endowment for scholarships.

Continued on page B9

Live & Learn

'The only long-term solution is endowment funding'

Continued from page B8

In Cleveland, Ohio, two Jewish day schools were able to cut their tuition almost in half by bumping up their revenue through private philanthropy, federation funding and voluntary contributions from parents. The program, now in its second year, is expected to continue for at least eight to 10 years – longer if it's deemed successful, according to Gary Gross, president of the Jewish Education Centre of Cleveland.

So far, there has been an increase in transfers of new students from local public schools from fewer than half a dozen before the new funding to 18 or 20 now, said Gross. Also, he added, the student retention rate has increased from about 90 per cent to about 95 per cent.

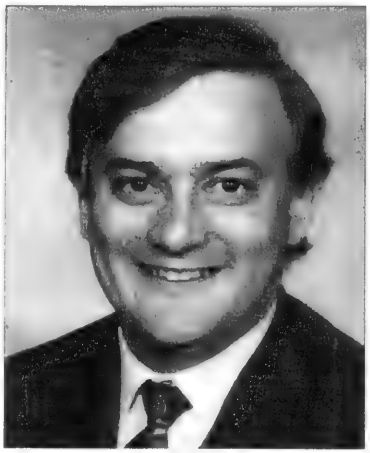
While some educators contend the rising cost of tuition at Jewish day schools has reached crisis proportions, others, like CHAT's Shaviv would venture to say that "perhaps value is more significant than cost to many parents."

In that context, he noted, day schools like his own are increasingly being called upon to provide services that extend beyond the classroom. For some parents, he said, it seems Jewish schools have "replaced the synagogue as the primary institution of Jewish family connection."

At CHAT, Jewish studies staff in particular have been called on for pastoral services in situations that have included death in the family.

• • •

According to statistics from the BJE, whose senior representatives could not be reached for comment, the percentage of school-age children enrolling in Jewish day schools is increasing, although the actual number of students in grades 1 through 8 is slightly down, because of a lower community birthrate.



Mark Smiley

It's difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain how many Jewish students – that is, potential Jewish day school students – are at non-Jewish private schools. Certainly, many are at public schools, whether for financial reasons or not.

But tuition per se is not the only financially pressing issue.

"I think every school, not only in Toronto but across North America, understands that as Jewish schools attracted more and more students from wider circles, so the demands on the schools to be more professional institutions housed in better facilities grew and grew… That has a cost attached to it," said Shaviv.

Because of "the costs of providing the quality of educational programming and facilities that is legitimately expected by today's parents," including rising teachers' salaries, the cost of Jewish education has "risen considerably," he added.

CHAT is building a new site at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's new Vaughan site, as is United Synagogue Day School. The schools are scheduled to open in 2007 and 2008 respectively.

USDS is also embarking on a renovation project at its Bathurst campus; Bialik Hebrew Day School finished a major renovation in 2003; and the Toronto Heschel School is consolidating its two campuses next year into one former public school building that needs to be modified to suit the school's needs.

"Ultimately most schools agree that the only long-term solution is building up endowment funding," said Shaviv.

At Associated, where more than 600 children out of a total of about 1,700 receive tuition assistance at three campuses, the challenge is to try and balance the school's commitment to "excellence in education" with its commitment to accessibility, said Smiley.

Frieberg's gift is "an incredible sign of encouragement," said Smiley. It will enable 45 students to attend the school by offsetting a portion of their tuition.

Smiley noted, however, that there are many more students who are able to attend the school only with financial assistance.

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Homeschooling a small but growing movement

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It was more than 10 years ago when music teacher Sarah Feuerstein noticed something special about some of her young students.

A number of them, she recalled, were more enthusiastic than their peers. They showed a "thirst for knowledge," were mature for their age and were "much more adjusted as far as society goes."

Then it struck her: the one element those students shared in common was that they were all homeschooled.

The homeschooled youngsters were "active learners" and "always curious," unlike most of the public school kids, who sat quietly and passively, expecting to be told what to do, she recalled.

That got her thinking. Maybe her own two sons might benefit from homeschooling. Although her oldest boy rejected the idea – he wanted to remain in school with his buddies – her younger son, Benjamin, was open to the idea.

From grades 5 through 8, Benjamin was homeschooled, returning to the public system for Grade 9, when the desire to be part of a group was too strong to resist.

While he was being homeschooled, Feuerstein said she enthusiastically threw herself "into the whole thing."

She found a list of support groups in Canada and eventually became associated with various associations that promote homeschooling and provide mutual support, such as the Ontario Federation of Teaching Parents.

Over time she created a Jewish homeschool support group (http://groups.yahoo.com/group/jhsc/), which includes 24 Canadian families spread out across the country. Like homeschoolers everywhere, they trade information, provide helpful hints and give updates about new developments.

She found there was no shortage of teaching materials and resources available, including math books that she said are much more effective than those in the public system.

Feuerstein readily accepted the philosophy of homeschooling, which is "to allow natural learning" and not necessarily "produce little geniuses" who outperform kids in public or private schools.

That may mean accelerated learning for some, or slower learning in some subjects for others.

In investigating the homeschool movements, she learned original homeschoolers were largely Christian evangelicals, but the movement had expanded to include numerous secular parents who believed they could provide an enhanced educational experience for their children right at home.

Feuerstein, it seems, joined the homeschooling trend just as it was gathering steam. According to a recent article in the *Sunday Times* of London, the number of British children taught at home has almost doubled in the past five years, echoing a trend in the United States, where five per cent of children are homeschooled.

Continued on page B11

Hebrew tutor supplemented homeschooling

Continued from page B10

A 2001 Canadian report, *Home Schooling: From the Extreme to the Mainstream*, estimated that 80,000 children are being educated in private homes, a figure that represents a doubling of the number "in only a few years."

The report, published by the the Fraser Institute, a free market-oriented public policy organization, noted that homeschooling is legal in all 10 Canadian provinces. Provinces, which have constitutional authority over education, regulate the practice and most provinces require parents to register their homeschooled children with their local school or school board.

Parental dissatisfaction with the public school system is the main reason for the growth of homeschooling, the report stated, along with the desire to accommodate each child's unique learning style and concerns over school safety.

Leah Freedman homeschooled her two children, Josh and Julia, for a total of five years. She started with Josh, now 21, when he was in Grade 7. The year before "he was getting stressed out at [Leo Baeck] school," she said. He loves to learn but was frustrated by the structure and regimentation common in schools, she said.

With Josh's agreement, they embarked on a two-year homeschooling experiment.

"I was very nervous about it," Freedman conceded, even though she prepared extensively to make sure it would run smoothly.

At the start of the year, she cleared a work space on the family's dining room table, obtained all the necessary textbooks and began to teach her son. Within a few weeks, she saw that Josh was not responding to the kind of structure she had created in the home so, being "a very flexible person," she took her cue from how her son learned and created a less-structured environment.

"Fortunately, I did not have a background in education, so I had no preconceptions," she said. "It was a good thing for me. It enabled me to use my imagination."

Josh and his mom adapted to an unstructured form of learning, visiting the library, reading and discussing science magazines on topics such as astronomy and exploring new ideas.

She never felt Josh was falling behind his school contemporaries. "You can tell if your child is learning by listening," she said. "If he came up with new ideas or demonstrated new skills, then I knew he was learning."

Employing the Saxon Homeschool math program helped Josh, who "ended up way ahead in math."

Seeing her brother thriving at home led Julia to request homeschooling. A year after Josh started, she began Grade 5 at home, remaining there through Grade 8. Julia enjoyed a more structured approach – checking off items covered in the day – so for her Freedman employed the Calvert School lesson plan, which provides a daily agenda of items to be covered.

Because there was so little time wasted, often Julia was finished her day's work by 1 p.m. Both kids remained active in after-school programs such as karate, where they made new friends. For Hebrew lessons, the Freedmans sent their children to a tutor.

Both kids returned to the Jewish day school system at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) for Grade 9, when the need to be part of a group beckoned.

Two of Jerry Moscovitch's four children were homeschooled after unsatisfactory experiences in the public and private school systems.

His daughter, Kyra, 12, was homeschooled for two years before finding a public school that would accommodate her sports training schedule. Her 14-year-old brother, Mischa, is in his third year of homeschooling.

Kyra is a nationally ranked figure skater – together with her brother Dylan, they are the Canadian junior pairs champs – and her previous school was "very rigid" in not allowing her to work around her training schedule, Moscovitch said.

School "was the wrong environment for [Mischa], given his personality," he added.

Moscovitch, who runs his own engineering and design firm, thought he and his wife could build a program for his children they could control and that "would educate them in a better way."

The family hired an educational consultant from the private sector who set out a curriculum and who in turn recommended private tutors.

> ***Skating champs' lessons were geared to their sport***

Working one-on-one with the teachers has been beneficial to his children, who were able to study at their own pace and work around their sports schedules.

The kids' activities included science experiments and were project-oriented. Lessons were geared toward their sporting activities. Mischa, an accomplished tennis player, would study the physics and math about the game. Kyra would study the motions and forces involved in skating. Moscovitch said the learning style more closely resembled a university-oriented approach than one found in high schools.

Although Kyra has returned to school, with flexible hours, Moscovitch believes the homeschooling experience has been beneficial.

"I think they're more mature because of what they are doing," he said. "They are more committed... more focused" – they must be so to maintain their busy schedules, he added.

Some homeschooling factoids:

• A 1995 U.S. Department of Education study showed that when tested, children schooled at home have above-average scores.

• Lawrence Rudner of the University of Maryland measured test scores of 20,760 homeschool youths in 50 states and found in every subject and grade level, they did considerably better than public and private school students. Overall test scores for homeschoolers was in the 85th percentile in math (i.e., they scored higher than 85 per cent of their contemporaries); public school students scored in the 50th percentile.

• Having a parent who is a certified teacher had no significant effect on the achievement levels of homeschoolers. However, children of parents with university degrees perform significantly better than parents who don't have a degree.

• Canadian research data found homeschooled students scoring, on average, in the 80th percentile in reading, the 76th percentile in language, and at the 79th percentile in mathematics. The Canadian average is the 50th percentile.

• In 2001, 75 per cent of American universities accepted homeschool students.

• A 1997 U.S. study found that 98 per cent of homeschooled students are involved in two or more outside activities on a weekly basis.

• The average homeschooling family earns above-average income, has above-average levels of education, are two-parent families, have a stay-at-home mom and are above average in size (62 per cent have three or more children).

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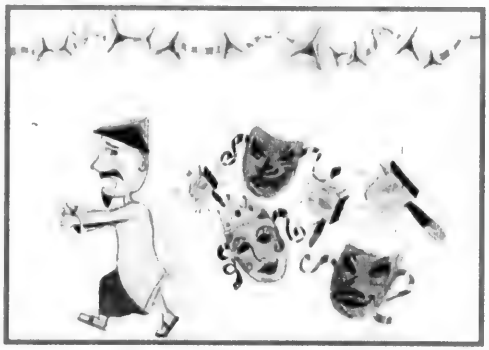
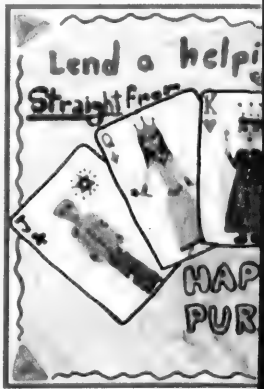


By Ellie Singer, Grade 6

By Lia Loebenberg, Grade 1

By Maxie Bluestein, Grade 5



By Sharice M

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Eli Gotfryd, Miranda Hannon, Tyler Hersco, Brodie Kirsh, Carly L
Samuel Shane Gelock, Liam Gerry, Jack Hanoch, Alisa Oikmine, Michael Oikmine, Tamara Perez, M
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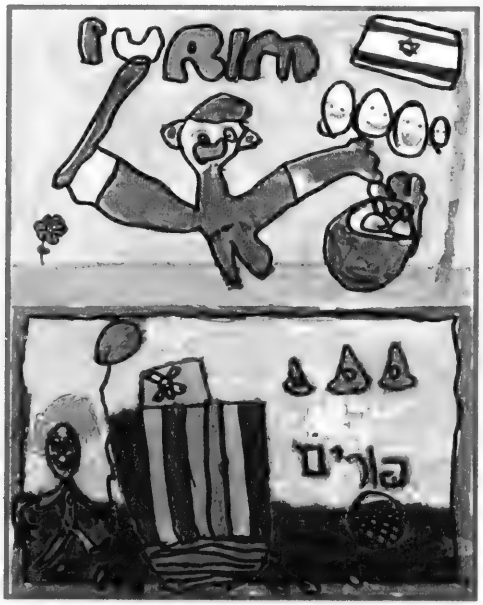

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By Nicole Shapero, Grade 4

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By Ashley Langburt, Grade 3

By Laura Loebenberg, Grade 5

Making learning fun in Toronto's Jewish schools

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

Everyone remembers a favourite teacher – the one you worked so hard to please, the first person you look for at a reunion, the one whose class was fun, who made you laugh. Those great teachers are still around in Toronto's Jewish schools. Whether in spelling, physics or history, many students are learning with a smile.

Steve Baker, a Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) math teacher, believes classroom fun builds something much deeper – mutual trust and respect.

Baker keeps students grinning with word problems starring a dramatic cast including Elvira Beauregard and Magnolia Bulkhead. "I spend all night thinking of them."

Even his tests come with a gag: "If I think the test is going to be tough, I put on a page of jokes as the first page… I tell them, 'Start with the first page. It's very important.' That loosens them up a bit first." And yes, he gives them a mark for reading his jokes.

Much of Baker's humour is self-directed. Once, when he noticed distracted students making cartoons of him, he placed chalk around the classroom and gave them 10 minutes. "I told them, 'Nothing obscene… go up to the board and draw caricatures of me.' Some were brutal. I never knew I could be so ugly!"

Baker says "kids are more interested in knowing that you care than they are in caring what you know." This means he will tune in to other events in their lives. "There are times I'll cut class a bit short when I know they have a huge test coming up next period."

Excellent teachers don't all clown around, says Catherine Gitzel from the Teacher of Excellence Awards for Toronto's Jewish Day Schools (www.teacherawards.org), but "the majority of recipients have the word 'fun' in their nomination." Humour, she says, helps kids feel teachers know them "beyond the classroom door."

One example is 2005 winner Nadia Moldaver, who nicknames all her students. "Kids say the nicknames last for life," Gitzel says. Moldaver uses wacky spelling sentences in her Grade 5 Bialik classroom. "Kids break out laughing during dictation," Gitzel says.

Bialik teacher uses wacky spelling sentences

Moldaver, whose past students often come back for hugs, says nicknames are "a way of… allowing them to feel special." But she cautions that although breaking the ice is important, kids "can tell when you're being fake, trying too hard, probably better than adults can."

Eli Honig, a 25-year science teacher at CHAT, also believes a relaxed atmosphere helps learning sink in. "I don't like to have them in straitjackets."

Honig uses Slinkies in the classroom and pioneered physics trips to Canada's Wonderland. He believes kids appreciate your "laughing with them and at yourself."

Of the Wonderland trips, he says, at first, "the kids thought it was a con job… but it was all under the auspices of learning. There were demands placed on them.

"You have a responsibility to make sure that it goes beyond fun," he says, quoting Einstein: "'Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler'… Don't compromise it by making it only fun."

Baker agrees that kids need a basic foundation, which is where the soup cans and basketballs come in. "I try to concretize things." For example, they may talk about investing bar or bat mitzvah money. Parents call him, thrilled that their kids are reading the business section.

Baker, who began his career teaching special education in the Jane-Finch area, also believes relaxation opens doors.

"Kids are uptight – 'I might make a mistake.' If you don't take risks in math and science, there are very few things you can learn." He intersperses the basics with "math tricks" and cartoons.

Humour is even more important in special education, he says. "These kids have… an uphill battle to begin with."

But even mainstream students can have "math phobias," and fun helps overcome obstacles, he says, and draw out students who "don't have a long history of overwhelming success."

Baker, whose seven years at CHAT followed 18 years at United Synagogue Day School, also runs an after-school fitness program. His message: "What's important to them is important to you. Go to school plays, drama club, committees… If the kids are putting on a talent show…show up."

Continued on page B15

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Humour is 'powerful' for teachers

Continued from page B14

But he draws a careful line. "You're not their friend, you're their teacher… There are lots of ways to show you care, to create an atmosphere of mutual respect… without crossing any inappropriate boundaries."

Gitzel emphasizes that humour is just one element of a great teacher – but a powerful one. It makes "students want to keep going back. They go in anticipating humour – and also learning."

A fun teacher, she says, can change a student's mindset from "I need to get an A" to "We can enjoy this journey of education together."

CHAT math teacher Steve Baker, seen at left in the classroom and at right with student Jonah Muscat-Brown, likes to show his playful side.

Serious play at York University

Jennifer Jenson has a job my 11-year-old son would envy – she studies videogames. The assistant professor of pedagogy and technology at York University believes videogames offer students a "sandbox" – a safe place to try out new possibilities, even if those possibilities lead to failure.

"We hate failure in education," Jenson says. Playing a game, you can "try over a million times until you get it exactly the way you want it. Educators don't do that; [we] don't have time.

"Play can be fun but serious at the same time."

She has developed a game called Contagion, using a hypothetical outbreak modelled partly on SARS to teach kids about health care.

Videogames – "not shoot-em-ups," – even turn up in English classes, where students analyze their narrative as they would novels. "They're so familiar with the medium, they're actually able to be more critical."

She says "we find play scary because it goes dangerous places… but those are actually the most productive, interesting places that learning happens." She'd love to see educators creating "opportunities for these kinds of playful immersions, and not just through videogames."

Given the number of educators at a recent interdisciplinary International Conference on Digital Games Research in Vancouver, she sees a "real push to more critically and academically look at videogames – much the way we did 25 years ago with TV and film."

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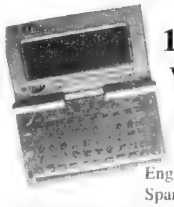

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Teaching Israel to a new generation

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

The current generation of elementary students is unique in that many have actually been to Israel.

When he asks students how many have been, most hands go up, says Rabbi Elliot Diamond, principal of Jewish studies at Netivot HaTorah Day School. "They're familiar with parts of the land [and] may have family members living there, brothers and sisters studying in yeshiva."

Simona Dayan, Rabbi Diamond's counterpart at Bialik Hebrew Day School, says the same is true at her school. "Many have visited Israel more than once. Kids start by telling us where they've visited, where relatives live." Beginning with students' enthusiasm, she says, helps instil Israeli ruach in almost every facet of the school.

Though today's students may "have visual images in their mind," Rabbi Diamond says, and feel "more connected" than in past, their understanding isn't necessarily complete. But that emotional connection is an excellent starting point.

Both schools place Israel front and centre, despite different ideologies. With roots in Labour Zionism, Bialik emphasizes the language and culture of modern Israel. "When kids leave Bialik," Dayan says, "they have a lot of knowledge and spirit."

Despite their different approaches, an overwhelming love of Israel is tangible in both schools. From the construction-paper almond trees in Netivot's lobby, bursting with the blossoms that herald Israel's spring, to a student-built Jerusalem inside Bialik's front door, they're clearly sharing a passion that can only broaden and enhance students' own experiences.

Netivot is founded on principles of religious Zionism that hold that "the establishment of the state has political, but also religious, significance... The modern State of Israel is a homeland to the Jewish people," Rabbi Diamond says.

At the school, Israel takes on the friendly face of teachers and other dynamic religious Israelis. In addition to many resident Israelis, the teaching staff includes four pairs of shlichim – emissaries brought to Toronto by the Jewish Agency. They not only teach language, Rabbi Diamond says, but also bring "personal experiences, which they share... throughout the year – not just connected to any one curriculum topic."

They infuse the school with contemporary "attitudes, language, excitement passion," he says. Four Bnot Sherut girls, 19-year-olds performing one-year national service, tutor and offer cultural programs, exemplifying contemporary Israel, "teaching phrases that you'd hear in the Israeli streets." Two other young women from the Bnei Akiva religious youth movement teach a unique course on modern Israel.

Continued on page B24

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Live & Learn

Is early preschool necessary?

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

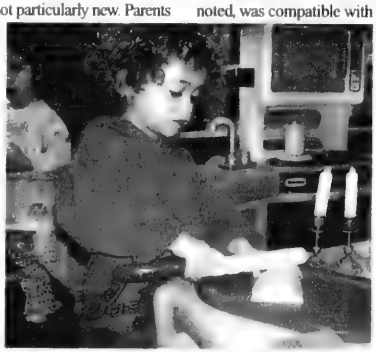
It's the first day of junior kindergarten and little Yossi or Rivkeh is excited to be there. So are you, as the day marks the start of your four-year-old's formal education.

But hold on a minute. In talking with other moms and dads, you notice that a lot of other children have been going to "school" for two years now.

Hmm. You thought you were giving your little one a healthy start by enrolling him or her in school at four, but now panic may be setting in with the thought that he or she may have fallen two years behind the other kids.

Should you be concerned?

Early childhood education (ECE) is not particularly new. Parents have been sending their kids to ECE schools for some 20 years now, and some countries think so highly of it that they fund full-day preschools. Sweden, for one, has a government-supported, municipally operated preschool program for all children. The Swedish government sees its preschool system as the first step in children's long-term education.



Gabi Maresky prepares for a Torah Tots Preschool Shabbat program.

In Canada, school for children at age two or three is not mandatory, although Ontario does regulate preschools through the Day Nurseries Act. In Toronto, there are a lot of programs available for kids from about 2½ to four the traditional age they attend junior kindergarten.

Educators contacted by *The CJN*, including those who operate preschools and who have an interest in encouraging parents to send their children to one, agree that parents are very anxious about their children's education. At the same time, while they extol the virtues of early childhood education, they also agree that moms and dads are capable of providing, at home, the intellectual encouragement, developmental stimulation and enriched environment that children need to thrive.

But, they add, preschool programs for two- and three-year-olds have the added benefit of providing an enriched educational environment that few households can easily match.

So how necessary are preschools for two- and three-year-olds, and do they provide a long-term educational benefit?

Martha Friendly, senior research associate in the childcare resource and research unit, Centre for Urban and Community Studies at the University of Toronto, said junior kindergarten geared for four-year-olds has been around since the 1950s and has become so widespread that 95 per cent of children attend at that age.

The move to start children's education even earlier has been gaining ground in recent years, whether in full-day or half-day programs, she said.

Educators widely recognize that "ECE is a good thing for children at that age," and parents, particularly those in the middle class, are increasingly eager to enrol their youngsters in ECE programs, Friendly said.

"Probably, it's more common now to go to that kind of program, but it is not a new idea." Three-year-olds attended preschool programs as early as the 1870s, she said.

Researchers in France found that the sooner children started in preschool, the better they did in Grade 1 – at least as measured by the rate at which they were able to continue in Grade 2. Children in France are more likely to be kept back a year than they are here, she said, but the earlier they started a full-day preschool program, the less likely they were to have this happen.

An American study indicated that for low income kids, preschool provided measurable benefits as well. Children did much better in school in subsequent years, Friendly said, adding, however, that the quality of the preschool is an important factor in those results.

Friendly noted that most of the research in this field examined full-day rather than half-day programs.

A good preschool will not be regimented but will have children engaged in what they are doing, playing co-operatively and participating in age-appropriate activities under the supervision of trained teachers. Preschools help children develop their fine and gross motor skills and learn to use language, she said.

"It's really a great thing for children to go to these programs. I think it would be the unusual parent who could provide [a full range of activities]... It is an additional experience [parents] can give their child."

A 2002 report, *The Early Years Study Three Years Later*, by Margaret McCain and Fraser Mustard, surveyed other studies on ECE and noted that a 1970 British report "found that preschool programs and parenting practices were important predictors of the mobility of children from all social classes." That finding, the researchers noted, was compatible with an American study that showed clearly "the effect of improvement in the early years on better outcomes in school and adult life."

Regina Lulka, principal of the Montessori Jewish Day School, said the ultimate goal at the school, which serves 98 children from age 2½ to 10, is to get "them to love learning."

The school helps its youngest students learn through movement, manipulation of objects and co-operative and social learning, she said.

The youngest children are in the same room with four- and five-year-olds, which allows the older ones to develop leadership practices and create a "respectful, helpful" environment.

The Montessori method, revolutionary when it was introduced some 100 years ago, allows children to learn at their own pace with objects and toys of interest to them, Lulka said. That can be duplicated in a home setting, she acknowledged, but a preschool program gives parents and children a welcome break from each other while permitting children to learn with their peers.

Parents who can't afford preschool fees can duplicate the schools' benefits if they provide their children with a stimulating and enriched learning environment, she added.

Goldie Plotkin, director of Torah Tots Nursery School, a preschool with 140 children from 2½ to five years old, said some youngsters benefit more from being at home with their parents.

Regardless of whether they are in school or at home, children must feel loved and secure for them to learn and develop. Academic expertise delivered in a preschool is important, "but it can't take the place of the love and nurturing and warmth of a mother and father," she said.

A preschool can supplement that environment, and she advises parents who are searching for a preschool to look beyond its physical facilities and examine the school's environment.

Children age two and up are developing rapidly, but they need to feel confident, secure and loved to benefit from preschool, she said.

If those criteria are met, then the facilities available at quality preschools can make a difference – whether it's a sand table, a water table or a sensorial activity (where kids feel objects like pasta and "goop"). Activities like finger painting, cooking, baking, music and art help children learn as well, she said.

Plotkin believes "preschool children need to spend lots of time at home" and a preschool should serve as an extension of the development they enjoy there.

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No set Holocaust curriculum in public schools

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

For many years, Faigie Libman, 71, one of the youngest Holocaust survivors from Kaunas, Lithuania, spoke little about her experiences.

Now, she says, she doesn't stop.

As a youngster, she lived in the Kaunas ghetto with her parents and grandparents, and spent time in Stutthof concentration camp, as well as four labour camps.

"I never talked about my life until I retired from Associated Hebrew Schools, where I taught junior kindergarten for 26 years.

"I was heartbroken to leave the classroom, and since then, I've talked constantly."

Hundreds of students have heard her speak. Her speaking engagements are arranged through the Holocaust Education and Memorial Centre of Toronto, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, and a public school in Brampton once gave her a $1,000 cheque to donate to the centre, she says.

"One Catholic school sent me a letter thanking me 'for sharing and touching their hearts,' and at Humberside Collegiate I got a standing ovation.

"A student came up to me with tears in her eyes and told me that her grandfather came from Lithuania. When she asked him why he didn't help the Jews, he told her he wasn't allowed. I told this girl that she could be a leader now and prevent such a thing from happening again. I said she should always remember me, and tell her children and grandchildren."

Libman has spoken to church groups and to students from Grade 4 to university. "Wherever I'm asked to go, I go."

She made the decision to start talking, she says, "because I have to make sure [these students] know what hatred and prejudice can do. The students are our future."

In her presentation, she says, she talks about the Righteous Gentiles so all "students see that they can do something.

"I also show them a newspaper article about [the war criminal] Helmut Rauca. I actually saw him at the Kaunas ghetto in 1941. When he was arrested in 1982, I relived everything. I was so devastated that I locked myself in my room [for days].

"I never know who I'm going to touch. The truth is that the night before I speak, I can't sleep. I never know how the kids will react, but when I finish talking and begin taking questions, I realize that I've done something special."

Roz Lofsky, who teaches English as a second language at A.Y. Jackson Secondary School, said she taught an extensive unit on the Holocaust when students still attended OAC.

"About 20 years ago, there was a real push to teach the Holocaust. [Former] superintendent Morry Patt had a huge interest in it. A curriculum was written, money was given for professional development, and schools were encouraged to teach it."

Then the curriculum changed, Lofsky says. "Somehow the thrust to teach the Holocaust stopped and teachers had to fit it in when they could. There is no encouragement now.

"Students spend a day or two on it in Grade 10 history, but it's offered nowhere else unless the teacher decides."

It is "essential" for students to learn about the Holocaust, she says, "because they must learn how low humans can go. They have to be vigilant. It's important for them not to be passive bystanders. A lot of people just let the Holocaust happen, and that is an important message. They must take a stand."

Currently, she says, there is no Holocaust curriculum in public schools. "Things might be looking up, however," she adds. Last year, the UJA Federation's Holocaust education committee, of which Lofsky is a member, "offered a teachers' seminar but had to cancel because too few people signed up. This year, we offered it again and 75 teachers enrolled."

Lesley Shore, an assistant professor at University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), has a special interest in Holocaust education, and teaches a course called Anne Frank and the Writing of the Adolescent Self.

"Schools are not compelled to teach about the Holocaust, but the Ontario curriculum does leave the possibility open.

"With an absence of curriculum, however, the teachers seem to do nothing about it. My experience tells me that [many teachers] tend to stay away from a difficult topic.

"There are teachers, though that do teach it, and amazingly they're not all Jewish. They feel a moral obligation to carry it forward."

Shore mounted an exhibit on Anne Frank in OISE's library last year, and took the dean of her school to see *Paper Clips*, the movie about students from Whitwell, Tenn., who collected six million paper clips representing the six million Jews killed by the Nazis.

She insists that students from Grade 5 and up should be learning about the Holocaust. "But teachers need to be trained. I'm doing all I can, but I feel like I'm holding up the sky."

SIDDUR TIME: Above, from left, Grade 1 student Leah Kanee, teacher's assistant Elana Newstead, and Rebecca Feldman are all smiles at United Synagogue Day School's siddur ceremony. Inset, Casey Levitt. [Sheila Miller photo]

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From left, Jordana Wasserman, Maya Dobner and Ben Share, Grade 5 students at Leo Baeck Day School, stand beside biography cards provided by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Students research individual Holocaust victims

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Grade 5 students at Leo Baeck Hebrew Day School recently learned about the Holocaust in a very personal way.

Their language arts teacher, Danielle Ryval, provided them with biography cards from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and each student researched the life of the person on his or her card.

"These cards were about survivors, victims, freedom fighters or Righteous Gentiles. Students took what information they had on their cards and continued their research in books.

"My objective was to have the students personalize the stories. Six million is an overwhelming number, but by following the story of one person, it becomes more authentic to them," Ryval says.

Students were instructed to find out about the person's hometown and about the Jewish community before the war, she says.

"The students really got into this project. Some had a little knowledge about the Holocaust, and some have grandparents connected to the Holocaust, and were ready to explore the topic further.

"[These cards] provided a foundation for the kids to begin learning about their history. It opened their minds and hearts, and helped them appreciate their grandparents' history. It is a huge concept and we have to start teaching it slowly."

She also had her students write an oath, she says, about not forgetting the past. "I'm trying to teach kids to be better people. I want them to know that they can make a difference to other people's plight."

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School says it's making great strides to provide more choices

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

If it seems like every other Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto graduate becomes either a doctor, lawyer or businessperson, it may not be a coincidence.

Elysse Zarek, a 2001 CHAT graduate who has a bachelor of journalism degree from Ryerson University, and Mitchell Marcus, a theatre actor and producer with his own theatre company who graduated from CHAT six years ago, believe that many of their peers ended up in more conventional professions partly because of the limited information and choices provided to them by CHAT's guidance department.

When it came time to decide which university and what program Zarek should apply for, CHAT's guidance counsellors didn't seem to know much about schools other than the University of Toronto and York University, she said.

She recalled that when she inquired about Ryerson and its renowned journalism program, her guidance counsellors seemed uninformed about it, and she felt discouraged from applying there because Ryerson didn't have a large number of Jewish students.

"I was really persistent about getting the information. I had to make it clear to them that I was serious about it," Zarek said, adding that only after she insisted on getting it did she receive help in pursuing that path.

"In retrospect, it would have been nice if they knew more about other schools and gave me more options," she said.

Marcus also said that students tended to be directed into conventional professions by default – "specifically in terms of the options [guidance counsellors] give."

He said that as a student who was very involved in acting and theatre, when it came time to decide what program or school would be the best fit for him, he was left uninformed about his choices.

"When I left CHAT, I didn't know what 'arts' was at university. I thought it was a major in itself, which it's not."

He said he was completely unaware that there were many majors to choose from in the arts and fine arts streams, and that the two are different.

But Margaret Klompas, head of CHAT's guidance department, said that every year the school organizes a career day for Grade 11 students, with nine or 10 different panels in which professionals from many different fields speak about what they do and what a typical day is like for them.

Klompas said the focus used to be more on business, law and medicine, but it was changed because the guidance department felt it was important to expose students to a wider variety of careers.

"We try to give them a view of what's out there," Klompas said.

"If you think of who we're inviting [to career day] – a chef, a musician, a social worker, a publisher, an engineer… – we're not speaking with just the conventional professionals."

Marcus, who has spoken at CHAT's career day in the "arts" room, feels that having only one room for both "arts" and "fine arts" – which together offer more majors than any other single faculty at most universities – is not enough.

Mitchell Marcus

"There shouldn't be one room of arts [and] two of medicine… That is so disproportionate to what universities offer. It should be six rooms of arts that are grouped together in interesting ways," Marcus said.

"One thing that is lacking is that when it comes to filling out those applications, I do think that there is a bit of information missing about what the options are, that there are schools that exist outside of [the University of Western Ontario], York, U of T and McGill [University]."

Marcus said that although performance and theatre had always been a big part of his life, when it came time to make his important choice, he knew he didn't want to go into a theatre program.

He ended up at York's Schulich School of Business, but dropped out after his first year. He later graduated from York with a degree in fine arts and cultural studies.

He said that if he had been aware of all his options and had been told about programs such as theatre management, he may not have wasted a year in business school.

"This is why I like to go back [to CHAT] and lecture on career day," Marcus said. "If you don't want to get a business degree… there are a million different options."

Although Marcus is critical of CHAT's guidance department, he is confident that counsellors are not intentionally steering students to become doctors, lawyers and businesspeople.

"No one ever said to me, 'You shouldn't do theatre, look at this medicine program,'" he said.

"I don't think they're trying to foster a community of businessmen."

However, Marcus does feel that not enough is being done to guide students who don't have a clear idea of what they want to do after high school.

"Too many of my friends ended up arbitrarily in political science or in one of the programs you take because you don't know what you want to do.

"If they had maybe really sat down and thought about it, and had somebody to work through it with them to say, 'What are your interests, let's look at things that might interest you,' they might not have just gone to Western arbitrarily."

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Students consider pros and cons of out-of-town university

By KYLE GORDON
Special to The CJN

For many high school students, attending university is the next logical step in education, but deciding on the university that will best suit their specific needs can be a daunting and challenging task.

Sari Shawn, 18, was confronted with the decision of where to attend university just last year. Then a Grade 12 student at York Mills Collegiate Institute, in Toronto, Shawn knew that she wanted to go away to university, but she wasn't sure where.

"Staying at home was never something I thought of. I wanted to become more self-sufficient and independent," Shawn said about her decision to attend an out-of-town university.

Shawn's parents outlined a few stipulations before their daughter committed to a university.

"My parents said as long as I was in a good program they would support me wherever I went," she said. They also wanted her to understand that if she decided to attend a university that required a plane ticket, like the popular Dalhousie University in Halifax, she would be limited on how often she could come home during the year.

"Finances were an issue. If I went to Dalhousie, I would only be able to come home once during the year and I wouldn't have had my parents to help me move in," Shawn said.

She began to consider universities that were far enough away from Toronto to give her the independence she required, yet close enough to come home when she needed some family time.

In the end, Shawn decided to follow in the footsteps of her older sisters and attend university in London, Ont. She is currently in first year at Huron University College, the founding college of the University of Western Ontario.

Shawn is pleased with her decision and still believes that going out of town for university is a valuable experience.

"When you go away and you're on your own, there is no one to motivate you except yourself. People can either become lazy, or gain a lot of responsibility and understand that if you don't push yourself, no one will in the real world. If you stay at home, it is so much easier to get your parents to help you with everything," she said.

Zoey Fiksel, a graduate from the University of Toronto, admits that by attending a local university she may not have received some of the life skills that her friends acquired by going away to school, like paying bills and living alone.

She is pleased with her decision to stay in Toronto and proud of the reputable university where she received her bachelor of arts degree, but she would still encourage students to try and go out of town for university. "You can always go away and come back if it's not right for you. I know lots of people who have done that. Try it – what's the worst thing? You can always transfer if it is not for you," she said.

Sari Shawn prepares for exams at University of Western Ontario Huron University College's library. [Halee Donenfeld photo]

Fiksel lived at home for the four years she attended U of T, and while her parents were understanding about her comings and goings and her house was very conducive to schoolwork, she feels she missed out on some of the social aspects of university by not living in residence first year.

"I would suggest res. It is a great way to meet people, and it is a good taste of living away while still living in the city," she said.

Debbie Chadwick, the academic advisor at Huron University College, believes that residency is a good first step toward independence for students leaving home for the first time. Typically, if students are confident in their independence, they will have a smooth transition from high school to university, she said.

"I think the students that have the easiest time are the ones who have gone away for a month or two in the summer and have experienced some separation from their parents," she said.

Residency is a big part of the first year experience. Students who live in residence make a connection with their classmates that off-campus students do not have, added Sharon Robertson, director of student services at Huron University College.

"It is much harder for off-campus students to be part of the experience. In residence, the students study together, eat together and party together. I encourage local students, if they can afford it, to consider living in residence," she said.

In the end, choosing a university is about making the best decision for the student. "Go where you feel you are going to get the education you want and where you feel the best about the programs offered," Robertson added.

But before making any decision, Robertson encourages all students to do their research. Go to the university fairs, ask around and get a feel for how the university presents itself.

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E-mail: info@budocankarate.com
Website: www.budocankarate.com
BudoCan Karate is a traditionally rooted martial arts school designed to help students achieve their Personal Best. Training involves the integration of Mind, Body and Spirit with practical and fun self discipline and self defence training for kids aged 6-60 years old.

KLIM SCHOOL OF ART
1238 Centre St.,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 3M9
Contact: Lindsay Maier
Tel: 905-882-0884 Fax: 905-881-7711
E-mail: lindsay@klimart.com
Website: www.klimschoolofart.com
Klim School of Art is a great environment to explore self expression through the arts! For over a decade, we have been providing the community with children's and adult's art classes, which teach various artistic techniques through a variety of mediums. Klim School of Art is a wonderful and inspirational space to stretch your imagination!

THE RENANIM YOUTH SINGERS
at The Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue, 55 Yeomans Rd.,
Toronto, Ont. M3H 3J7
Director: Susan Michaels
Tel: 416-449-2296 Fax: 416-449-5926
E-mail: susan.michaels@rogers.com
Website: www.renanimchoirs.com
Considered the voice of Jewish youth, this multi-award winning, all denominational choir will represent Canada in Israel next year. Divided into Junior and Senior Ensembles, these auditioned vocalists earn community hours enhancing functions throughout metro. During weekly rehearsals students develop literacy, vocalization and musicianship skills along with self-confidence and the essential ity of community.

HIGH SCHOOLS

CHAT
(Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto)
Director of Education:
Paul J. Shaviv, MA, M.Phil

Cont'd on Page B19

Directory of Education Advertisers cont'd

Cont'd from Page B18

High Schools Cont'd

Tanenbaum Campus, 200 Wilmington Ave., Toronto, Ont. M3H 5J8
Tel: 416-636-5964 Fax: 416-636-7717
E-mail: office@chattc.org
Website: www.chat-edu.ca

Richmond Hill Campus, 51 Wright St., Richmond Hill, Ont. L4C 4A2
Tel: 905-787-8772 Fax 905-787-8773
E-mail: office@chatrh.org
Website: www.chat-edu.ca
Toronto's Community High School (gr. 9-12) providing courses leading to university entrance. A comprehensive Jewish Studies program is an integral part of our school including a community service requirement. Our reputation is based on individual care for every student. We offer an extensive program of sports and extra-curricular activities. Please visit our website www.chat-edu.ca - be sure to click on The CHAT Experience.

ULPANAT OROT GIRLS' SCHOOL
45 Canyon Ave.,
Downsview, Ont. M3H 3S4
Rosh HaYeshiva: Rabbi Shlomo Gemara
Menahel: Rabbi Eitan Haglili
General Studies Principal:
Mr. Frank Samuels
Executive Director: Jerry Solomon
Tel: 416-638-5434 Fax: 416-638-7905
Orthodox Jewish Girls' school providing excellent Judaic and General studies in a vibrant, caring, religious Zionist environment. Jewish Studies are offered in Hebrew with an Ulpan program for those who need it. 4 year General studies program inspected by the Ministry of Education.

YESHIVAT BNEI AKIVA OR CHAIM
159 Almore Ave.,
Downsview, Ont. M3H 2H9
Rosh HaYeshiva: Rabbi Shlomo Gemara
Gen. Studies Principal: Mr. Frank Samuels
Mashgiach: Rabbi Niel Applebaum
Executive Director: Jerry Solomon
Tel: 416-630-6772 Fax: 416-398-5711
Provides excellent Judaic and general studies program in a vibrant, caring, religious, Zionist environment. Offers computers, guidance, modern Bert Midrash and gym. Jewish studies taught in Hebrew; 4 year general studies program inspected by Ministry of Education.

Pre-Schools

BETH SHOLOM SYNAGOGUE
1445 Eglinton Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M6C 2E6
Contact: Barbara Lev
Tel: 416-783-6103
Playtime Nursery for Parents, Grandparents & Tots. Programs for children ages 1-2 and 2-3 Mon. thru Thursday morning programs available instructive, creative programs with adult participation, holiday celebrations, arts & crafts, music, stories and refreshments. Bond with your children, grandchildren and interact with other adults, to form lasting friendships.

J&F HOME CHILD CARE SERVICES
211 Consumers Rd., Ste. 205,
Toronto, Ont. M2J 4G8
Executive Director: Sandra Tummino
Tel: 416-494-5696 Fax: 416-494-6147
Website: www.j-f.ca
J&F Home Child Care Services is looking for enthusiastic individuals to provide day care from home. We will provide advertising, equipment, excellent pay, program ideas and workshops. For more information call us or visit our website.

LOVING CARE CENTRE
601 Clark Ave. W.,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 8E1
Supervisor: Devorah
Tel: 905-764-8863 Fax: 905-764-0743
Offering a fun, nurturing English/-Hebrew/Heritage education, 18 months through Sr. Kindergarten Graduates have proven success in Gr. 1 readiness in public & Jewish day school systems. Letterland, Aleph Bet, Early Math & Science skills are emphasized. ECE & Certified Hebrew Teachers. Full course nutritious meals served daily. Hours: 7:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m., 12 months/year, includes a special 2 month summer camp program.

MENORAH NURSERY INC.
4300 Bathurst St.,
Downsview, Ont. M3H 3R4
Also at: 18 Reiner Rd.
Administrator: Helen Dodick
Tel: 416-638-6910
Menorah Nursery is a place where each child has an opportunity to learn through play with other children, with appropriate toys and materials, and where their mental, emotional, and physical growth is fostered. Choosing Menorah Nursery, assures you that we will provide a warm, stimulating and secure place for your child.

TEMPLE SINAI NURSERY SCHOOL
210 Wilson Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M5M 3B1
Principal: Bibi Goldberg
Tel: 416-487-3281 Fax: 416-487-5499
At Temple Sinai Nursery School parents actively participate in their children's education! Each month spend a morning helping in your child's classroom. Witness your child's growth and development in all areas of our enriched curriculum while meeting their new friends. Join us on trips and special events! Call for more information.

TORAH TOTS PRE-SCHOOL
83 Green Lane,
Thornhill, Ont. L3T 6K6
Director: Goldie Plotkin
Tel: 905-886-0420
The objective of Torah Tots Pre-School is to provide your child with an environment that enhances social and emotional skills, fosters independence, creates a love for learning and readies the children for higher learning. Our Pre-School progams incorporate a range of sensory, educational and developmentally appropriate activities that integrate Jewish values with the development of secular skills. The structure of thematic play makes for flexibility, supporting teachers as they create a program to meet their children's interest. Torah Tots now boasts a very successful Montessori segment for our Nursery and JK classes. Space for 2006-7 still available in some classes.

Private Schools

ACADEMY FOR GIFTED CHILDREN - P.A.C.E.
12 Bond Cres.,
Richmond Hill, Ont. L4E 3K2
Director: Barbara Rosenberg
Tel: 905-773-0907 Fax: 905-773-4722
The Academy for Gifted Children - P.A.C.E. provides high-powered learning experiences to challenge bright minds and ensure intellectual growth and achievement, while simultaneously addressing the social-emotional needs of the child. P.A.C.E. offers a differentiated education, built on greater depth and breadth of instruction, and a more complex approach to learning.

EARLY EXPRESSIONS PRIVATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
3375 Yonge St., Ste. 1,
Toronto, Ont. M4N 2M6
Director: Stacey Goodman
Tel: 416-932-9105 Fax: 416-368-5341
Early Expressions is a private elementary day school for grades 1-3. The school is founded by Stacey Goodman, a dedicated and experienced classroom teacher and early childhood interventionist. A secure, fun, and interactive environment, Early Expressions offers more than the typical school setting. Come see what makes us special.

THE STERLING HALL SCHOOL
99 Cartwright Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M6A 1V4
Advancement Director: Cathy Reeves
Tel: 416-785-3410, x239 Fax: 416-785-9816
E-mail: admissions@sterlinghall.com
The Sterling Hall School offers a secure environment for the education of boys in mind, body and spirit. Our supportive community and small classes nurture and challenge the students to become critical thinkers, self-directed learners and successful contributors. SHS is an independent school for boys from JK-Gr. 8.

Special Education

ARROWSMITH SCHOOL
245 St. Clair Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M4V 1R3
Admissions Director: Annette Goodman
Tel: 416-963-4962 Fax: 416-963-5017
E-mail: info@arrowsmithschool.org
Website: www.arrowsmithschool.org
Arrowsmith School is an independent school situated in mid-town Toronto that is dedicated to helping students with learning disabilities. The Arrowsmith Program is based on 25 years of sound neuroscientific research demonstrating that it is possible to treat learning disabilities by indentifying and strengthening weak cognitive capacities.

DR. ABRAHAM SHORE SHE'ARIM HEBREW DAY SCHOOL
Sara & Sam Hennick Education Centre
4588 Bathurst St.,
Toronto, Ont. M2R 1W6
Principal: Kathy Manoim
Executive Director: Faigie Davids
Tel: 416-633-8247 Fax: 416-633-4783
Provides special education for children with learning disabilities and attention deficit disorder, focusing on the needs of the whole child in academic, social, organizational and other areas for both Judaic and general studies. Special programs include: social skills, computer skills, Feuerstein thinking skills, art therapy, music therapy, parent education and support.

REENA
Toby & Henry Battle Developmental Centre
927 Clark Ave. W.,
Thornhill, Ont. L4J 8G6
President & CEO: Sandy Keshen
Tel: 905-889-6484 Fax: 905-889-3827
Reena is a non-profit social service agency supporting individuals with a developmental disability, and their families through residential and social work programs. Community day, evening, respite and Sunday programs focus on recreation, education, life skill/vocational training, support and leisure. Charitable donations can be made through the Reena Foundation at 905-763-8254, ext. 3033, or toll free 877-324-4141, ext. 3034.

THE DUNBLAINE SCHOOL
21 Deloraine Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M5M 2A8
Contact: Charleen Pryke
Tel: 416-483-9215 Fax: 416-483-0903
Website: www.dunblaineschool.com
A non-profit school, Gr. 1-8, seeking to maximize the potential of students with learning disabilities in a nurturing environment. Aims to prepare students for re-introduction into public and private school systems. Dunblaine features individualized programs for each child emphasizing the development of social skills, self-awareness and building self-esteem.

UJA FEDERATION
BOARD OF JEWISH EDUCATION
4600 Bathurst St., Ste. 232,
Toronto, Ont. M2R 3V3
Tel: 416-633-7770 Fax: 416-633-7535
E-mail: bje@ujafed.org
Website: www.bjetoronto.org
The UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education, is Toronto's central Jewish educational organization dedicated to preserving, enriching and promoting the quality of Jewish education in our schools. Established in 1949, the BJE now serves more than 70 day and supplementary schools, 1,700 educators and 17,000 students.

Supplementary Schools

AHAVAT YISRAEL HEBREW SCHOOL
54 Glen Park Ave.
Toronto, Ont. M6B 2C2
Principal: Mrs. Leslie Shapiro
Tel: 416-781-8088 Fax: 416-781-4456
Provides a creative, enjoyable learning experience for those interested in a once or optional twice a week program. The school, in its 17th year, offers an enriching curriculum of reading, writing, language, prayers, Israel and holidays. Special events include challah baking, Purim party and Passover seder. Remedial and enrichment program available. Affiliated with Board of Jewish Education.

ATERET SHALOM HEBREW SCHOOL at Yorkhill Elementary School, 350 Hilda Ave. (at Clark), in Thornhill. Also coming to **Thornhill Woods Public School 341 Thornhill Woods Dr.** *starting Sept. 2006*
Administrator: Sadie Domb
Website: www.ateret.ca
Kids learn & have fun too on Sundays, JK to Gr. 7 & Bar/Bat Mirtzvah prog. Low tuition fees, 1 or 2 days a wk. Kids love Hebrew, holidays & celebrations. ***New!* Parents & Tots Hebrew Fun & Learn** at Thornhill Woods starting **Sundays, March 26-June 4** (9 sessions). A Parent & Tots class with a Jewish twist! Parents and children are invited to explore Jewish holidays and traditions through art, games, lesson & play in a warm and caring environment.

BEIT RAYIM SYNAGOGUE AND HEBREW SCHOOL
9711 Bayview Ave.,
Richmond Hill, Ont. L4C 9X7
Tel: 905-770-7639 Fax: 905-770-5635
E-mail: school@beitrayim.org
Website: www.beitrayim.org
Beit Rayim Hebrew School delivers a curriculum that focuses on Jewish values and concepts to build knowledgeable Jews. Our students learn by doing. Education is a collaborative effort that involves the energy of dedicated teachers, committed parents and motivated students. Beit Rayim Synagogue and School is located in York Region.

BETH SHOLOM HEBREW SCHOOL
1445 Eglinton Ave. W.,
Toronto, Ont. M6C 2E6
Principal: Karen L. Goodis, RJE
Tel: 416-783-6103, #225
E-mail: karen@bethsholom.net
Beth Sholom Hebrew School offers small classes, Hebrew language and prayer skills; Judaica, music and outstanding Family Education programs. Enrichment for former day school students; full time special education class for students with special needs and a dedicated professional staff.

BETH TORAH EDUCATION PROGRAMS
47 Glenbrook Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M6B 2L7
Education Director: Elliott Michaelson
Tel: 416-782-4495 Fax: 416-782-4496
E-mail: em.btc@rogers.com
Beth Torah Congregation is committed to offering a positive educational experience to members and non-members alike. We run programs from Gr. 1 -Gr. 10 that emphasize the integration of our heritage in our daily lives. "Adventure Judaism: Education for Jewish Kids Who Want to Stay That Way" teaches a living Judaism for the 21st Century.

BETH TZEDEC CONGREGATIONAL SCHOOL
1700 Bathurst St.,
Toronto, Ont. M5P 3K3
Principal: Elly Bauman
Tel: 416-787-0381, x30 Fax: 416-781-0150
E-mail: congschool@beth-tzedec.org
Beth Tzedec Congregational School is a supplementary school offering an exciting educational experience that encourages family involvement and inspires joy and pride in being Jewish. Classes focus on Hebrew reading, prayer, Bible, holidays and customs, history, and Israel, enabling students to become active, contributing members of the Jewish community.

CONGREGATION DARCHEI NOAM
183 Cocksfield Ave., #4,
Toronto, Ont. M3H 3T4
Rabbi Tina Grimberg
President: Michael Mitchell
Tel: 416-638-4783 Fax: 416-638-5662
Website: www.darcheinoam.on.ca
Our Reconstructionist community is vibrant, egalitarian and inclusive, with a strong commitment to education. Our school provides a liberal Jewish education in a creative and nurturing environment for children in Kindergarten-Gr. 6. The program focuses on Hebrew language, Jewish holidays, values and ethics, Torah and history. Parent participation is encouraged.

DOWNTOWN JEWISH COMMUNITY SCHOOL (c/o Miles Nadal JCC)
750 Spadina Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M5S 2J2
Principal: Joan Schoenfeld
Tel: 416-924-6211, 112 Fax: 416-924-0442
E-mail: joan@djca.org
Website: www.djca.org
Community school, 200+ students, providing sense of appreciation, enjoyment in Judaism; including concepts and skills necessary to live a Jewish life and feel comfortable in a Jewish setting. JK-1: Sunday morning delightful activity-oriented program. Grades 2-7 Sunday only or Sunday/Wednesday options. Unique high school program Wednesday, 7-8:30 p.m., on contemporary teen dilemmas and issues of Jewish identity.

KEREN HATARBUT INSTITUTE
788 Marlee Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M6B 3K1
Director: Joseph Klinger
Tel: 416-787-0197
Offers courses for adults and teenagers in conversational Hebrew, Bible & Prayers & Jewish History for beginners, intermediate and advanced students. All classes are conducted under the guidance of skilled Israeli teachers. The promise is that beginners will speak, read and write Hebrew in 14 sessions.

MORRIS WINCHEVSKY SCHOOL
585 Cranbrooke Ave.,
Toronto, Ont. M5A 2G9
Executive Director: Maxine Harmelin
Tel: 416-789-8602 Fax: 416-789-8981
E-mail: mws@on.aibn.com
Website: www.winchevskycentre.org
Now in our 78th year, our engaging curriculum explores Jewish traditions, identity and heritage through Yiddish culture, history, literature, music, drama and art with a social justice perspective. Our program culminates in a special secular Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Classes are held Sunday mornings for ages 4-13. Families of diverse backgrounds welcome.

ORAYNU CHILDREN'S SCHOOL FOR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM
Bayview-York Mills area, 10:1 ratio
Tel: 416-385-3910
Redefining Jewish celebration for secular, humanist and cultural Jews. School (JK-Gr/7) offers unique, non-theistic study of history, culture, values, Hebrew, music, family education, holidays. 2-year Bar/Bat Mitzvah - exceptional ceremony in English! Children choose personal projects. Interfaith families welcomed, respected; you truly belong. Oraynu ... not your ordinary congregation!

SHAAR SHALOM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
2 Simonston Blvd.,
Thornhill, Ont. L3T 4L1
Supervisor: Hava Greenberg
Tel: 905-889-4975 Fax: 905-889-1575
Highlights: 2 days a week. Intensive Hebrew reading program, excellent Family Education, Arts and Music programs, Remediation and enrichment available, synagogue skills. We are committed to helping children develop the skills and tools they need to become committed adult Jews. SK-Gr. 6 meet Sun. & Wed. Gr. 7 Sat. morning at shul & Wed. at school. Gr. 8 Wed. eve. Affiliated with the BJE and United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. To visit the school, call to make an appointment.

TEMMY LATNER HEBREW SCHOOL
446 Spadina Rd., Ste. 203,
Toronto, Ont. M5P 3M2
Principal: Rifky Karfunkel
Tel: 416-483-0883 Fax: 416-483-6712
The Temmy Latner Hebrew School is an afternoon Hebrew school program at the Forest Hill Elementary School. Your child will love our exciting, stimulating environment, where Hebrew school is fun, without compromising solid learning and growth. Tuesdays 4-6 p.m. SK-Gr. 6. Call now to register!

Tutoring

MATH MASTERS TUTORING SERVICES
4576 Yonge St., Ste. 408,
Toronto, Ont. M2N 6N4
Contact: John Tzelardoni
Tel: 416-223-6284 Fax: 416-223-0065
Whether the student needs improvement, or is excelling in his or her course, Math Masters will provide a program that is beneficial to the learning process. Offering a personalized, one-on-one service, our students experience an increase in academic results, confidence, and self-esteem. For further information, please call 416-223-6284.

Universities

CENTRE FOR JEWISH STUDIES, YORK UNIVERSITY
Vanier 241, York University
4700 Keele St., Toronto, Ont. M3J 1P3
Director: Prof. Sara R. Horowitz
Tel: 416-736-5823 Fax: 416-736-5344
BA Religious Studies (Jewish Studies Stream), BEd (Jewish Teacher Education Program), MEd, MA and PhD (by department), Certificate in Hebrew and Judaic Studies, Exchange Programs in Israel and Europe. Courses in Hebrew Education, Classical Judaism, Philosophy, History, Sociology, Women's Studies, Holocaust, Sephardic Studies, film, Israel and Middle East.

QUEEN'S JEWISH STUDIES PROGRAM
Theological Hall, Rm 234
Kingston, Ont. K7L 3N6
Director: Justin Jaron Lewis, Ph.D.
Tel: 613-533-6369 Fax: 613-533-6879
Website: www.jewishstudies.ca
E-mail: judaism@post.queensu.ca
Jewish Studies at Queen's offers a stimulating interdisciplinary minor to complement any major. With small classes and caring professors, we offer courses in Hebrew, Religion, Philosophy, Classics, History, and English. As the program grows, so does Jewish life in Kingston with 2 congregations and an active Hillel.

FIDDLER ON CHAT'S ROOF

More than 55 actors from the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's southern campus performed to sold-out audiences at the Leah Posluns Theatre earlier this year. From left are students Bonnie Abramsky, Mitch Freed, Joseph Weissgold, Mara Zigler and Emma Freed.

She's off to a great beginning. We're helping to make sure it won't end.
Jewish education has always been the backbone of Jewish life.
That's why UJA Federation's Board of Jewish Education – with an eye to the future – is investing over $11 million in formal and informal Jewish education – more than any other North American Federation.
Just like our children, we're looking to the future.
The future of Jewish life.
UJA FEDERATION
Live generously

Making Israel 'come alive'

Continued from page B16

Special occasions are the best time to feel Israel. "In some ways [holidays are] more intense than… in Israel," Rabbi Diamond says. "We bring part of the Israeli experience to our students." A full-day Yom Ha'atzmaut program, for example, "creates a wonderful flavour of Israel."

The school also often welcomes Israelis with important messages for kids. Capt. Omer Teori, an Israel Defence Forces combat fighter, recently spoke about his experiences as a religious soldier.

"It's having an impact," Rabbi Diamond says. "I think we're really successful. A tremendous amount of kids… go on to spend at least a year in Israel." Many graduates have made aliyah or voluntarily served in the IDF. "Following disengagement, one of our graduates who lived in Gush Katif came to talk to the kids. Graduates have also come to talk about their experiences in the army."

At Bialik, Israel is also about much more than just good grades. Students spend six months preparing for a school-wide Chidon Israel (Israel I Love) competition in which they show off knowledge of every aspect of Israeli life: geography, history, literature, politics. "They know the parties, the ideology… it's important to see Israel as it is today," Dayan says.

The school even boasts a "little piece of Israel" in the five-year-old Israel Interactive Centre (IIC), a classroom, museum and workshop in one, run by Nurith Sela, whose love of the land inspires a range of activities.

There, Grade 4 students build on mapping skills from general studies, creating tactile relief maps of Israel. At this stage, Sela says, "they don't know the [place] names, but they know the shape." Hands-on learning makes Israel "come alive."

Kids even get their hands dirty – using actual rocks and soil from the Negev to create animated movies. Through interdisciplinary problem-solving, they tackle Israel's most pressing issues, such as water shortages. They also create models of familiar Israeli landmarks, which are proudly displayed around the IIC.

Sela says even today's kids still arrive with misconceptions: "They think Israel is tents and camels." Through interactive learning and video-conferencing – joining Israeli kids for a Tu b'Shvat celebration Israel "becomes real," she adds.

Dayan says she'd like to make IIC resources available to the broader community.

A focus on Israel is evident in student work at Bialik Hebrew Day School.

On Campus

DINING OUT ON ISRAEL

The Jewish Law Students' Association at York University's Osgoode Hall Law School held Osgoode's first-ever Israeli Dinner last month. The event included live Israeli music, entertainment and food representing Israel's culture, history and diversity. About 80 law students – both Jewish and non-Jewish – gathered in the school's junior common room to enjoy staples of Israeli cuisine such as bourekas, falafel and olives from the Galilee. Tickets were $5 for students, with all the proceeds donated to Ve'ahavta.

[Dunny Medina photo]

The Canadian Jewish news

CONGRATULATIONS

In honour of your marriage, The Canadian Jewish News is pleased to present you with a 6 month subscription.

Please fill in the requested information and fax to 416-391-0949 or mail to 1500 Don Mills Rd, Suite 205, Toronto, Ontario M3B 3K4

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Province _____ Postal Code _____

Phone number _____

Date of wedding _____

Location of wedding _____

CANADIAN DELIVERY ONLY

Subscription will begin two weeks after receipt of information.

If you wish, please enclose a photo - we'd be honoured to publish it in an upcoming issue.

Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel tov to...

Mazel tov to Sora & Zoli Zimmerman on their 50th anniversary. Wishing you health and happiness. Love, Evelyn, Bernie, Alice, Danny, Arlyn & Danny and 13 grandchildren.

Mazel tov Ruthy Margolese on your 90th birthday March 12. Love, children, Arlene & Allan, Malca & Ken, Mordecai Zev & Esther Nechama, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov to Marjorie & Lorne Gula on the birth of their son Jared Ethan. Proud grandparents are Reisa & Walter Gula and Denis Gagnon.

Mazel tov to Shirel & David Derfel on the birth of Aaron Jordan. Big sister Naomi just adores you!

Happy fourth birthday March 12 to Kellie Jordyn, daughter of Cary & Cindy Pomeranz. Love, Bubbie Henna & Zaidie Irving Pomeranz.

Jeremy Jacobs & Carrie Lindzon-Jacobs happily announce the birth of their son, Ryan Stephen, on Jan. 30. Mazel tov to Ryan's family and friends.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.

JNF
Say it with Trees
"Mazel Tov on your Special Anniversary"
JEWISH NATIONAL FUND
416-638-7200

What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

CJN DATING
MEET YOUR MATCH
www.cjndating.com
powered by JMATCH
JEWISH MATCH INTERACTIVE DATING

What's New deadlines: Monday, March 13, is the deadline for the March 23 issue and Monday, March 20, is the deadline for the March 30 issue issue. PLEASE NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES: Wednesday, March 29, is the deadline for the April 13 issue, Monday, April 3, is the deadline for the April 20 issue and Wednesday, April 5, is the deadline for the April 27 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, March 9

WEEKLY TANACH CLASS

The weekly Beth David Synagogue Tanach class studies the Book of Joshua, Thursdays, 9:15 a.m. The class, conducted in English, uses Hebrew text. Led by **Aaron Nussbaum**, the class approaches the text from both a traditional and critical viewpoint. 416-633-8097.

Saturday, March 11

SINGLES 35+ SERVICE

Singles 35+ are invited to a Shabbat service with **Rabbi Meir Gottesman** at Emuna Shleima Shul, 4120 Bathurst St. Services 9:15 a.m. RSVP 416-785-1395.

HALTON-PEEL SERVICES

B'Nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel, an egalitarian Conservative synagogue in Mississauga and Oakville area, invites the community to join its monthly Shabbat service at 10 a.m., followed by kiddush. For location and info, contact bnaishalom2004@yahoo.ca or **Judi** at 905-469-4344.

THE STORY OF ESTHER

Shir Libeynu Congregation presents "The Story of Esther: The Whole Megillah and Then Some," fun for kids and discussion for the grown-ups, 3-5 p.m. at Miles Nadal JCC. RSVP to 416-465-5488 or shirlibeynu@yahoo.ca.

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

Beth Jacob Congregation presents its final movie and refreshments night for this season with a screening of *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World* starring **Stacy Tracy, Milton Berle, Sid Caesar, Buddy Hackett, Ethel Merman** and **Jonathan Winters**. 8 p.m. 147 Overbrook Pl. $2. 416-638-5955.

PURIM CELEBRATION

The Winchevsky Centre celebrates International Women's Day and Purim with a musical and theatrical cabaret featuring the all-girl klezmer band Pomegranate. The evening will raise funds for the Morris Winchevsky School. 8 p.m. $15. 416-789-5502.

TEMPLE MT. EXCAVATIONS

Aaron Demsky, professor of biblical history at Bar Ilan University, delivers an illustrated lecture on "Leaving No Stone Unturned: The Excavations at the Temple Mount," the history of Jerusalem and its centrality for the Jewish people. 8 p.m. at Congregation Bnai Torah, 465 Patricia Ave. $10. 416-226-3700.

Sunday, March 12

PURIM CARNIVALS

The Winchevsky Centre Community Purim Party takes place on Sunday, March 12, 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Enjoy the puppet play *What Really Happened the Night Esther Met the King!* by storyteller **Judy Shier Weisberg**, Purim songs, giggles and human taschen, costume parade and prizes. Shalach manot activity in co-operation with Ve'ahavta's mobile Jewish response to the homeless. $9. Children under 3 free. 416-789-5502.

Beit Rayim's annual Purim Carnival, 1:30-3:30 p.m., with games, pizza, hamentaschen and prizes. Free. 905-770-7639.

Beth Torah Synagogue Purim Carnival, 5-7 p.m. at 47 Glenbrook Ave. Enjoy games, prizes, costumes, music and food. $5. Bring a non-perishable item for the Passover Food Drive. 416-782-4495.

THEATRE FOR SINGLES 40+

Singles 40+ are invited to the play *Kafka and Son* at the Al Green Theatre, 750 Spadina Ave. at 2 p.m. $10. Call 416-785-1395.

Continued on page 27

BATHURST JCC
PURIM CARNIVAL
****
SUNDAY MARCH 12, 11:30 - 2:00
4588 BATHURST STREET
****
FREE ADMISSION
AFFORDABLE RIDES & GAMES
CARNIVAL RIDES
GAMES & PRIZES
MAGIC SHOWS
BALLOON ANIMALS
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What's New

Continued from page 26

SINGLES BOWLING EVENT

Join Walk and Talk Etc. a walking club for Jewish singles 50+, for an evening at World Bowl, 9 East Wilmot, 5 p.m. Pre-registration required. E-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

CONJOINED TWINS

"Separating Conjoined African Twins: A Jewish Story" with **Dr. Jacob C. Langer** and **Dr. Rachel Spitzer**. The circumstances and ethical issues involved in separating conjoined twins, from both secular and Jewish perspectives, will be addressed. Congregation Darchei Noam, 15 Hove St. 7 p.m. 416-638-4783.

Monday, March 13

PURIM CARNIVALS AND MEGILLAH READINGS

Beth Tzedec's Purim musical *Behind the Megillah: The True Story of Purim*, an exposé of what really happened in Shushan, features a live band. Follows the Megillah reading at 6 p.m. 416-781-3511.

Chabad of Markham's Purim Party features a children's carnival, Russian dance troupe and choir, masquerade, Megillah reading, food and dancing. 6:30 p.m. $5, $25 per family. 905-886-0420.

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation begins Megillah reading at 6:45 p.m., followed by a carnival, 7:30-10 p.m. Includes blow-up bouncers, games, food, great prizes and musical entertainment by Velt. Come in costume. 416-789-3213.

Pride of Israel Synagogue's Power Point Megillat Esther program accompanies the reading of the Megillah on Purim evening at 6:45 p.m. and the morning reading March 14, following 7:30 a.m. services. 416-226-0111, ext. 10 or e-mail ravrhodes@thepride.org.

Congregation Darchei Noam's celebration begins with a Purim story and carnival for children at 6:30 p.m., followed by a Ma'ariv service and the reading of Megillat Esther at 7:30 p.m. The evening concludes with a Purim shpiel, featuring performances by their Hebrew School and B'nai Mitzvah students and light refreshments. Come in costume. 416-638-4783.

Join **Anshei Minsk**'s costumed Megillah reading at 6:45 p.m., followed by a Purim party at 8 p.m. All the hamantaschen you can eat plus other food and drink. Bring the kids and dance all night to a live band. 10 St. Andrew St. 416-595-5723 or reachus@theminsk.com

Tuesday March 14

WOMEN'S MEGILLAH

Join women of all ages as they read Megillah for women, beginning with Shacharit at 9:30 a.m. Megillah reading at 10:15 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation.

Wednesday March 15

THE HAGGADAH

Rabbi Moshe Stern begins a five-week course analyzing the Haggadah. 8 p.m. Tonight and four consecutive Wednesdays. Free. 416-787-1631.

Other news

THE TENTH MAN

Teatron Theatre Productions presents the drama comedy *The Tenth Man* by **Paddy Chayefsky** through Sunday, March 12, on the main stage at the Leah Posluns Theatre. Tickets $15-40. Call 416-855-6651 or visit www.teatrontheatre.com.

DINNER & WINE TASTING

Beth Emeth Brotherhood presents "Dinner and Passover Wine Tasting," Thursday, March 16, 6:30 p.m. $20. Non-members $25. Tickets must be purchased by Tuesday, March 14. Call 416-633-3838.

HONEST REPORTING

Adath Israel Young Business & Professionals Network presents **Dov Smith** of Honest Reporting Canada The evening is for those in their 20s or 30s who want to learn how to promote fair and accurate media coverage of Israel and the Middle East. Free. Thursday, March 16, 8 p.m. Call 416-635-5340 to reserve.

KLEZMER MUSIC

Join Congregation Bnai Torah for an evening of klezmer music with **Brian Katz** and **Jonno Lightstone**. Sunday, March 19, at 8 p.m. Reserved tickets $12. At the door $15. Call **Fern**, 416-226-3700.

NIGHT OF COMEDY

United Synagogue Day School presents "United We Laugh: A Night of Comedy" with Les Aaron and Friends, Monday, March 20, 7:30 p.m. at Leah Posluns Theatre. $50. For information, call **Lorraine Bloom**, 416-224-8737, ext. 175.

DEALING WITH CANCER

The Wellness Library at Baycrest Hospital is hosting a free information session on ways to help and support people affected by cancer. Speakers include **Lois Bloch**, Baycrest social worker, **Macushla Ginivan**, cancer survivor and speaker with the Canadian Cancer Society, and **Rosie Sherman**, cancer survivor and speaker with L'Chaim Cancer Support for Jewish Women. Wednesday, March 22, 2:-3:30 p.m. at the Baycrest Wellness Library. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 3374, to register.

MUSICAL EVENING

Join Beth Sholom Synagogue for "A Night at the Opera/A Day in Shul," an evening of opera, Yiddish, synagogue and contemporary Jewish music featuring siblings, **Cantor Amy Goldstein**, of New York, and **Cantor Martin Goldstein**, of Denver, followed by a dessert reception. Wednesday, March 29, 8 p.m. $18. 416-783-6103.

HAGGADAH FOR THE BLIND

If you have guests at your seder who are seniors or visually impaired, you may obtain a Braille or large-print haggadah free of charge from the Jewish Heritage For the Blind at 800-995-1888 or fax your request to 718-388-0653 or e-mail jhb.ny@verizon.net.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Diane**, 416-638-7800, ext. 246, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Adolescent Social Skills Group: An eight-week group to help teens enhance social skills, promote self-esteem and build confidence, develop problem-solving skills, become more aware of verbal and non-verbal communication, and make new friends. Ages 14-17. Wednesdays, beginning March 22; no sessions April 12 and 19.

FOR SENIORS

Chai Shalom holds its "Spring Dance," Sunday, March 26, at 7:30 p.m. with live entertainment by **Wen Atmadja**. Members $7, non-members $ 10. For tickets, contact **Helen Schwartz**, 416-633-4111, or **Marlene White**, 905-731-2515.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday Dance, March 26. Casino Rama, Wednesday, March 22. Mah-jong group starting. Call for info. Casino Niagara, Wednesday, May 24. For information, call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. March 9, movie, March 16, Purim celebration. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Megillah Reading, Tuesday, March 14, 10-11 a.m. in the Fireside Lounge.

The Book and Munch Club meets Wednesdays, 12-1:15 p.m. in the Volunteer Members' Lounge, bring your lunch. For details, call ext. 2275.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Bridge taught by **Shawn Mahood**, Tuesdays, beginning March 28, Beginners, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Intermediate, 2:30-5 p.m. Call **Janet** at ext. 259.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Kafka and Son, through March 18 at the Al Green Theatre. Tickets $15-25, 416-504-7529 or www.artsboxoffice.ca

TU B'SHVAT CELEBRATION: Residents of the Reuben Cipin Healthy Living Community celebrated Tu b'Shvat with Eli Shenhav, Jewish National Fund emissary in Toronto, and raised $1,550 for JNF projects. From left, in the front row, are Sylvia Weinrieb, Cirell Broudy, Freda Rubenstein, Temi Rosenthal and Sylvia Walt and in the back row are Louise Bortenstein, Blema Mazin, Monty Mazin, Reuben Cipin and Shenhav.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 22

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Elizabeth Heimler	Feb 17/06	3560 Bathurst St
Anne Beriault	Feb 23/06	5314 Lakeshore Rd

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Frances (Titel) Steinber	Feb 17/06	9 Knightswood Rd
Dr. Marvin Steinhardt	Feb 17/06	32 Cousion Ave
Alfred S. Magerman, Q.C.	Feb 17/06	43 Knollview Cres
Martha Saskin	Feb 18/06	645 Castlefield Ave
Alfred Nathan	Feb 19/06	260 Heath St
Irving Rebick	Feb 20/06	19 Lower Village Gt
Edith Jenkala	Feb 19/06	205 Wynford Dr
Eddie Teplitzky	Feb 20/06	14 Halbadier Pl
Anne Lampert	Feb 19/06	215 Wynford Dr
Sylvia Cohen	Feb 20/06	1201 Steeles Ave W
Dinah Vale	Feb 20/06	3560 Bathurst St
Grace Berman	Feb 21/06	80 Elgin Mills E
Jason Teitelbaum	Feb 18/06	8638 Keystone Ct
Libbie Cowan	Feb 21/06	3560 Bathurst St
Mara Glick	Feb 22/06	217 St. George St
Rose Berry	Feb 24/06	645 Castlefield Ave
Samuel Katz	Feb 25/06	22 Helena Gardens
Abraham Blady	Feb 25/06	89 Baycrest Ave
Sam Pukerman	Feb 26/06	24 Danby Ave

The family of the late

LEN SCHER ל"ז

Loving son, husband, father and grandfather

Wish to thank our family and friends for your kind expressions of sympathy during our recent bereavement.

MORRIS GOLDMAN ל"ז

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our nieces, nephews and many friends for the kindness, sympathy and generous donations made in memory of our beloved husband, father and grandfather.

The Goldman Family

The family of the late

JOHN SPIRES ל"ז

would like to express their gratitude for all those who were so kind during our recent bereavement. Contributions to his memory may be made to: The John Spires Memorial Fund for Leukemia and Lymphoma Research Jewish General Hospital Foundation @ 514-340-8251. He will be greatly missed by his family and many devoted friends.

Linda, Jennifer, Shael, Michael and Jodie

The family of the late

BEN (BARUCH) JAVASKY ל"ז

would like to express their appreciation for the kind expressions of support during the recent loss of their beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather and for the many donations which were made in his memory.

Ruth, Jerry, David and Howard Javasky
Beverly Lyons and Susan Weitz

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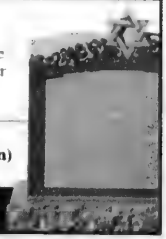

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On Campus

UWO students launch *Human Rights Review*

By KYLE GORDON
Special to The CJN

A lack of awareness surrounding global human rights issues led two University of Western Ontario students to create the *Human Rights Review*.

Ariella Goodman, 22, and Tamara Morgenthau, 21, met four years ago while in their first year at UWO. But it was not until September 2005, while attending Shabbat dinner at London's Chabad House, that they discovered a common passion for raising awareness about human rights violations.

"We thought that most of the student population would be interested in this issue, but many of them don't have the time or are not willing to make the effort to research it themselves. We thought by providing them with a publication dedicated to global human rights issues it would increase awareness and generated discussion," Morgenthau said.

University of Western Ontario students Tamara Morgenthau, left, and Ariella Goodman are the editors of the *Human Rights Review*. **[Kyle Gordon photo]**

Following the Crisis in Darfur conference at UWO in October, Goodman and Morgenthau decided to take their concern for human rights issues to the next level.

They started sending e-mails to classmates, friends and professors requesting writers for the first publication. Students Taking Action Now Darfur (STAND) also played a prominent role in spreading the word.

"The response has been really positive. We have had a lot of people contacting us who want to get involved," Goodman said.

"It just grew from there."

In February, Goodman and Morgenthau launched the *Human Rights Review (HRR)*. Originally, the review was to be released before the December break, but they decided to wait until February so the launch would coincide with the Amnesty International event Keeping the Lights on Human Rights. The event featured a panel of guest speakers who discussed the topics of poverty, racism, women's rights, refugees and genocide.

It seemed fitting that the first issue of the *HRR*, which focused on genocide and the current situation in Darfur, Sudan, would be launched around the time of the Amnesty event, said Morgenthau.

"Darfur is a really prominent issue right now. We thought we should make the first issue on genocide because a huge theme with genocide is the lack of awareness," she said.

Goodman added that "the United States has already declared that the situation in Darfur is a genocide, but they refuse to act. We want to gain public awareness and get people involved. If we get involved, maybe the United States will do something."

Following the success of the genocide edition, Morgenthau and Goodman have started planning for the second and third issues. The next two issues will focus on the themes of poverty and justice respectively.

"With each edition we are trying to spread awareness and show that everyone can make a difference and everyone can help," said Morgenthau.

Goodman added: "We are just showing them how."

In addition to providing an overview of the situation in Darfur, the review also includes addresses of websites with more information and ways to get involved with STAND Canada.

"It is important that students have the tools. We are the people who will make a difference eventually," Goodman said.

Although Morgenthau and Goodman are graduating this spring, they have no intention of abandoning the publication.

"We hope to keep it going even when we are gone. We want to expand it to different campuses and get writers from all over Canada involved," Goodman said.

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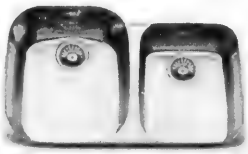

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Hamantaschen recipes are really kid friendly

By EILEEN GOLTZ
Special to The CJN

Hamantaschen are the food most commonly associated with Purim. Traditional hamantaschen are made with a pareve or butter cookie dough, although yeast dough is also popular.

While poppy seeds and prunes are the classic fillings of choice, many people use jam, and there are other sweet and savoury fillings used by cooks looking for something just a little different to serve to family and friends at the Purim seudah (dinner) or to put in the mishloach manot basket.

The following recipes are all kid-friendly (both to make and to eat) and offer a mix of unusual and delicious ingredients. Most of these recipes can be made ahead of time and frozen.

CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY HAMANTASCHEN

½ cup margarine
¼ cup sugar
1 egg
1½ tsp. vanilla
1½ cups flour
½ cup Dutch process cocoa
½ tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. baking soda
¼ tsp. salt
1 jar raspberry preserves

In a bowl of an electric mixer, combine margarine, sugar, egg and vanilla and blend until well mixed.

In a separate bowl, combine the cocoa, flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Add the dry mix to mixer bowl and blend together until well mixed. Divide dough into four pieces and chill for one hour.

When chilled, preheat oven to 350. Roll dough out on a lightly-floured surface to about ⅛-inch thickness. Cut into 3-inch rounds. Re-roll scraps. Place 1 teaspoon raspberry preserves in centre of round and fold three sides up to form a triangle, leaving some preserves visible in the centre. Pinch the corners and place on greased cookie sheet, two inches apart (hamantaschen will expand). Bake for 15 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. Makes 2 dozen.

FIG HAMANTASCHEN

¼ cup sugar
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
1¼ tsp. salt
8 tbsp. unsalted butter or margarine, cut into small pieces
1 egg, lightly beaten
3 tbsp. fresh orange juice
¼ lb. dried figs, chopped
1½ cup water
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice

In a food processor, combine the sugar, flour, baking powder and salt. Pulse once or twice to combine. Add the butter or margarine and pulse until the mixture resembles cornmeal. Add the egg and orange juice and process just until dough forms. Remove the dough and wrap it in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 2 hours or overnight.

Combine the figs, water and lemon juice in a saucepan and cook over medium heat until most of the liquid evaporates, about 10 minutes. Let cool and puree in a food processor.

Preheat the oven to 400. Line cookie sheets with parchment paper or grease them. On a floured surface, roll out dough ⅛-inch thick. Cut into circles with a 3-inch cookie cutter. Place 1 teaspoon filling in centre of each circle. Pinch 3 edges of dough together, leaving a small opening in centre for filling to peek through. Place on prepared cookie sheets and bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Let cool on rack 10 minutes before removing. Makes about 24.

KATI'S APRICOT PRUNE HAMANTASCHEN

Dough:
2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
2 tsp. baking powder
¼ tsp. salt
¼ cup granulated sugar
½ cup cold butter or margarine, cut into ½-inch cubes
1 large egg, lightly beaten
grated zest of 1 orange
1½ tbsp. fresh orange juice

Filling:
2 cups unsweetened dried pitted prunes
1 cup unsweetened dried apricots
1 cup water
1 tbsp. lemon juice
½ cup honey
¼ cup walnuts, coarsely chopped

In a large mixing bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, salt and sugar. With a pastry blender or two knives, cut the butter into the flour until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Stir in the egg, orange zest and juice, mixing well until the dough is smooth. Shape dough into a flat disk, wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate until firm.

To make the filling, chop the prunes and apricots into small pieces. Put them in a saucepan with the water and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat and simmer for about 12 minutes or until very soft. Add lemon juice and honey, then cook, stirring constantly, for about 5 minutes. Stir in nuts and set aside to cool.

Preheat oven to 400 and line baking sheets with parchment paper or non-stick baking mats. On a floured surface roll out dough to ⅛-inch thickness, then cut into 3-inch circles. Place a rounded teaspoon of filling in the centre of each circle and fold up three sides to make a triangular shape with a large opening in the centre. Pinch together the edges of the circle that are touching so that the triangle holds its shape. Bake 12 to 15 minutes or until lightly golden. Allow to cool thoroughly on wire racks.

CREAM CHEESE HAMANTASCHEN

This recipe asks you to use squares to make the triangle shape. Unusual, yes, but they taste just as delicious as using the traditional circle to make hamantaschen.

2 cups flour, sifted
1 cup butter
½ lb. cream cheese
½ cup poppy seeds
1 cup walnuts (chopped fine)
1 cup raisins (chopped fine)
approx. 8 oz. honey

In the bowl of an electric mixer, combine the butter and cream cheese. Mix until well blended. Gradually add in the flour, mixing to make a ball of dough. Place the dough in a glass bowl, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. In a bowl, combine the poppy seeds, walnuts, raisins and honey. It may take a little more or a little less than about 8 oz. of honey. Use enough to hold the mixture together.

Preheat oven to 350 and grease the cookie sheets. Roll out the dough (not too thin) and cut into 3-inch squares. Fill each square with about 1 tablespoon of filling and fold the dough in half to make a triangle. Bake on prepared cookie sheets until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Makes about 2 dozen.

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Shiite group causing concern in West Bank and Gaza

By KHALED ABU TOAMEH
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces are investigating whether Iran, Hezbollah or Al Qaeda is behind a new Shiite group that has been operating in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip over the past few days.

Called the Higher Shiite Council, the group is headed by Muhammad Ghawanmeh, a former Islamic Jihad official from the West Bank. Ghawanmeh was close to Islamic Jihad secretary-general Fathi Shikaki, who was reportedly assassinated in Malta in 1996 by Mossad agents.

Hamas officials, upon learning of the new Shiite group, expressed deep concern and called for an investigation to establish who is behind the initiative.

PA and Hamas officials told *The Jerusalem Post* that either Iran or Hezbollah was most likely behind the group. "The timing of the establishment of the new group is very suspicious," said a top Hamas official. "It appears that some parties are trying to replace Hamas or compete with it."

A PA security official said he did not understand how a Shiite group could operate in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip "where we don't have even one Shiite." All the Muslims living in the PA-controlled areas are Sunnis.

Many Palestinians expressed fear on Sunday that the presence of a Shiite group in the West Bank and Gaza could lead to a situation like the one in Iraq, where Shiites and Sunnis appear to be on the verge of civil war.

The security official said both Iran and Hezbollah are now trying to establish new contacts in the Palestinian territories because Hamas is preoccupied with running the affairs of the Palestinians after its victory in the Jan. 25 parliamentary election. Their fear, he added, is that Hamas would be forced, under international pressure, to halt its terrorist attacks after taking control of the Palestinian Authority.

Leaflets distributed by Hamas and Fatah militias on Sunday indicated that they would thwart the attempt by a Shiite group to establish power bases in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

"We already have too many groups and militias in Palestine," said one leaflet. "There's no room for another one, especially a Shiite council."

A Hamas official in Gaza City said the reports about the presence of a Shiite group are "very disturbing and could have catastrophic repercussions for the Palestinians."

Ghawanmeh, a Sunni, said he became a believer in the Shiite sect after spending some 20 years in an Israeli prison with Lebanese Shiite prisoners. He claimed that his council had many followers in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and that they had all abandoned the Sunni sect.

Ghawanmeh said the new group would work to enhance relations with Iran, Hezbollah and the Shiites in Iraq. "Our objective is to unite the Muslim world," he added. "Our Shiite brothers in Egypt have already established their own group there and we are all working together."

In response to a question about the timing of the establishment of the new Shiite council, Ghawanmeh denied that his group was planning to challenge Hamas. He said the timing was related to growing threats against Iran and Hezbollah by the United States and Israel.

He admitted that his group was in touch with Iran, but denied receiving financial aid from the Tehran government.

He also admitted that his group was linked to "Shiite elements" in Lebanon, but did not mention Hezbollah by name.

Some PA officials said they did not rule out the possibility that the new group was linked to al-Qaeda, but Ghawanmeh has sought to distance himself from the Osama bin Laden and his followers.

"I disagree with Al Qaeda on many issues," he said. "I'm opposed to the killing of innocent people and the destruction of mosques in Iraq." He said his immediate plan was to build a Shiite mosque in Ramallah.

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Hamas rises as Kadima falls

By LESLIE SUSSER
JTA

Analysis

After a successful visit to Moscow, Hamas leaders claim "the wall" of diplomatic isolation Israel is trying to build around the newly empowered organization is collapsing.

But Israel is still confident that the international community will cut off funds to a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority and back Israeli moves for a second unilateral pullback from Palestinian territory.

The Moscow trip perfectly served Hamas' strategy: to gain as much international recognition as possible without making concessions to Israel.

Following talks with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, Hamas leader Khaled Meshaal declared that the organization did not recognize Israel's right to exist and that the internationally accepted "road map" peace plan was no longer relevant.

If the Russians had hoped to score diplomatic points by persuading Hamas to accept the West's conditions for dialogue – recognition of Israel, acceptance of previous Israeli-Palestinian agreements and repudiation of violence – they failed utterly.

Hamas, however, succeeded in getting a Russian promise to urge the West not to withhold funds earmarked for the Palestinians.

Hamas has had other diplomatic successes. Its leaders have held talks in Turkey and have been invited to South Africa and Venezuela. They also claim some European countries are holding secret contacts with them.

More importantly, European funding for the Palestinians has not yet dried up. The European Union is releasing $143 million (US) in emergency aid to the Palestinians, on the grounds that the Palestinian Authority is on the vérge of economic collapse and that Hamas has not yet formally taken the reins of power.

With an eye to retaining western aid, without which it couldn't function, Hamas has been putting out mixed messages. On the one hand, it says it won't recognize Israel; on the other, that it's ready for a long truce.

In a rare interview with Israel's *Ma'ariv* newspaper, Alistair Crooke, a former European Union adviser on security who knows the Palestinian scene well, put a positive gloss on Hamas' position. Crooke argues that a real process of change is underway in the organization and that it would be ready to end the conflict if Israel withdraws to the pre-1967 boundaries, known as the Green Line.

He says Hamas wants a mutually agreed, long-term ceasefire so that it can concentrate on Palestinian institution-building in preparation for full statehood alongside Israel.

Crooke, who now runs the London-based Forum for Conflict Resolution, recently met with top Hamas people and clearly was getting a message across for them. But it's not clear whether Hamas is genuinely ready for some sort of accommodation with Israel, or whether Crooke is merely being used as a pawn by Hamas in a game aimed at impressing European and other western donors.

For now, the Israeli government does not believe Hamas is genuine. While the Hamas leaders were in Moscow, Israeli Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni was in Europe trying to pre-empt an erosion in the EU's hard line on Hamas.

In talks in Vienna, Paris and London, Livni argued that it's essential that Europe keep up its diplomatic and economic pressure on Hamas. She also maintained that it would be a mistake to try to circumvent Hamas and negotiate with the Palestinian Authority's President Mahmoud Abbas, from the somewhat more moderate Fatah Party, because he's in no position to deliver.

Indeed, Israeli policy is based on pressuring Hamas to moderate its positions and, if that fails, convincing the international community that there is no peace partner on the Palestinian side and that, therefore, Israel has no option but to set its borders unilaterally.

Thus, the main goal of Livni's European trip seemed to be to set the stage for a second unilateral withdrawal from Palestinian territory, if her party, Kadima, wins the March 28 general election.

On Sunday, Kadima announced its plans for a second disengagement. Avi Dichter, former head of Israel's Shin Bet security service, outlined the details: Israel will dismantle isolated West Bank settlements, relocating the settlers in large settlement blocs close to the Green Line, or in Israel proper.

The Israel Defence Forces, however, will remain inside the evacuated territory, the way it has done in the northern West Bank since the evacuation of four settlements there last summer. Dichter calls it "a civilian, but not a military disengagement."

Dichter explained that since there is no Palestinian peace partner, Israel, too, sees the "road map" as a dead letter and that it would negotiate the new boundary lines with the international community, especially the United States, rather than with the Hamas-led Palestinians.

Hanan Krystal, a political analyst for Israel Radio, says that by officially announcing its disengagement plan, Kadima has set the March 28 election agenda.

"The election will now be a referendum on a second disengagement," he declared.

The timing of Kadima's announcement may have been intended to boost the party's electoral prospects. Over the past few weeks, polls have shown Kadima's share of the vote steadily declining.

Pollsters, who initially paid little heed to the loss of a seat or two, now are talking about a trend. Weekend polls show Kadima getting some 37 seats, well below the 43 it had three weeks ago. Most of the gains have been made by the right – which may not be surprising, given Hamas' accession to power, which has allowed the right-wing parties to paint a picture of an Iranian-backed, Al-Qaeda-supported radical state on Israel's doorstep.

The Kadima plan is intended to show that the centrist party has a realistic answer to the threat, and one more likely to bring about stability and calm than anything the right or left can offer.

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Israel & the Jewish World

Israel 'hopeful' IAEA will refer Iran to Security Council

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Israel was hopeful that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) would on Monday continue what it started last month and formally refer the Iranian nuclear file to the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions, government officials said Sunday.

The officials said the fact the Iranians had not agreed to a Russian proposal to enrich uranium in Russia increased the chances that action would indeed begin in the Security Council on the Iranian dossier.

Nevertheless, Israeli officials have been very cautious not to expect any dramatic sanctions at the outset that would convince the Iranians it would be more in their interest to stop the development of their nuclear program than to go ahead with it. These officials said referral to the Security Council is the first step down "a very long" corridor to keep Iran from gaining nuclear weapons.

While Israel has been lobbying intensively for years to get the Iranian dossier taken up by the Security Council, there is concern in Jerusalem that too much time has been wasted, and there is now a significant gap between Iran's development and diplomatic efforts to stop it.

Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni discussed the need to send the Iranian file to the UN during talks she had last week in Vienna, Paris and London.

Iran, meanwhile, warned Sunday that it will start large-scale uranium enrichment if it is referred to the UN Security Council. "If Iran's nuclear dossier is referred to the UN Security Council, [large-scale] uranium enrichment will be resumed," Iran's top nuclear negotiator Ali Larijani told reporters in Tehran.

"If they [the United States and its allies] want to use force, we will pursue our own path," he said.

"Research and development won't stop, but we are ready to agree to a timetable on [large-scale uranium] enrichment. This is the final proposal from Iran to find a solution," he said.

Iran only has an experimental research program and it would need months to begin any large-scale enrichment.

Larijani also said Iran would not abandon nuclear research, or back down from pursuing its nuclear program if the it was taken to the Security Council.

"Nuclear research and development is part of Iran's national interests and sovereignty, and it won't give it up," he said.

Iran, Larijani said, had exhausted "all peaceful ways" and said that if there were demands made contrary to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, Iran "will resist." "We are ready to set a timetable for uranium enrichment" if Iran's rights are accepted, he added.

Taking Iran to the UN Security Council, he said, is "not an advantage for us and others. It can also make problems for others. However, it will not cause Iran to give up nuclear research and development. If anybody doubts this, they can test it."

Iran, according to Larijani, "will show appropriate co-operation with the IAEA if Iran's nuclear issue remains within the agency."

Earlier, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hamid Reza Asefi said Iran could reach a nuclear agreement with Russia or Europe within the next few hours.

Asefi said such a deal would be called off if the IAEA referred the Islamic republic to the Security Council, and added that the Russian proposal to enrich Iranian nuclear fuel needed more discussion.

"Both an agreement, and its absence, is possible. Nothing is definite," he said.

On Thursday, Iran and Russia held talks to establish a joint uranium enrichment venture to ease concerns over its nuclear ambitions. However, further talks on the details did not produce a clear-cut decision, as Iran did not entirely give up plans for domestic enrichment – a key Western demand.

Enrichment is a key process that can determine the direction of a nuclear program. Uranium enriched to a low level produces fuel for a nuclear reactor, while higher enrichment produces the material needed for a warhead.

Asefi also criticized what he described as the double standard in U.S. nuclear policy, citing Washington's recent deal with India as an example, and he added that Washington is systematically trying to portray Tehran in a bad light.

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Dubai ports firm enforces boycott of Israel

By MICHAEL FREUND
Jerusalem Post

The parent company of a Dubai-based firm at the centre of a political storm in the United States over the management of American ports participates in the Arab boycott against Israel, the *Jerusalem Post* has learned.

The firm, Dubai Ports World, is seeking control over six major U.S. ports, including those in New York, Miami, Philadelphia and Baltimore. It is entirely owned by the Government of Dubai via a holding company called the Ports, Customs and Free Zone Corporation (PCZC), which consists of the Dubai Port Authority, the Dubai Customs Department and the Jebel Ali Free Zone Area.

"Yes, of course the boycott is still in place and is still enforced," Muhammad Rashid a-Din, a staff member of the Dubai Customs Department's Office for the Boycott of Israel, told the *Post* in a telephone interview.

A-Din noted that while the head office for the anti-Israel boycott sits in Damascus, he and his fellow staff members are paid employees of the Dubai Customs Department, which is a division of the PCZC, the same Dubai government-owned entity that runs Dubai Ports World.

The website for Dubai's Jebel Ali Free Zone Area, which is also part of the PCZC, advises importers that they will need to comply with the terms of the boycott.

On the site, there is a list of six documents required to clear an item through the Dubai Customs Department. One of them, a certificate of origin, "is used by customs to confirm the country of origin and needs to be seen by the office which ensures any trade boycotts are enforced."

A-Din confirmed that his office examines certificates of origin as a means of verifying whether a product originated in the Jewish state.

On at least three separate occasions last year, the *Post* has learned, companies were fined by the U.S. government's Office of Anti-boycott Compliance, an arm of the Commerce Department, on charges connected to boycott-related requests they had received from the Government of Dubai.

U.S. law bars firms from complying with such requests or cooperating with attempts by Arab governments to boycott Israel.

In a related development, Israel's largest shipping company, Zim, endorsed the bid by Dubai Ports World to manage the U.S. ports. Zim skirts the Arab boycott by running ships under other nations' flags.

With files from JTA.

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Israel Briefs

We failed Ethiopians: IDF

The Israel Defence Forces has failed to properly absorb Ethiopian immigrants and has not made the best use of their potential, senior IDF officers admitted. As a result, the officers said, only a handful of non-combat Ethiopian soldiers were accepted into prestigious IDF courses, while most were classified as "low-class" soldiers and given insignificant jobs. "We need to improve the way we recruit Ethiopian soldiers," a senior recruitment officer told *Jerusalem Post*. "We need to get to know the Ethiopians better and to try and understand their world and background."

Two West Bank shootings

The Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade claimed responsibility for a shooting last week that killed an Israeli man at a gas station near Migdalim in the West Bank, but Israeli police weren't ruling out criminal motives. Hours later, an Israeli was seriously wounded in a shooting near the Palestinian town of Kalkilya. In Gaza, a senior Islamic Jihad member was killed when his car exploded. Israel denied involvement.

Roclet lands near Ashkelon

A Palestinian rocket hit a strategic facility in Ashkelon on Friday. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the attack on the facility, which was not described in detail, in the Israeli city just north of the Gaza Strip. In retaliation, Israeli military attacked Qassam rocket launch sites in the Gaza Strip.

Israeli soccer deal criticized

An Arab country's national airline criticized the decision of a British soccer team it sponsors to promote Israeli tourism. Emirates Airlines, which pays $5.2 million (US) for naming rights to Arsenal's new stadium, and whose logo appears on team jerseys, censured the $600,000 deal, which goes into effect for the 2006-2007 season, with an option to renew for one year. Israel will be promoted in Arsenal's Emirates Stadium in London, on the team's website and in its official magazine, where Israel will be billed as Arsenal's "official and exclusive travel destination." The club said it cleared the deal with UAE officials, but a spokesperson for the national carrier denied this, calling the deal "unfortunate," and adding the company will "do our best to persuade Arsenal not to renew."

Octogenarian donates liver

A deceased 84-year-old woman became the oldest-ever Israeli to donate an organ for transplant after her liver was given to a 59-year-old woman. The donation saved the recipient's life. Until now, the oldest donor was a 75-year-old man. The Rabin Medical Center-Beilinson Campus in Petah Tikva said it will change its previous age limits and be able to expand the number of organ donations because of the surgery.

Israel must hit Iran: MK

"Whether America provides Israel with a security umbrella or not, Israel will have to attack Iran," MK Effi Eitam said. In an interview with Channel 10 TV, he warned that "In the coming year – and no later – Israel will have to take one of the most difficult decisions in its history." The attack will be necessary, said Eitam, "unless an unimaginable miracle happens and the diplomatic initiative will bear fruit."

General cancels UK visit

An Israeli army general cancelled a sabbatical in Britain out of concern he could be prosecuted by pro-Palestinian groups. Brig.-Gen. Aviv Kochavi, an ex-commander of Israeli forces in Gaza, indefinitely postponed his trip last week on the advice of the judge advocate general, security sources said. He was to spend a year studying at a British defence college. Israel has been on high alert for legal risks faced by its top brass in Europe after another ex-Gaza commander, Doron Almog, narrowly escaped arrest and prosecution on "war crimes" charges in London last year.

JTA and Jerusalem Post

Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

SCHOOLS SHOW STRONG INTEREST IN STAGE VERSION OF *HANA'S SUITCASE*

The theatrical version of *Hana's Suitcase* by Canadian playwright **Emil Sher** opens this week at the Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People, and sales to school groups have apparently already broken records. LKTYP "has sold out school performances faster than they have in the history of the theatre," according to **Margie Wolfe**, founder and publisher of Second Story Press, which holds the rights to the bestselling book by Karen Levine upon which the play is based.

Plans are already afoot for the Holocaust-related play to tour Canada starting in the fall, and the United States, beginning in St. Louis, Mo., next January, Wolfe reports. At LKTYP, the play runs March 9 to April 27. 416-862-2222. www.lktyp.ca

Lena Gorelik

* * *

German-Jewish Writer: Twenty-five-year-old writer **Lena Gorelik**, who's been dubbed Germany's answer to Canadian writer **David Bezmozgis**, won a significant German literary prize last year for her first novel *Meine Weisse Nacht* (*My White Night*). The St. Petersburg-born Gorelik attended a conference here last year on "the new German-Jewry" and is again in Toronto until March 17, courtesy of a writers-in-residence program of the University of Toronto Munk Centre and the Goethe Institute.

She reads from her novel at the Munk Centre's European studies faculty, Friday, March 10, 12 to 2 p.m. Admission free. Please e-mail larysa.iarovenko@utoronto.ca or e.klein@utoronto.ca in advance to register.

* * *

Recovery from Brain Damage: Montrealer **Paul Nadler** was a creative and hip television director with an active social life. But 10 years ago, at the age of 30, he suffered a car accident in Egypt that left him with a traumatic brain injury from which he was not expected to recover.

Next week, CBC Newsworld presents *Braindamadj'd... Take II*, a documentary about Nadler's gutsy, manic determination to regain his previous life. Co-produced by **Jonathan Finkelstein** of Apartment 11 Productions, the film premieres Tuesday, March 14, 10 p.m. and 1 a.m., and repeats on March 18 (same times).

* * *

Unlocking History: *Beethoven's Hair*, which airs mid-month on the Bravo channel, traces the unlikely history of a lock of Beethoven's hair cut at the composer's death in 1827 by a German-Jewish boy, **Ferdinand Hiller**, who kept it as a memento. The lock was reportedly used to save the lives of Jews during the Nazi regime, and was sold at auction in 1994 for about $8,000 (Cdn).

Based on a novel by **Russell Martin**, the documentary also reveals how modern science and forensics have shed new light on the composer's various health ailments; and former owners of this legendary relic tell how it touched their lives. Bravo TV, March 18, 8:30 p.m. www.beethovenshair.ca

* * *

Names in the News: The 19 winners of the 2005 National (American) Jewish Book Awards were announced recently. Top prize, for book of the year, goes to Israeli writer **Amos Oz** for his memoir *A Tale of Love and Darkness*. **Deborah Lipstadt**'s *History on Trial: My Day in Court with David Irving* won best Holocaust book and **Michael Chabon**'s *The Final Solution* won best fiction. Sponsored by the Jewish Book Council, the awards are to be handed out in New York on April 26.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Teatron Theatre presents *The Tenth Man*, the drama comedy by Paddy Chayefsky. Leah Posluns Theatre, March 8 to 12. $4-$15. 416-855-6651.

• A community Purim party at the Winchevsky Centre features *What Really Happened the Night Esther Met the King?* a puppet play by storyteller **Judy Shier Weisberg**. Also plenty of songs, stories, graggers, hamantaschen and more. $9 at the door, free for children under three. 585 Cranbrooke Ave. Sunday, March 12, 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. 416-789-5502.

* * *

At the Galleries

• Sandra Ainsley Gallery presents "Mirroring Abstract Forms," an exhibition of new work by Seattle-based artist **Martin Blank**. The pieces suggest "a sensual dance with textures, shapes and energy that reflect the subtle, yet powerful resonance of human landscapes." Blank gives a drawing demonstration at the opening, Thursday, March 9, 6:30 to 9 p.m. On view until April 24. Distillery District, 55 Mill St., Building 32. 416-214-9490.

• Toronto artist **Leah Belfon** presents a new show of lyrical semi-abstracts and bold works on paper at her home, 436 Lawrence Ave. W., Unit 3. All are welcome. Sunday, March 12. 416-787-3888.

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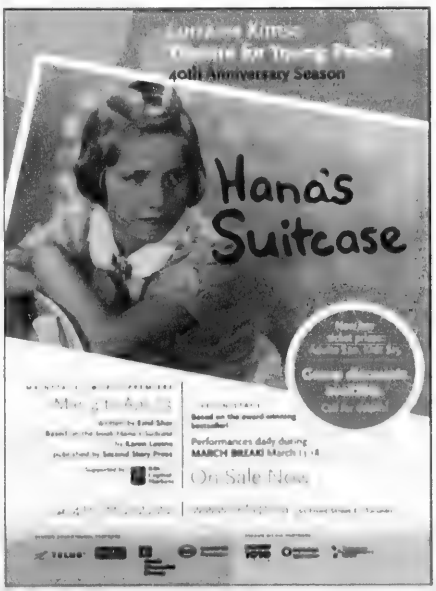

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TEATRON Theatre

Disabled artist has 'chronic cartooning syndrome'

By SVETLANA BARKAN
Special to The CJN

Sofia Kanibolotskaia is a disabled artist who has overcome many challenges.

She is an energetic woman of 32, a cartoonist and a devoted mother of a daughter who turns one this month.

Kanibolotskaia says she is a "person with a chronic cartooning syndrome." Her vision of life results in humorous cartoons and sketches that bring smiles to the faces of kids and adults alike.

She came to Toronto from Moscow with her parents in 1993. She had completed the first three years of medical school there, played guitar, participated in sports and took ballet lessons.

However, Kanibolotskaia was left almost completely paralyzed after her spinal cord was injured during an operation for a non-malignant spinal cord tumour. After that, a Toronto neurosurgeon, Charles Tator, performed five more surgeries, which gave her the ability to use her hands again.

When she recovered, Kanibolotskaia pursued her education – she is currently studying at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education and plans to become a science teacher. She has also completed a number of commissioned works and her creations have been featured at exhibitions in Toronto.

Kanibolotskaia's work was recently featured in an exhibit mounted by the Abilities Festival, which provides a showcase for artists as well as the opportunity for the artists' families to meet. The festival is an annual event in Toronto, supported by such sponsors as Alliance Atlantis, Royal Bank and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

For the past three years, Kanibolotskaia has designed T-shirt logos for the Queen's Quay Disabled Sailing Club. She is an active member of the club and has participated in Reach Regatta, an annual competition for disabled sailors.

As an artist, Kanibolotskaia continues to experiment with different media. She recently participated in the making of a promotional video for a rehabilitation organization. The video included her visual art and a musical performance.

When a friend wrote a children's book, she asked Kanibolotskaia to do the illustrations, because "nobody can express their inner child quite like Sofia does!"

Every artist has a unique source of inspiration. Kanibolotskaia literally created her newest source of inspiration on March 27, 2005, when she gave birth to Michelle Nadine. She says she didn't know if she was capable of giving birth. In addition to the regular challenges of motherhood, being a disabled mother has its challenges, says Kanibolotskaia. But "there is nothing more important to me than my family, and being able to contribute this amazing creature to the world makes me feel more empowered than ever," she adds.

Her mother, Julia, quit her job and stayed home for almost three years to help Kanibolotskaia through her pregnancy and later with the baby. Julia and and Kanibolotskaia's father, Mikhail, continue to help her care for her daughter.

She feels blessed to have come to Canada and says Canadian society is one of the few in the world where people with disabilities are valued and respected. They offer a tremendous potential that can be used to benefit today's society in so many ways, she adds.

Sofia Kanibolotskaia's artwork can be viewed online at www.abilitiesfestival.org.

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R&B/gospel release taps into religion and social justice

By BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI
Special to The CJN

David Wall, a Toronto musician and member of the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band, doesn't think singing about Jesus is a big deal.

"What's not to love about Jesus," he says. "He was a Jew and a great rabbi."

The Christian deity came up in conversation after I asked Wall about his song, *Get Right with God*, a southern gospel track off his latest rhythm-and-blues-infused record, *Wonder*. It's easy to picture this haunting and heartfelt gospel tune with its repeated chants of "Get right with God" and "Jesus" – sung in church. But, says Wall, the song is less about Christianity and more about what Jesus stands for.

"I like the idea of religion mixed with social justice and a politically oriented agenda," says Wall on the phone from his Toronto home. "I'm tapping into that culture, how Jesus connects with the civil rights movement."

Wall adds that when it comes to singing the gospel, none of his Jewish clientele seem to mind.

"I don't think people really care [about singing about Jesus]. For example, in the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band, we sing secular Yiddish songs. There are some mystical songs, but we don't sing Jewish liturgy. I don't think there are any contradictions – I've just always loved gospel."

His new disc, which was released in February, is a marked departure from the Yiddish songs he sings with the Flying Bulgar Klezmer Band (FBKB). Some of his fans might be surprised to learn that his roots are in R&B, not Judaism.

"This is actually my musical roots. I didn't really get into Judaism as a religion or a culture until my adult years. I used to listen to Janis Joplin and The Supremes, so R&B has always been there," he says.

> ***'Yiddish shouldn't be seen as a museum culture. We need to preserve it'***

Wall's R&B pedigree was intensified when he formed the Bourbon Tabernacle Choir, an eight-piece R&B band that included Broken Social Scene's Andrew Workman.

In time, Wall, Bourbon's vocalist, got tired of touring with the group, and concurrently, began thinking about his religious roots.

"One of the main reasons I quit Bourbon was because I felt like I was stealing another people's culture. In retrospect, it was ridiculous and self-indulgent, but I was looking out in the audience and there were a lot of black people. I was doing an imitation of African-American music. That coincided with David Buchbinder [from FBKB] saying he needed a singer."

Joining a klezmer band isn't like forming a rock band. Wall needed to learn Yiddish, and impressing bubbies and zaides is no easy task.

"Elderly Jewish people have a real sense of ownership over the language and it needs to be done right. So it was a real challenge to be able to pronounce everything," he says.

However, he doesn't think the aging crowds have an exclusive right to the language.

"Yiddish shouldn't be seen as a museum culture. We need to preserve it. And I think the Yiddish revival is expanding. Maybe because of historical distance and people hear it and understand that there's really great music and it's a great culture."

To improve his Yiddish, Wall took cantorial music lessons. It's something that not only helped him get in touch with Judaism, but it vastly improved his vocal chords.

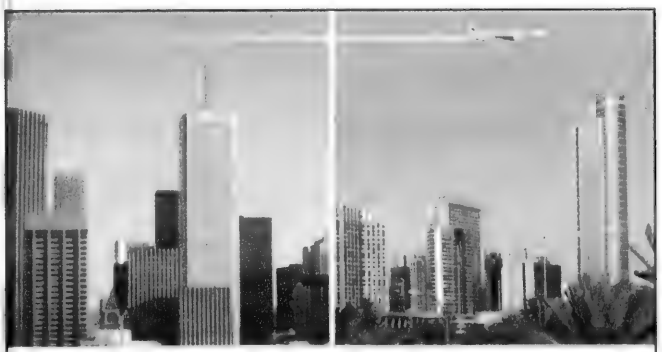
"Stylistically, there's not much of a connection between klezmer and R&B, but in terms of musicality and wisdom, it's [his cantorial training] had a massive influence. It's about proper voice production, not pop inflections. It's about doing a really good job – it's operatic so my voice is much better and much more melodic," he says.

With improved pipes and some distance from Bourbon, Wall was ready to release his first solo album in 12 years. For an active musician, more than a decade between solo records is a long time.

"It was an excuse to hang out with my friends. I have two kids, and I do other projects with people, so that's why this project came to be. I missed my friend [and album producer] Ken Whiteley," says Wall, whose day job involves writing music for film and TV.

Even though Wall's new disc is a throwback to his early influences, he not about to tour the world as he did with Bourbon.

"This is a labour of love and my wife and I are supporting a family. I can't just quit my day job anymore."



Studio 2 host does it all at TVOntario

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

It wasn't until his first week as a student at the University of Toronto that Steve Paikin knew what he wanted to do when he grew up.

The Hamilton native, who hosts two programs on TVOntario – *Studio 2*, a nightly current affairs show, and *Diplomatic Immunity*, a weekly foreign affairs show – recalled walking into Hart House on campus and approaching a table set up by the U of T radio station.

"A light just went on and I thought, 'I think this is what I'm supposed to do.' I walked over to the table and I asked them if they had anybody that did the play-by-play for Varsity Blues hockey and football games."

After he was given the green light to call games for the school's varsity hockey and football teams, he said, "Does this mean I get to be the Foster Hewitt of U of T? Foster Hewitt was the voice of the [Toronto Maple] Leafs and he was my idol growing up."

For the next three years, Paikin did play-by-play and Michael Landsberg, currently the host of TSN's *Off The Record*, was his colour commentator.

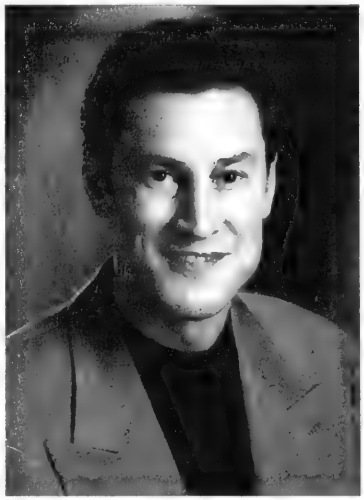
"We were perfectly horrible," Paikin said.

Since then, Paikin has been a city hall reporter for CHFI radio, a general assignment reporter, a Queen's Park correspondent, a host of news and current affairs programs on CBC Newsworld and the anchor of CBC at Six in Toronto.

He has been co-host of *Studio 2* since its debut in 1994.

In a career that has spanned more than 20 years, the 45-year-old father of three boys has made a name for himself as a staple of Canadian current affairs programming, and he said he is fulfilling all his ambitions at TVOntario.

"Studio 2 is a beautiful job for somebody who is interested in more than one thing. I love sports and I get to do that every Monday. I love international affairs and I get to do that every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. I love politics and I get to do that every Thursday, and I love generally what's going on in our world. I love to do documentaries and I get to do one of those a year," Paikin said.



Steve Paikin

In 1993, Paikin produced a documentary called *Return to the Warsaw Ghetto*, which featured three survivors and their children who revisited the ghetto they were confined to during World War II.

He's also a published author.

"I'm proud of the fact that in the course of a full-time job, I've managed to write three books," Paikin said. "That is just a nightmarish workload. I don't even want to think about how I got it done."

Paikin, who has a bachelor of arts degree from U of T and a master's in broadcast journalism from Boston University, said his biggest challenge was being the moderator of the second English-language political leaders debate in the recent federal election campaign.

"It was the scariest experience of my professional life," he said in all seriousness.

"You are watching the clock to make sure everybody stays on time. You are watching your question sheet to make sure you know where you are on the list. You are listening to their answers so that if there is a logical followup to something they say, you can do that. You have a producer talking in your ear some of the time to remind you of who's next and how you're doing on time and whether you have to do followups or whether you can go on to the next question," Paikin said.

"I found it to be a very challenging experience. The other thing is that *Studio 2* is watched by about 100,000 people a night, and this debate is watched by about three million. If you screw up, there are a lot more people who are going to know about it, and you do not want one of your mistakes to adversely affect one of the leaders and possibly affect his performance during the course of the debate."

Although covering politics is one of his passions, Paikin said he would never consider running for office himself.

"The world of politics needs a lot of different kinds of people. It needs people to run, it needs people to govern, it needs people to be in the opposition, it needs people to work on policy, it needs people to run campaigns behind the scenes and it needs people to try to figure out what's going on and explain it to the public. I think I'm best suited to do the last thing."

Paikin said he can only hope that he'll be able to continue informing Ontarians for years to come.

"When I came over to TVO, I thought that if I can do *Studio 2* for two years, that'll be just great. I'll learn a lot and it'll help set me up for whatever is to come after that. I just never would have imagined that it would last this long, and I'm thrilled it has and I hope it keeps lasting."

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Arts & Travel

Actor hopes to land TV role during 'pilot season'

By BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI
Special to The CJN

Right now, Adam Rodness is taking part in a yearly acting ritual – pilot season.

Every January to March, thousands of actors pack their bags and head to Los Angeles, hoping to land a spot on a TV show. Rodness, a Toronto actor who hosts Jamie Kennedy's Hip-Hop Comedy Tour, has an advantage over his fellow 22-year-old actors – he's been through pilot season before.

"I spent every penny ever saved in a span of four months," says Rodness laughing. "I went to Vegas and spent tons of money on stupid things, like expensive dinners. I never had a sense of what a dollar meant."

So, Rodness' first visit to Hollywood didn't quite work out as expected, but despite all the spending, he did learn a valuable lesson.

"I thought it would come to me, but when I came back to Toronto I realized that it's not the way it works. You have to go out there and just give."

For the last couple of years, Rodness has been giving his all. Until this past September he hosted a show on the dance music station, BMPTV, and he's currently working on a new music show called *Rockstars* with *Entertainment Tonight Canada*'s Rick Campanelli.

"We go to every major city and bring bands back to Toronto where we do this whole live rock-show thing," says Rodness. "It's a great idea. It allows Canadian artists to come out and get exposure, and I love rock music."

Rodness isn't sure when, or if, the show will air, but in the meantime he's happy to talk about his role in his first movie, a Jamie Kennedy-produced flick called *Kicking It Old School*, which is slated for release in 2007.

"Being one of the leads in the movie, trying to carry the movie, you realize you have responsibilities now. It was really cool to see how a whole movie is actually done."

Unfortunately, the experience wasn't all glitz and glamour.

"It was kind of unbearable," he says. "We were filming in the woods and it was just at the peak of when it got hot in the summer. The mosquitoes were hatching and then it started to rain so more mosquitoes came after that."

It's not surprising that Rodness is filming movies, starring in TV shows and cavorting with celebrities (he partied with L.A. Lakers owner, Jerry Buss) – he's been a part of the entertainment industry his whole life.

"My parents are wedding singers," he says, adding that they were also actors when they were younger.

Because of this, Rodness hasn't faced any resistance from his parents in pursuing the bright lights.

"Most parents who have children who want to pursue acting, they turn their heads to it and say you might want to go and do something else. Since my mother was an actor for many years – and my dad pursued it too – they were happy I was going out to do it," he says.

Having supportive parents is important; after all, actors have to be away from home for months at a time if they want to make it in the biz. And they often need to move to a bigger city.

"Making it unfortunately means moving to New York or L.A.," says Rodness. "There's a lot of work in Toronto, but it's all being cast in the States. Sure there are some names out there of people who live in Canada, Colin Mochrie for one, but the big actors are all in the U.S."

While Rodness will take any Hollywood job, he does have his sights set on a specific role.

"I would love to play an undercover cop," he says. "When I was younger, I wanted to be a cop, then I wanted to be an actor, now I want to be an actor playing a cop. Maybe a young 22- to 23-year-old cop who can work with other police officers and undercover."

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Forest Hill matron tells her story with surprising candour

***Stray Cats & Other Loves* by Evelyn Wolfe, Mosaic Press.**

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

Born on Toronto's Grace Street in 1927, Evelyn Wolfe became a well-to-do Forest Hill matron, cable-TV talk-show host, Jewish book-club organizer and social convener at the Beth Tzedec congregation. Judging from her recent autobiography *Stray Cats & Other Loves*, she fulfilled each of these roles energetically and with style.

A born raconteur, the first-time author tells of her various adventures, escapades and intrigues with sure-footed ease and surprising candour.

Her account of her intimate (and innocent) friendship with Irving Layton, whom she revered, should provide fodder for future biographers of the celebrated Montreal poet, who died recently at 93. She also maintained a long-time romantic friendship with Gideon Hausner, the late Israeli legislator who gained renown as Adolf Eichmann's prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials.

The names of other celebrities, both local and international, are sprinkled throughout these pages like so many raisins in a fruitcake. The "dramatis personae" include Aharon Appelfeld, Arthur Cantor, Nathan Cohen, Fania Fenelon, Raul Hilberg, Irving Howe, Werner Klemperer, Victor Kugler, Samuel Pisar, Chaim Potok, Mordecai Richler, Morton Shulman, Elie Wiesel and Herman Wouk. Most come across favourably but a few, especially Shulman, seem to hoist themselves by their own petards.

Wolfe was brave and determined enough to break off wedding plans with an early suitor who was wrong for her, and resourceful enough to build a rich social life through her sometimes difficult married years, befriending the various "stray cats" she found wherever she went.

While she spends relatively few words on her marriage, she gives full airing to various distressing family matters, such as her daughter's recurrent bouts with anorexia and the escalating business and legal troubles of one of her brothers.

Despite her occasional references to herself as a "nervous wreck" who lacked confidence in her younger years, she comes across as warm-hearted, high-spirited and sure of herself, someone toward whom others would naturally gravitate.

Her charm comes through in her description of an early meeting with Layton. Arranging a 1969 speaking engagement for the poet in Toronto, she gave a small party in his honour and later drove him to the synagogue for the speaking engagement.

"By the time we reached Beth Tzedec, I was very comfortable with him, although a little bit in awe of his great intelligence," she writes. "As we waited back stage to begin the program, Irving asked, 'Evelyn, is it all right to use four-letter words in the synagogue?'

"'Absolutely not,' I answered, without flinching, 'but five-letter words are fine, so if you want you can pluralize them.'

"He roared his booming, infectious laugh and hugged me. When something delighted him, his reaction was a sight to behold. At that moment, I felt a bond between us."

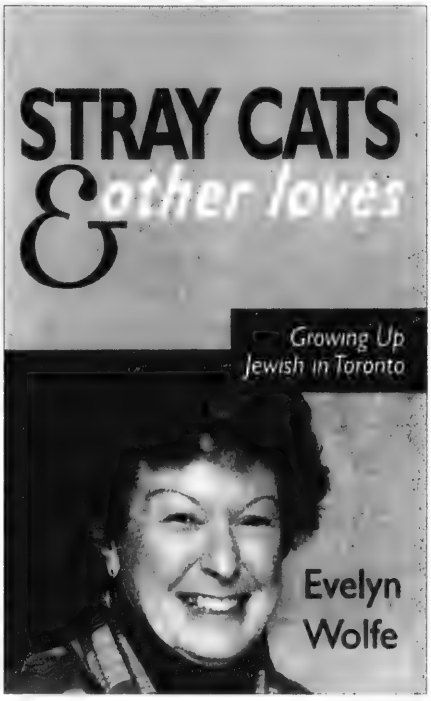
Wolfe also became a faithful longtime friend to Stuart Rosenberg, the influential Beth Tzedec rabbi who was summarily dismissed by the congregation, prompting much hard feelings and a bitter lawsuit. Three weeks before the High Holy Days, Wolfe arranged to erect a tent on her lawn for alternative services over which Rosenberg presided.

Another of her lawn parties had a decidedly different tone, and stands out as the book's most madcap and silly moment. Keeping a promise she had made to her daughter, she held a "bark mitzvah" party for the family dog, Toto, to which other dogs and dog owners around the neighbourhood were invited. A newspaper photographer showed up to record Wolfe's zany canine caper for posterity.

In 1950, she and husband Milton Wolfe moved into a Bathurst Street apartment at what is now Markdale Avenue. Her reminiscences are vivid and historic.

"The building was on the west side of the street and at the back was a small garden where we all sat in the summer. Beyond that was nothing but an open field. Today, the area is called Cedarvale, but at that time there were no streets, or houses. To the north of the building, nothing was built except for the Holy Blossom Temple, and from there to Eglinton Avenue, there was nothing to be seen. I felt that we had moved to the outskirts of Toronto."

Despite the presence of numerous annoying typos, which bring credit neither to publication nor publisher, *Stray Cats & Other Loves* is an impressive, engaging autobiography and a welcome addition to the growing body of literature about the Toronto Jewish community.



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Nutritional consultant puts focus on eco-kashrut

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

By observing the laws of eco-kashrut we impact our own health as well as the health of our community and our environment, says Aviva Allen, a registered nutritional consulting practitioner.

Speaking at Torah in Toronto, a series of workshops sponsored by the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Allen said the practice of eco-kashrut helps sanctify consumption so that we can elevate the physical world by acknowledging the holiness of our relationship to God's world.

In observing eco-kashrut, she said, we seek food that is grown organically without pesticides, and avoid food additives, preservatives, colouring agents and artificial flavours. "It teaches us the essentials for healthy living."

The simplest way to describe eco-kashrut, she said, is to take the word "kosher" and expand on it:

K – kinder to animals
O – obedience to God's will
S – self-discipline
H – holiness
E – ethical consumption
R – reverence for life

In expanding our dietary laws, she said, we should add that we should not oppress workers or cause suffering to others or animals.

"Traditional kashrut is concerned with the treatment of animals, but only with regard to slaughtering. Eco-kashrut is concerned with how the animals are treated beforehand.

"Chickens are often raised in horrific conditions. There could be 50,000 broiler chickens cooped up in one barn, and they are given growth-promoting drugs. [Sometimes] they get too big for their limbs to handle and they can't walk."

The chickens that are kept in cages in factory farms have no access to fresh air, she said, and often get angry. To prevent them from pecking each other to death, farmers cut their beaks off.

"Then they are given drugs to treat the stress that is related to being debeaked."

Raising animals to produce veal is a clear violation of ethical behaviour, Allen said.

"In order to make the meat tender and pale in colour, animals are kept in the dark so they are deprived of iron. The question is, 'Can veal ever be kosher?' The answer is 'yes' because the animal is slaughtered properly. According to eco-kashrut, however, the answer is 'no.'

We also have to be mindful of industries that oppress workers and provide poor working conditions, she said. "Dangerous pesticides are often used in growing grapes, and farm workers are exposed to them. They may have agreed to work on the farm, but according to Jewish law, it is still a violation, even if they have given permission."

People must start thinking about ethical consumption, she said, not just about what they eat.

"Eco-kashrut is violated if they waste trees or use things that are not recyclable. They need to be mindful and make the right choices. We can observe traditional laws while addressing the concerns of Jews today."

We can make a difference through individual choices and through market power, she said. "We can buy local organic food, and if we stop buying veal, the stores will stop stocking it.

"Buy free-range organic eggs and chickens. Then you'll know the chickens were raised in a humane way.

"I'm not saying that everyone should be a vegetarian, but try to be a selective meat eater, such as on Shabbat or holidays. Try to think about the total chain of consumption."

Clarification

The article "WISE program gets women back to work" (*CJN*, March 2) should have indicated that the program was modelled after Women In New Roles (WINR), a JVS employment assistance program for unemployed or underemployed women over the age of 25. This program, located at Finch Avenue and Keele Street has been in existence since 1990.

About Nutrition

By LISA WEINBERG

Q. I am confused about how many servings of carbohydrates I should be getting in a day and what makes up a serving.

A. This is a very good question and you are not alone. Now that the low-carb and no-carb craze has finally run its course, we are all a little confused about how many carbohydrates to eat. I would suggest that adults should consume three to seven servings per day, four to six being ideal for most healthy weight adults. Men should eat at the higher side and women at the lower end of that range.

What constitutes 1 serving of complex carbohydrates (whole grains, the ones you want to be eating most of the time if not always) is the following: ½ cup cooked oatmeal, 1 cup high fibre cereal, ½ cup whole wheat or multigrain pasta, ½ cup brown or converted rice, 1 slice whole wheat, rye or pumpernickel bread, ½ whole wheat pita (6-inch) or one whole wheat English muffin.

Eat these carbs without fear or guilt. They are heart healthy, they will fill you up and keep hunger down and are all generally healthful.

Q. My 11-year-old daughter has always had a problem with constipation and has for years depended on laxatives and suppositories to help her have a bowel movement. I have tried getting her to make dietary changes, but it is difficult and we have had little success. Any suggestions?

A. In my experience, the best natural and healthful laxative is flaxseed. Your daughter needs to have between one teaspoon and one tablespoon per day, and it must be ground or milled (buy it this way). If it's whole, the body can't break down its outer shell. Add this to sundaes, cereal, yogurt, on top of toast, in pancakes, muffins, cookies, banana bread, on salads, in tuna, etc. It has no taste, just a nutty texture, although it is not a nut.

Try this for a week, and I am confident she'll have success. Make sure to use ground or milled flaxseed, not flaxseed oil. Once you open the flaxseed, store it in your freezer for six months or it goes rancid easily.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN.

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35 CONDOMINIUM FOR RENT
40 CONDOMINIUM FOR SALE/RENT
45 CONDOMINIUM WANTED
50 ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
55 ACCOMMODATION WANTED
60 SHARED ACCOMMODATION AVAILABLE
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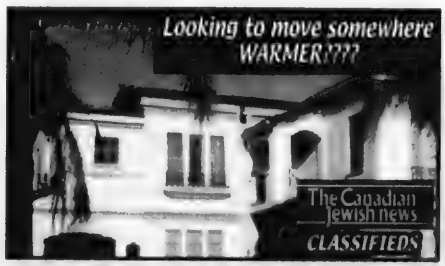

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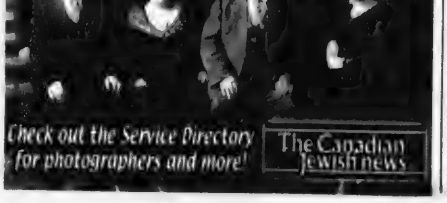

Israel & the Jewish World

Katif youth experiencing psychological difficulties

By RAFAEL D. FRANKEL
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — For two weeks after disengagement, Sabir Atias, 17, couldn't get out of bed in the morning. She broke out in skin rashes, cried for days, and fell into a depression no one could help her escape.

"I'm not a person like that," she said recently, recalling her first days in the caravan park in Nitzan. "But there was no solution to my problem. I couldn't see a light."

Six months later, Atias' smile, so conspicuous during her days in Gush Katif, has returned and her speech is as fast and scattered as a normal teenager. She said while she had learned to deal with the bitterness and sadness she felt in the wake of her family's eviction from Neveh Dekalim, she still harboured feelings very different than those she felt before disengagement.

"I'm tougher now than I was before. Things that would have broken me before don't touch me now. But I'm not hopeful for the future, because I think it's all over, and there's nothing to look forward to here."

As disheartening as her comments sound, Atias is among the better adjusted of the youth from Gush Katif, who, six months after disengagement, suffer a wide range of psychological problems, according to social workers and youth- group leaders who work with them on a daily basis.

A majority of the teens have been receiving poor grades and fighting with their parents, and experiencing feelings of betrayal, disillusionment and alienation. Others, social workers said, have contemplated suicide, been victims or perpetrators of rape and incest, exhibited signs of eating disorders, or forsworn school altogether.

"The teens are going through a huge identity crisis," said Haiya Rabinovitch, a social worker from Achiya, in the Binyamin region, who heads 10 social workers hired by the Committee of Gush Katif Settlers to work with the evacuees. "Many of them are dealing with the effects of terror from the last five years, from friends who died, and they have put up a lot of barriers. Now they are in a vacuum where there is no terror, no struggle [against disengagement], and also they don't feel like they have a home," she said.

These feelings have led to a huge number of teens being unable to concentrate in school, she said, while those already in the army or performing national service are constantly moving around and unable to settle down. "It is very tough for the kids to stick to the tasks they are given," Rabinovitch said.

Given the delicate psychological condition of the 1,200 Gush Katif evacuees aged from 12 to 18, a strong, long-term government effort would be required to adequately care for the youth, Rabinovitch said. She, along with other social workers and youth-group leaders, said the government had not come close to fulfilling its obligation to care for the teens.

"The government isn't dealing with the big picture," said Avi Cohen, who works for the Gush Katif committee as an activities counsellor. "They have just acted in small ways, so they can put a check mark on a piece of paper saying they dealt with the problem."

Asked if the government was making the necessary efforts, Social Affairs Ministry spokesperson Nachum Ido acknowledged that his agency had not been fast enough in responding to the needs of the youth, nor to the psychological problems of the evacuees in general.

"We are only starting the major efforts now," Ido said. "It took a lot of time." According to Ido, the government's poor showing stemmed in part from a lack of understanding of how bad the situation was and also from initial denial on the part of the teens and their parents that they suffered psychological problems.

"Nobody knew exactly what would happen. At the beginning, the [evacuees] themselves didn't know what they needed, didn't know they had a crisis. They didn't want to deal with the social workers," Ido said. "Nobody thought that these youngsters, who are very strong and very idealistic, wouldn't go to school, that they would have antagonism toward their parents."

The ministry is only now getting around to spending most of the NIS 10 million (about $2 million US) budgeted for psychological treatment. The ministry will not finish doling it out until the end of April, Ido said.

A youngster from Atzmona leaving her home last summer. [Isranet photo]

Now that the full magnitude of the problem is understood, he said, the ministry was gearing up for a stronger effort. Thirty social workers are being hired, and funding has been approved for the construction of three clubs for teens in Nitzan and to pay counsellors to run them. Two social workers are being sent to Yad Binyamin, east of Ashdod, where another trailer park is located, to evaluate the problems of the youth there and develop a plan of action, Ido said.

The government has authorized an additional NIS 10 million to be spent on social services for the evacuees in the coming year, he said.

Rabinovitch said the additional social workers, though welcome, would not be enough. She also said the inexperience of many of the social workers hampered the teen's psychological recovery.

"[A lack of] experience is a very big problem," Ido admitted. However, he said, since social workers are employed by local districts, the ministry could not bring in more veteran staff. "But the social workers who are in charge at the Disengagement Authority are experienced, and they can help the younger ones," he said.

That response did not sit well with Cohen. "People are talking about ending their lives, and you're telling me it's too difficult to get the good people. That's crazy," he said. "These teens are our future and they are wonderful kids.

"It doesn't matter if you were for the expulsion or not. We [hurt] them and now we have to build them up again."

People working with the evacuees fear lasting psychological damage had been done during the past six months, alienating the Gush Katif teens from the country they once loved.

"There was a time I read the paper every day, but now it doesn't matter to me at all," Atias said. "I don't care about the state. I still care about the people, but whatever happens now, it wouldn't matter to me if I lived outside the country. No one is treating us like we deserve. The government, the whole system, the people, they all betrayed us. They didn't care enough."

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Athletes inducted into Montreal Jewish Sports Hall of Fame

MONTREAL — Hockey coach Cecil Hart, who guided the Montreal Canadiens to Stanley Cup championships in 1930 and 1931, fitness pioneers Joe and Ben Weider, soccer star Dave Kaplan and the 1949-50 YMHA Blues Canadian senior basketball championship team have been selected for induction into the YM-YWHA Alex Dworkin Montreal Jewish Sports Hall of Fame.

The induction ceremony will take place on May 8. A gala reception for inductees, patrons and gold ticket-holders will precede the ceremony in the Hall of Honour, with proceeds designated for the YM-YWHA youth fitness program, which includes scholarships for needy youth.

Ronald Corey, former president of the Montreal Canadiens, is honorary chair of the event.

The Weider brothers, Kaplan and the surviving members of the basketball team – Irving Kott, Ben Lands, Joey Riehman, Ben Tissenbaum, Sol Tolchinsky, Erie Ulrich, and Murray Waxman – are expected to attend the event.

Hart will be inducted posthumously, as will the deceased members of the basketball team, Doodie Bloomfield, Jack Golfman, Mendy Morein, Johnny Share, Moe Spiegel, and Sam Stein.

Hart, a direct descendent of Aaron Hart, the first Jewish settler in Canada, was born in 1883 and died in 1940. He was an all-around sportsman who pioneered amateur hockey in Canada and moved to professional hockey in 1921, when he helped negotiate the sale of the Montreal Canadiens.

Hart coached the Montreal Maroons in the 1924-25 season but returned to the Habs in 1926 when the team moved to the hallowed Montreal Forum.

In the eight seasons he coached the Canadiens, from 1926 to 1932 and 1936 to 1939, his teams never missed the playoffs, winning Stanley Cups in 1930 and 1931, the first time the Habs won back-to-back titles.

Overall, Hart posted a career NHL coaching record of 196-125-73. Emphasizing speed on the ice, he helped lay the groundwork that made the Canadiens one of sport's most dominant franchises.

Cecil Hart

A tough competitor, he was respected as a true sportsman by players and opponents alike. The Hart Memorial Trophy for the NHL's most valuable player is named after him. The original Hart Trophy, donated to the NHL by his father in 1923, was retired to the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1960 and replaced by the Hart Memorial Trophy.

The Weider brothers, born into a poor Montreal family, decided to get fit at a young age, in order to protect themselves from neighbourhood bullies. From these humble beginnings, Joe and Ben became world leaders in promoting the benefits of exercise and fitness, changing the face of bodybuilding and creating an empire based on fitness publications, bodybuilding equipment and nutritional supplements.

Joe, who was born in 1922, launched the Weider magazine business in Montreal in 1940 and was later joined by his brother, Ben, who was born in 1924. Ben served in the Canadian Army and is now an honorary colonel of the 62nd Field Artillery Regiment of Shawinigan, Que. After Ben's discharge in 1945, the brothers founded Weider Sports Equipment and Weider Health and Fitness, the first step on the road to the development of their multimillion-dollar fitness and bodybuilding business. Their products are sold all over the world.

While involved in all aspects of the business, Ben concentrated on building the International Federation of Body Builders (IFBB), which he founded in 1945. He is still president of the federation, which currently has 173 national affiliates, making it one of the world's largest sporting associations. In 1998, the International Olympic Committee granted provisional recognition to the IFFB, probably the most important of Ben's accomplishments after 52 years of determination and persistence.

Although they are in their 80s, Joe and Ben continue to travel the globe, promoting fitness and strength-conditioning as key factors in the collective health of citizens the world over.

Kaplan, a longtime Montrealer, was an outstanding athlete in soccer, football, hockey, baseball, track and field and tennis, but earned a national reputation as a goalkeeper with the Montreal Hakoah soccer team from 1948 until 1955.

Born in Winnipeg in 1923, Kaplan played football in college and with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. He also played hockey with several Winnipeg teams, including the RCAF team after he became an airman during the war. With the war over, he moved to Montreal in 1946, playing various sports. He joined the Hakoah Soccer Club on its formation in 1948 and was named its MVP in 1949.

In 1950, he was selected as goalkeeper for the Montreal All Stars in a pair of international soccer games against Manchester United and the national team from England. He was game MVP against Manchester United.

The Y Blues team was a major factor in Canadian basketball for several years. After winning the eastern championship, the 1949-50 team won the national title by beating the University of Manitoba in a best of five series in Montreal.

The Montreal Jewish Sports Hall of Fame is dedicated to Montreal athletes and teams that have recorded outstanding accomplishments, as well as builders and benefactors whose contribution to sports is acknowledged in Canada and internationally.

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Winter Maccabee games brings Slovak Jews together

By DINAH A. SPRITZER
JTA

BANKSA BYSTRICA, Slovakia — More than 170 Slovak Jews trudged through deep snow on poorly marked paths in remote central Slovakia recently to compete in the Winter Maccabee games, which marked the 70th anniversary of the last Winter Maccabee games, held before World War II.

Several athletes from the Czech Jewish community also joined, as did an Israeli who resides in Prague.

The last Europe-wide Winter Maccabee games, held in 1936 in Banksa Bystrica, attracted 5,000 participants from around the world. The games were the second-largest sports event in what was then Czechoslovakia.

Following a long hiatus as a result of World War II and then Communism, the Slovak division of the worldwide Jewish sports organization was relaunched 11 years ago with only a handful of enthusiasts.

Gertrude Stiffelova, who watched the 1936 games as an eight-year-old, returned to watch the 2006 competition.

"It's a wonder to be here," she told the crowd at a ceremony following a day of slalom skiing and snowboarding. She received an award just for showing up.

Lucie Belanova, a Jew from Banksa Bystrica who works at a Bratislava bank, said. "I guess, for us," being Jewish "is a social thing."

Belanova believes that no Jew in Banksa Bystrica can read or speak Hebrew.

There are approximately 3,000 Jews in Slovakia today. In contrast to the Czech Republic, where the 1990s were a time of rebirth for Jewish communities, Slovak Jews suffered during the 1990s under Vladimir Meciar, whose supporters included openly anti-Semitic nationalists.

"My children are absolutely free to celebrate their Jewish identity here in a way that I could have never imagined," said Dagmar Gavornikova, chair of the Slovak Maccabee organization. "So many of my generation left in 1968 after the [Soviet] invasion of Czechoslovakia.

"We thought those of us here were the last generation of Slovak Jews," she added. "These games show we were wrong."

Several competitors said they never go to synagogue, but were glad to associate Judaism with something positive like sports, rather than something negative like anti-Semitism.

In contrast to neighbouring Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, Slovakia did not undergo full democratization until 10 years after the end of communism in the region. Slovak government officials are now trying to promote religious and ethnic tolerance, but a recent survey indicated that one in three Slovakians would prefer not to live next door to a Jew.

Jana Romanova, 25, a reporter for Slovak television, says she's the only openly Jewish journalist at the station.

"There are a few others there, but they hide it," said the former president of the Slovak Union of Jewish Youth.

Asked to describe her interaction with non-Jews in mostly Catholic Slovakia, she jokes, "When I told someone I was Jewish, she thought we were all dead."

The Jewish take on takeovers

Money Matters

Rabbi Jay Kelman C.A.

Acquiring other companies has become a favourite method of corporate growth. With many large corporations awash in cash, and given the slow nature of internal growth, many companies are on the lookout for takeover targets.

The amount of such activity is often a barometer of general economic conditions. It was reported this month that merger-and-acquisition activity in Canada jumped 47 per cent to a near-record $166 billion last year amid "ideal market conditions," according to the investment banking firm Crosbie & Company.

Despite the attendant job cuts that usually follow, there is nothing inherently improper about such activity. The increased efficiencies that are often generated are beneficial to economic growth over the long term, thus making society better off. This is especially true when the targeted firm is inefficient. In such cases, attempts by management to block such takeovers would violate the prohibition of *lifnei iver*, of giving bad advice to their bosses, namely the shareholders.

Care should be taken to ensure that the individuals affected are treated fairly and equitably as they are forced to find new employment opportunities, but conceptually this is no different than the introduction of new technologies that benefit society while negatively affecting some people. What this means in practice is that, if at all possible, changes should be made gradually so that affected workers have time to train for and secure other employment.

While voluntary takeovers present few ethical issues, hostile takeovers are a different matter. With acquisitive companies often finding few willing partners, pressure tactics may be exerted on unwilling targets. Barrick Gold's successful $10.4-billion (U.S.) bid for Placer Dome is just the latest example.

Jewish law rejects any form of pressure tactics and coercion, whether done personally, through others or even through the media. Even designing scenarios on how to pry an object away from another person is prohibited. It not only violates the prohibitions on jealously (*lo tachmod*) and desiring (*lo titaveh*), it's also considered a form of theft. Some authorities maintain that "theft" occurs even if the price paid is above market value. While unethical, such tactics do not label one an evil person whose testimony would not be accepted in a court of law. Presumably, the willingness to pay for the object of desire demonstrates some form of honesty. In addition, continued pressure to sell would violate *ona'at devarim*, the causing of needless mental anguish to others.

At times, pressure tactics would be forbidden even in the context of a willing buyer and seller. In certain transactions, it's understood that bargaining is part of the sales process, and thus there would be no problem putting in a lower bid than the asking price. However, once an offer is rejected, attempts to try and convince the party to accept the same offer would be unwarranted.

Similar restrictions are placed on sellers. Absent explicit instructions, it would not be unethical for a telemarketer to try and sell you something. If, however, you indicate your desire to be left alone it would be unethical to continue with a sales pitch. As Rabbi Aaron Levine points out in his recent work, *Moral Issues of the Marketplace*, Jewish law does allow some forms of pressure to induce charitable giving – the "salesman" is facilitating an obligatory act. Nonetheless, such pressure would only be allowed in general terms. Undue pressure for a particular cause is not justified as a donor can rightfully say that while he or she must give charity, they don't have to give to any particular cause.

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3/4 c sugar
1 tbsp chili-garlic sauce

1/4 cup thinly sliced green onions

steamed white rice

Mix oil, cilantro, soy sauce, 2 tbsp garlic, ginger, 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper in large bowl. Add chicken wings; turn to coat. Cover; refrigerate 2 hrs. Preheat oven to 400°F. Using tongs, transfer chicken wings to large baking sheet. Bake about 20 mins.

Combine vinegar, sugar, water, chili-garlic sauce, 1/2 tbsp garlic, remaining crushed red pepper in medium saucepan. Bring to boil; reduce heat; simmer until glaze thickens to syrup consistency, about 20 mins. Transfer baked chicken wings to large bowl. Pour glaze over; toss to coat. Place chicken wings atop steamed white rice. Sprinkle with green onions.

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SOLDIER MAKES A STATEMENT: The inscription on the helmet worn by the Israel Defence Forces soldier suggests one of his key values and purposes. He was on duty at a demonstration last week near the Arab village of Beit Sira, northwest of Ramallah, against the security fence being built by Israel. [Israel Sun photo]

A place called Shalom

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

I believe our world has been at war since 9/11. The war we are fighting might be a "minor war" if we were to compare it to World War II, however, it is made up of many of the same ugly ingredients as major ones.

Firstly, on this battlefront a very sinister and mad cloud hangs over the world and a deeply embedded hatred lies in the soldiers who direct and fight this war. Myriads of people have died, been maimed and/or have had their lives destroyed because of this hovering black patch of ruin.

Within the war zone, a weapon best described as "sad" has been created – perhaps one of the most unfathomable weapons ever manufactured by human beings – the suicide bomber.

We can shut down chemical weapons and we can dismantle nuclear warheads. But where do we find the "on-off" switch for a living, breathing human being whose sights are squarely set on destroying his or her enemies using his or her skin, skull and skeleton as the trigger and explosive? The development of such a weapon, at its essence, is the contamination of the holy of holies – our bodies and souls created in the image of God. What has crept into the psyches of those who have chosen to use our children as our choice of weapons, when missiles stand taller than skyscrapers?

If indeed we are at war, then let us fight door to door – warriors all of us. But as the bloodied earth of battle lies at our feet, we must also know that at some point the fighting will end, the war will be over and that soaking red wetness will dry.

And when it does, the world will make amends for its lapse in sanity and will be kinder out of a deep existential drive to regain equilibrium between love and hate. Let us therefore begin today in preparation for that moment by setting a table of harmony for every nation, village, rogue and scoundrel so they can lay down their arms and pursue a serious process, with a hallowed intent – world peace.

In order to do this, we, the Jewish people, must remember the words, notes and images we were taught through Holocaust education. As partners in creating world peace, we must recall the stories of the survivors we listened to, recount the words we read in the Holocaust books and listen to the mournful songs sung by choirs, soloists and symphonies recalling the marches and the words of the prayer *Shema* on the lips of our victims.

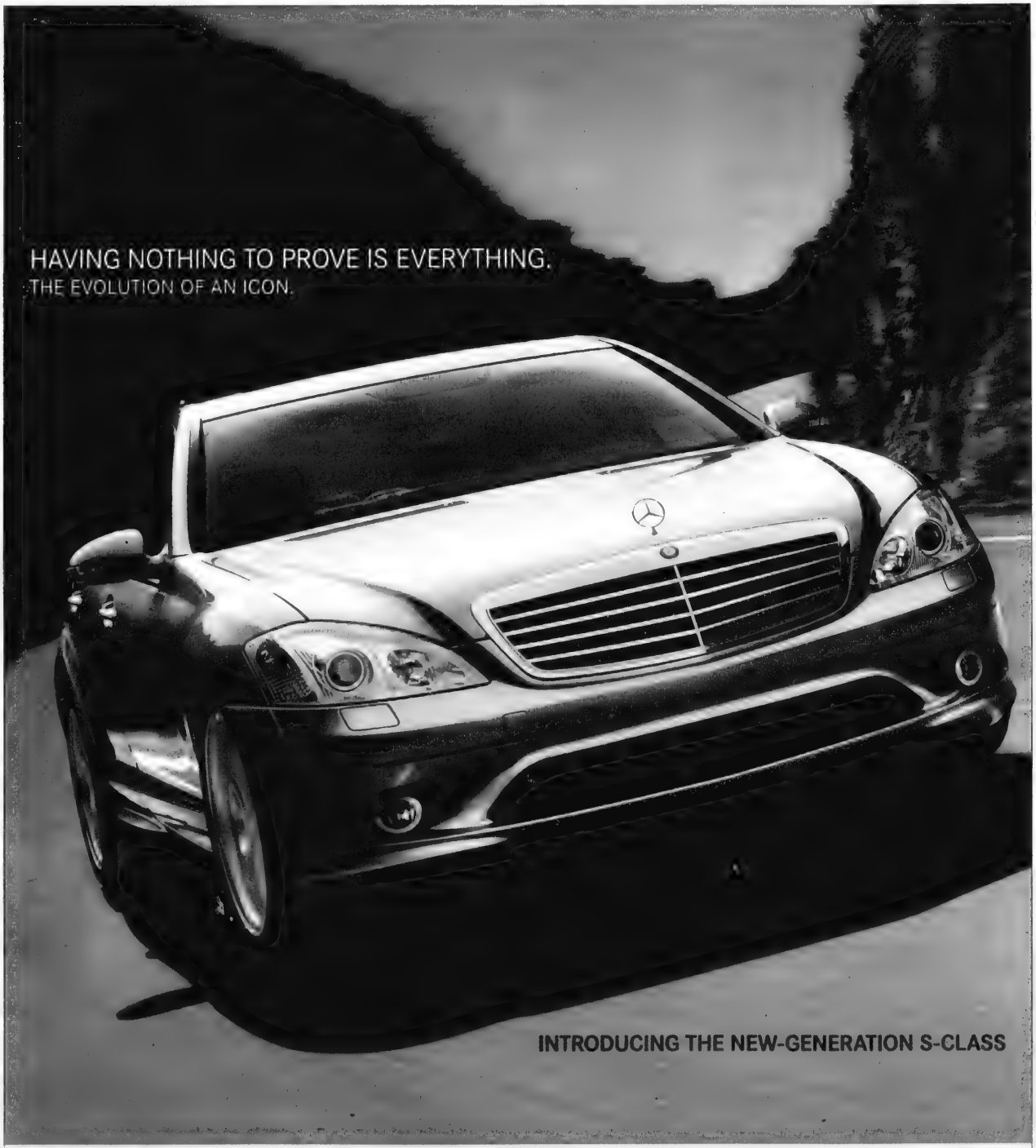
We must recall what we learned with great clarity so we can use it to bring peace to our frightened world. Never again!

Peace will come when we finally decide it is welcome; when we can no longer stand the violence and the narcissistic belief one nation is greater than an other. These ideas must be taught to our children, in elementary and high school, and at university. They must be expressed by our rabbis, priests and imams in bellowing voices.

It is within us to find this place called Shalom. So arm yourselves as much as you need to melt down the tyranny of bad men everywhere, but consider, too, that our mightiest weapon, the one that will ultimately conquer the planet, is a heartfelt rocket capped with justice and loaded with understanding and empathy, and has the ability to redecorate our globe with Godliness.

Are you not weary of the murderers, pillagers and pirates; hungry for serenity; starved for it, so much so you will give everything you have for peace – *Frieden* (German), *Nimuhore* (Rwandan), *Mir* (Russian), *Shalom* (Hebrew)? Are we not tired enough? Are we not awake enough?

avrum@veahavta.org SUDAN!



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This Week

National

Visiting Israel will no longer affect your insurance premiums. *Page 3*

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Proud Polish Catholic is drawn to her hidden Judaism. *Page 11*

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Georgia shul looks like a majestic Gothic church. *Travel Talk.* *Page 39*

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www.cjnews.com
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40008694
Publication Mail Registration #07694

Olmert pledges final borders by 2010

Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Israel's permanent borders will be established in the next four years, and at the same time, construction will begin in the controversial E1 section between Ma'aleh Adumim and Jerusalem, acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told the *Jerusalem Post* last week.

He also said he has no intention of meeting Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas after the elections.

"The dominant force in the PA is Hamas. Then why [meet]?" he asked. "We do not meet as two graduates from the same high school. There can only be a reason for a meeting if it serves a political purpose. If the government is a Hamas one, what political purpose can it serve?"

Aim is to preserve a large and stable Jewish majority

Olmert said that within the next four years he intends to "get to Israel's permanent borders, whereby we will completely separate from the majority of the Palestinian population and preserve a large and stable Jewish majority in Israel."

This was the first time Olmert has put a time frame on what he has referred to in the past as Israel's most pressing issue – determining its final borders.

He refused to discuss in detail where he envisioned the borders would run, saying only that his broad guidelines included Gush Etzion, the "Jerusalem envelope," Ma'aleh Adumim, the Ariel region and the "Jordan River as a security border."

He pointedly did not sign off on remarks made by Avi Dichter, No. 5 on Kadima's list, who said the settlement blocs that Israel would retain also included the Jordan Valley, Ofra-Beit El, Karnei Shomron-Kedumim and Kiryat Arba-Hebron.

"Dichter is perhaps a candidate to be in the next government, depending on how things develop, but he is not poised to be prime minister," Olmert said.

Olmert's pledge to build E1 within the next four years came six months after he became the first senior Israeli official to publicly confirm

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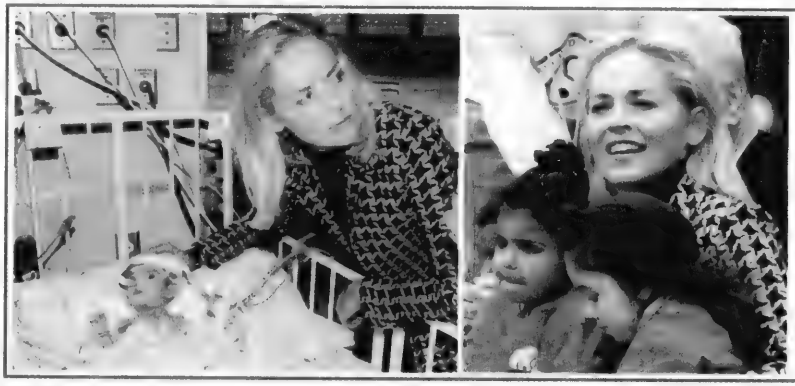

STONE ROLLS THROUGH ISRAEL

Actress Sharon Stone made her first visit to Israel last week with a schedule that included visits to the Galilee, Negev, Dead Sea, Massada, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. One of the key purposes of her trip was to support the work of the Peres Center for Peace, whose many projects include programs for the well-being of Israeli and Palestinian children. Stone visited Tel Hashomer Hospital, left, and the Jaffa Tennis Center, right. Stone celebrated her 48th birthday in Israel.

[Israel Sun photo]

Canada shifts vote on UN resolution

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Only one month into its mandate, the Conservative government of Stephen Harper has shifted from previous Canadian foreign policy, voting against a UN resolution that targeted Israel.

Canada joined the United States late last week as the only two countries to oppose a resolution that called on Israel to allow Palestinian refugee women and children to return to Israeli territory. The vote was 41-2 in favour of the non-binding resolution, passed by the UN Economic and Social Council (UNESC). Last year, Canada abstained on the resolution, but according to a report in the *Globe and Mail*, Canada's UN delegation was instructed by Ottawa to oppose the censure of Israel this time.

Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay said the vote "was simply a signal that unfortunately after a year, there had been no movement, there had been no progress in a direction that we hoped, and that is one of more balance and a greater reflection of sensitivity to both sides."

He told the *Globe* the vote was not an indicator of how Canada would vote on future Mideast resolutions.

The Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) welcomed Canada's vote. Shimon Fogel, CEO of the organization, said, "This government is showing some really meaningful resolve in continuing and expanding on what the previous government had begun to do."

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Shabbat Parah: Ki Tisa
Candlelighting: 6:08
Havdallah: 7:13
Greater Toronto Area

U.K.'s Straw promises to deal with Israel's nukes — please see page 31

The News in Brief

CANADA

Mostyn to Ottawa

OTTAWA — B'nai Brith Canada has named defeated federal Conservative candidate Michael Mostyn as its new director of government relations. Mostyn, a Toronto lawyer, lost to Liberal Ken Dryden in the 2004 and 2006 elections.

Rabbinic Celebration

NEW YORK — Six Canadians will be among 185 rabbis to formally celebrate their ordination on March 26 at the largest-ever ordination ceremony of Yeshiva University's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary (REITS). The six are rabbis Barry Kislowicz and Yehuda Sarna of Montreal; Eliav Silverman, Natan Kapustin and Yitchak Motzen of Toronto; and Yonah Levant of Calgary. Founded in 1896, RIETS has graduated more than 2,700 rabbis.

WORLD

Saudis Host Meeting

RIYADH — Saudi Arabia is hosting a conference this week aimed at promoting a boycott of Israel. It comes despite a Saudi pledge to the United States to end its participation in the boycott, the *Jerusalem Post* reported. The meeting was to be attended by representatives of the 57-member Organization of Islamic States.

Israelis on Ground?

LONDON — Israeli special forces are searching for secret nuclear sites in Iran, Britain's *Sunday Times* reported. Citing an Israeli intelligence source, the *Times* said Israel had dispatched commandos to seek out undeclared Iranian uranium enrichment facilities. The secret units reportedly entered Iran through a base in northern Iraq with U.S. approval. Israeli officials denied the report.

Divestment Rejected

LONDON — The Anglican Church's financial advisers recommended against divesting from Caterpillar for doing business with Israel. Its ethical investment advisory group voted unanimously last week against divestment, saying it "could find no compelling evidence that Caterpillar is or has been complicit in human rights abuses." The vote contravenes a Feb. 6 vote by the church's General Synod. Israel uses Caterpillar vehicles when it razes homes in Palestinian areas as part of counterterrorism efforts, and the synod said it would revisit the issue if there are new Caterpillar sales to Israel for use in house razing.

Anti-Zionists in Iran

TEHRAN — A delegation from the Jewish anti-Zionist group Neturei Karta visited Iran last week. It was visiting the Islamic republic to show support for Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his calls to eliminate Israel, the *Jerusalem Post* reported. Speaking to Iran's state-run radio, the group called for "the disintegration of the Zionist regime." The small haredi group opposes Israel's existence and regularly sides with anti-Zionist movements.

New Claims Payouts

NEW YORK — The International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims (ICHEIC) is offering $7 million (US) to Holocaust survivors and their heirs. The new money comes from eastern European claims on policies with insurance companies that were liquidated or nationalized after World War II and have no successor firms. The funds are the third set of grants made by ICHEIC and would bring the total distributed to $14.8 million. Established in 1998 to settle unpaid Holocaust-era insurance claims, the ICHEIC has been accused of sloppy management, foot-dragging in claims processing and favouring European insurers.

No Change on Gays

NEW YORK — The Conservative movement's policy on gays will remain unchanged until at least December. During a two-day meeting of the Rabbinical Assembly's committee on Jewish law and standards last week, authors of four responsa on the status of homosexuality in the movement were asked to make revisions in advance of a December vote on the issue. The decision reaffirms the status quo for now, and means the movement's 1992 decision barring openly gay people from its rabbinical schools and forbidding its rabbis to perform same-sex marriages will remain in place.

Sharansky Raps Bush on Democratic Policy

LOS ANGELES — Natan Sharansky said U.S. President George W. Bush's policy of democratization has failed because Bush is rushing tyrannies to elections.

Natan Sharansky

Bush often cites Sharansky, an ex-Israeli cabinet minister and refusenik who has written a book on the issue, in touting democratic reforms in the Arab world.

"Despite what I believe to be the president's genuine commitment to promote sweeping change, the policy shift hasn't matched the rhetoric, with one glaring exception: an intense focus on holding elections everywhere as quickly as possible," Sharansky wrote March 5 in the *Los Angeles Times*. "This has been a mistake because, although elections are part of the democratic process, they are never a substitute for it."

One result, Sharansky said, was the victory of Hamas, a terrorist group, in Jan. 25 Palestinian Authority legislative elections. Instead of rushing elections, he said, the focus should be on building and protecting a free society.

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The Canadian Jewish news

Vol. XXXVI, No. 12 (1,739)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation 42,245 copies.
Total paid circulation 41,398 copies

CCNA verified circulation Feb 9, 2006

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada $35.95, 1 yr. incl. GST.
$63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST.
U.S.A. $100 U.S funds, 1 yr
All other countries $110 U.S funds, 1 yr

Postmaster Please return 2985 and changes of address to Toronto office

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #0010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

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Insurance restrictions lifted for travellers to Israel

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It appears retail purchasers of life insurance will no longer have to pay a premium if they wish to visit Israel.

Canadian insurance companies are informing brokers that they will no longer require extra payment or write policies with exclusions for those who travel to Israel, said David Brown, a partner with insurer and financial planner Al G. Brown & Associates.

That means most people planning to visit the Jewish state will no longer have to be concerned whether the visit will affect their coverage.

"I think this is a major step forward for people who want to travel to Israel," Brown said.

Since at least 2000 – coinciding with the outbreak of the Palestinian intifadah – insurers have placed limitations on policy holders who are planning to visit Israel. At first, insurers said they would not issue policies for those planning a trip, but after lobbying from brokers and customers, the companies modified their position, agreeing to write policies but only with exclusionary clauses removing their liability if someone died in Israel, or by requiring an additional premium.

Canadian insurers took that course after international re-insurers, which take on the bulk of the risk in many life insurance policies, determined that covering visitors to Israel was too risky, Brown said.

From the outset, Brown contended there was no statistical data to back up that belief. Legislators in the United States seem to have agreed. A number of states, including California, Colorado and Georgia, have laws making it illegal for insurers to deny life insurance to people who travel to Israel. A similar bill is pending in the U.S. Congress.

David Brown

The proposed U.S. legislation, coupled with lawsuits south of the border and the improved security situation in Israel, seems to have convinced the giant European re-insurers to re-evaluate the risk levels of travelling to Israel, Brown said. Travellers to the West Bank and Gaza will still face extra costs or exclusions, he added.

Information Brown has received from Canadian insurers suggest premium-free and condition-free life insurance policies for those who plan to visit Israel will be limited to those whose visit is less than eight weeks and whose policy does not exceed $5 million.

"They should be able to get a standard life insurance contract without a [premium] rating or travel exclusion for Israel," he said.

But Brown suggested that even those travellers who may spend more time in Israel might be able to get life insurance. "I think these are soft guidelines and someone who doesn't fit within the guidelines should still submit their application," he said.

As for those who already own life insurance policies containing exclusion clauses, Brown said there has been no indication yet of a possible transition formula.

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Greater Toronto Area

Children inspiring children

From the editor's desk

It is hard to believe that it was simply cold, random chance that brought together the lives of a young teacher in Tokyo – Fumiko Ishioka – and a septuagenarian Toronto businessman – George Brady – more than five years ago. Too much dazzling goodness has sparked from the meeting of their deeply humane, steadfast, flint-like natures.

Their story – the poignant circumstances of their meeting and the educational work they have carried on since then - became the powerful, award-winning story called *Hana's Suitcase*. As most readers of *The CJN* know, Hana was Brady's younger sister. And the suitcase is the one she carried with her to Auschwitz in 1944 on the last journey of her young life.

Some five years ago, Brady's good friend Marty Goldberg told *The CJN* about Fumiko's unprecedented work in Tokyo and of her remarkable meeting with George. *CJN* staff writer Paul Lungen wrote the story. CBC writer/producer Karen Levine read it in *The CJN* and was so moved that she produced a radio documentary about Fumiko, George and Hana's suitcase that aired on the CBC. Levine was then persuaded to convert the documentary into a children's book that was published by Second Story Press. *Hana's Suitcase* was the brilliant result.

The story is an astonishingly resonating tale for youngsters that is currently being read and told around the globe in some 30 different languages. It intermingles the details of Hana's life in Europe with the efforts of Ishioka, the director of the Tokyo Holocaust Education Resource Centre, and her eight- to 18-year-old students, appropriately called the Small Wings, more than 50 years after Hana lived, to discover Hana's fate. Those efforts led to their life-altering encounter with Hana's only surviving immediate family member, her older brother, George.

As of last week, thankfully, *Hana's Suitcase* can also be seen on stage. Renowned Canadian playwright Emil Sher has adapted the book into a compelling play. Directed by Allen MacInnis, *Hana's Suitcase* is being performed until April 27 in Toronto at the Lorraine Kimsa Theatre for Young People.

It is a moving, emotion-evoking production. MacInnis' direction is tight, well-paced, creatively meshing the children's present search for Hana's ultimate fate with the tragedy of the past they eventually discover.

The sets are a clever aid to the telling of the tale that depict Tokyo, the Bradys' home in Nove Mesto, Czechoslovakia, their prison in Theriesenstadt and their final stop in Auschwitz. Whether as a backdrop for archival film footage or as pieces of torn fragments of a life that slowly find their way together again, the sets combine function with esthetic, stark, minimalist punctuations to the narrative told by the actors.

And the actors execute their roles thoughtfully, sensitively, with striking deference alternatively to the wounding details of Hana's life and the healing, guileless naivetés of the Small Wings.

The performance last Sunday was a special benefit production whose proceeds were dedicated to the Japanese Holocaust Resource Centre and Ishioka's ongoing research and promotion of tolerance around the world. Ishioka and Brady were in attendance and addressed the audience both before and after the production.

Ishioka spoke confidently and forthrightly, praising Brady for his courage and his generosity of soul.

"It's been five years since I came to Canada to meet George. Through learning about the Holocaust, the children in Japan learn about what is important to make the world a better place.

"All the letters, e-mails, poems, projects and songs exchanged among the children have been so inspirational for me. We will share with Japanese children, the e-mails and stories of Canadian children.

"It is a beautiful example of children inspiring children. Hana has given me a great gift."

Brady spoke softly, almost self-consciously, praising Fumiko for her courage and her generosity of soul.

"Fumiko has visited over 200 schools in Japan sharing with children the story of *Hana's Suitcase*. She is responsible for teaching millions of children about tolerance and respect for each other."

In the play, the character of Fumiko tells her young charges, "When you open hearts, you open minds."

Five years ago, far away in Tokyo, the Small Wings of Fumiko Ishioka sent their message of "wanting to do good in the world" to George Brady in Toronto who, with tears in his disbelieving eyes, joined with them in their cause. Now Small Wings and Survivor together bring that message to millions more "small wings" around the world, in the prayerful hope that their minds and hearts too will be opened to the important story of *Hana's Suitcase*.

– *MBD*

SeeJN

QUILT ARTISTS

Grade 7 student Liane Stein, right, and junior kindergartner Hallie Benjamin worked hard in the quilt studio at the Toronto Heschel School's annual arts festival and sale, which drew close to 1,000 people on March 5. The girls were creating a square for a community quilt that will honour Heschel's 10th anniversary and its move to one amalgamated campus next fall.

Biggest threat in Israel is 'internal intolerance'

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Israel has "come back to life" compared to a few short years ago, says the editor-in-chief of the *Jerusalem Post*.

Unemployment is down, although there are economic problems, including a fast-growing gap between rich and poor, David Horovitz told members of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's real estate cabinet at the Intercontinental Hotel last week.

David Horovitz

"The situation is improving, but it's fragile," said Horovitz, who edited the *Jerusalem Report* magazine before moving to the *Post*.

Also, he noted, disengagement from Gaza is "not over... it left many scars. People are still living in hotels. There are people who haven't been reacquainted with their belongings because they haven't found accommodations." In Nitzan, he said, there is 60 to 80 percent unemployment among people who were all employed in their previous homes.

"There's a tremendous sense of alienation among a large proportion of Orthodox Jews... It's very important that we have elections now."

The biggest threat in Israel, Horovitz believes, is internal intolerance and hostility between Jews themselves. "I encourage you... to help us absorb that rich Diaspora tradition of internal Jewish harmony," he said, alluding particularly to federations where "you take for granted" that Jews from diverse religious backgrounds work together.

Although some people have been predicting a "new intifadah" since Hamas won recent elections in the Palestinian Authority, Horovitz said the old intifadah didn't really end.

"Israel got more effective at fighting terrorism... We started building the security barrier, and making arrests on a much larger scale."

He said he suspects there's not a single Israeli family unaffected by terrorism. His wife was in Jerusalem's Café Hillel a few hours before it was blown up in 2003. She also witnessed the immediate aftermath of a bus bombing while taking their children to school, said the 43-year-old editor and book author, who made aliyah from England in 1983.

Two revolutions have taken place recently in Israel, Horovitz said. In addition to Sharon's "radical" political shift leftward, the Palestinians experienced a "post-Arafat" revolution, when the late PA president Yasser Arafat was succeeded by Mahmoud Abbas, "who was perceived in the Israeli mainstream as a much better person."

Horovitz recalled that Sharon himself told him last year in an interview that Abbas was well-intentioned.

"[Abbas] condemned terrorism, usually as being counterproductive, [but] occasionally as being morally wrong," Horovitz said. He added that he believes Abbas was unwilling to take the risks involved in dismantling Hamas and locking up bombers.

"At the same time as he was failing from the Israeli point of view to counter terrorism, he was failing from the Palestinian public's point of view to reform the way the PA governed," said Horovitz, who was in Ramallah 10 days before the PA elections. He added it was "obvious" that many Palestinians were going to vote for Hamas.

"It seems to me that ordinary Palestinians in very large numbers voted for Hamas primarily because they were totally fed up with the corruption of the Fatah leadership.

"It's not that they were voting for Hamas because of the suicide bombers, [but] plainly the fact that Hamas is determinedly opposed to Israel's existence and the fact it has engaged in relentless terrorism was not enough to deter them."

Horovitz disagrees with people who say Hamas may become more moderate. From a Muslim religious standpoint, it can't accept the notion of Jewish sovereignty, he said.

It may issue some kind of five- or 10-year *hudna*, he suggested, using the Islamic term for a type of ceasefire. However, he noted, the Islamic precedent would point to Hamas "building up [its] military ability so [it] can eventually vanquish the enemy."

He believes the only prospect of forcing Hamas to change its position "would be if money isn't there to govern." There are ways to channel funding directly to Palestinian recipients without going through Hamas, he said.

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Kadima election strategy divisive, editor says

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Toward the end of her scathing critique of the state of Israeli politics, *Jerusalem Post* columnist Caroline Glick looked up at the audience at the Shaarei Tefillah Congregation, and made an admission.

It pained her to have to describe the Israeli government in such unflattering terms, she conceded.

Though clearly uncomfortable, Glick continued a withering attack on Israeli policy, describing it by turns as reckless, despicable, divisive and morally unjustifiable.

"Is this the beginning of the destruction of the State of Israel or the end of the self-destruction of the Jewish people?" she asked at one point.

A native of Chicago who served in the Israel Defence Forces for five years after making aliyah, Glick said the government of Israel is pursuing policies that endanger the interests of Israel and its Jewish citizens.

It is not protecting Israelis from Hamas, Iran or Hezbollah, each of which now have a base in Gaza, while attempting to turn Israeli society against settlers, wrongly painting them as the reason for an absence of peace with the Palestinians, she said.

Kadima, the centrist part established by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, who is in hospital in a coma after suffering a stroke, is courting voters for the March 28 election by demonizing settlers, Glick said.

Not only is the portrayal of the settlers inaccurate, but it alienates a key element of Israeli society for no good purpose, she argued. "Kadima is eroding the will of the people to fight," she said. "How can a nation survive if it says its people are the problem, not the enemy that is trying to kill them?"

Glick, deputy managing editor of the *Jerusalem Post*, was speaking on the topic "Dangerous times for Israel and the Jewish people," as a guest of the Toronto Zionist Council and Shaarei Tefillah. Her address followed the presentation of a short film about the dismantling and forced evacuation of the tiny settlement of Amona, located nine kilometres north of Jerusalem. The film, presented by Toronto businessman Israel Kaplan, showed repeated instances of violent Israeli police attacks on settlers and their supporters.

Glick said "Amona did not come out of thin air." She traced the ultimate genesis of the event to a decision by Sharon in December 2003 to reverse his campaign promise not to withdraw unilaterally from territories – a campaign promise that earned him a parliamentary majority in coalition with Zionist religious parties, she said.

Sharon reached his decision to withdraw from Gaza and several West Bank settlements after consulting only with his sons, his political advisors and his communications consultants, shutting out the Israeli defence and security establishment. He went ahead with the withdrawal even after he was advised that serious security consequences would result. The IDF's chief of staff, Moshe Ya'alon, was fired in 2005 after he warned of the security threats, Glick said.

Sharon was warned that a unilateral withdrawal would be seen as a victory by the forces of global jihad, and that Ashkelon, just north of the Gaza border, as well as its power station and the Eilat/Ashkelon pipeline, would be put in jeopardy, and that Gaza would become a terror base like Afghanistan under the Taliban.

All these consequences have come to pass, Glick stated, with Gaza turned into a forward base for Hamas, Hezbollah (a client of Iran) and even Al Qaeda.

Heavy arms such as mortars, anti-aircraft missiles and anti-tank weapons are being smuggled in, and these will eventually find their way to the West Bank, placing Jerusalem and even Ben-Gurion International Airport within range of Palestinian fire, she said.

Imagine the consequences to the Israeli economy if a rocket lands near the airport, Glick suggested.

Iran, she continued, has promised to give Hamas $250 million (US) because "it wants to control what happens in the Palestinian Authority."

Hamas, she said, are "present-day Nazis" who threaten to destroy Israel and kill Jews. "They say it because they mean it and they are doing everything they can to do it."

In the face of these threats, the Israeli government under Kadima has turned its focus not on Israel's real enemies, but on the settlers, "demonizing and dehumanizing" them and religious Zionists. They have been called "messianics, fascists [who] incite violence and refuse to acknowledge the rule of law," she said.

"This is the strategy of Kadima to win," she added.

Glick – who served as assistant foreign policy advisor to former Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu, a longtime rival of Sharon's when they were both in the Likud party – suggested that contrary to Kadima's assertions, settlers are key to Israel's survival and viability.

She pointed to Lebanon as a test case. Israel lost control of southern Lebanon when it chose to base its troops in fortified positions and ceased patrolling the highways. That turned the countryside over to Hezbollah, leading to Israel's eventual withdrawal, she said.

Under the Oslo accords, Israel turned over large areas of the West Bank to the Palestinian Authority and stopped patrolling Palestinian cities. That gave Palestinians freedom to launch murderous terrorist attacks, culminating in the March 2002 wave of violence in which 130 Israelis were killed and no one felt safe anywhere, Glick said.

When the IDF responded with Operation Defensive Shield, it retook Palestinian towns and roads and brought the war to the Palestinians. Because of the demands of settlers to be able to come and go freely, the IDF patrols bypass roads and the result has been fewer attacks against Israel, she added.

Glick urged Canadian Jews to speak out against the policy of demonizing settlers and blaming them for the continuing conflict. She said Canadians can refuse to donate money to an Israeli government that "persecutes" Jews.

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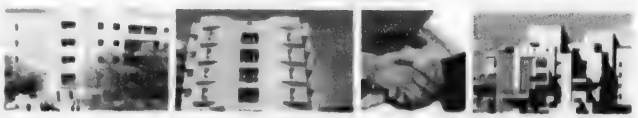

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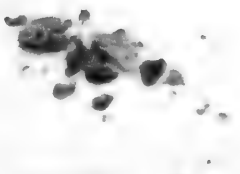

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Group advocates for Israeli Arabs in election run-up

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

Israel's Arab citizens – who represent 20 per cent of the country's population – lack proportionate access to state resources in areas such as health care, education and economic development, said an executive director of a group that advocates for Israeli Arabs.

The human rights repercussions are undeniable, said Shalom (Shuli) Dichter, the Jewish co-executive director of Sikkuy: the Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality, speaking to a small group at a private home in Toronto recently.

He noted that the Arab infant mortality rate is more than double that of Jews; there are many preventable deaths from lung and breast cancer among Arabs; and Arab women are being systematically denied opportunity.

Israel may be the beacon of democracy that Jews are so proud of, but quoting one of his Arab colleagues, Dichter said: "Israel is democratic to Jews… and Jewish to Arabs."

Jews and Arabs are "two tectonic plates" underlying Israel's security, he said, and this month's elections are an opportunity to stabilize those foundations and eliminate the dangers of an unequal society.

"Nobody says anymore that there is no discrimination in Israel," he said. Now, the "distinction is between those who claim that this is the way things should be versus those who support rectifying this situation."

Many Jews, both within and outside of Israel, explain away the dichotomy either in terms of Jewish entitlement or Arab unwillingness to co-operate, Dichter said.

While Jews may see increased access to resources as contingent on greater support from Israel's Arab citizens, he said, asking "are they loyal enough?" undermines our moral imperative and jeopardizes the well-being of all Israelis. "The state's job is to ensure that resources are distributed equally."

Shalom (Shuli) Dichter is the Jewish co-executive director of Sikkuy: the Association for the Advancement of Civic Equality, an Israeli organization run by Jews and Arabs.

Nevertheless, he said, 66 per cent of Israeli Arabs do support Israel as a Jewish state. "They feel a belonging to the State of Israel despite all differences" and "feel a part of Israel, despite the discrimination."

Dichter, a former elementary school teacher, thinks of his advocacy work as a form of "adult education."

He acknowledged that all participants in the equally Jewish- and Arab-run Sikkuy come to the table "working from their own interest." Its board of directors includes Jews and Arabs drawn from their communities' mainstream. "The Jews are Zionists, the Arabs are 'Palestinianists' – they represent the authentic interests of both sides," he said.

Universal harmony is not the goal, and many topics are off the table. "We don't always have the same agenda, but equality in sharing resources is in the interest of both sides," Dichter said.

Sikkuy's agenda includes a 10-year plan that calls for establishment of an "equality authority," comprising representatives of both communities, to oversee all government ministries in order to eliminate disparities.

The organization hopes to gain government support for its plan as well as to build co-operation through its Jewish-Arab Mayors' Forum and to establish shared industrial zones.

Sikkuy plans to mount a public-education campaign aimed at both Jewish and Arab Israelis, which it has started in the current election campaign. "The government is completely, directly dependent on public opinion," Dichter said.

Ordinary Israelis can affect the political process, he said, citing the 2000 grassroots-initiated pullout from Lebanon.

"Officials and ministers listen to public discourse every day," he said – particularly in an election year.

Sikkuy is calling on voters to choose a leader in the March 28 election who endorses its platform "in favour of resource allocation without distinction of religion, race or ethnic affiliation," Dichter said.

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Echoing a call to kill

Last week, haredi Jews from the group Neturei Karta visited Tehran. They were not there as tourists. They were there to publicly and ostentatiously lend their support to the government of Iran and, in particular, to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his policies.

As reported by JTA, in a statement to Iran's official IRIB radio, the visitors called for "the disintegration of the Zionist regime" and defended Ahmadinejad, saying that it "is a dangerous deviation to pretend that the Iranian president is an anti-Jewish or anti-Semitic personality." The head of the delegation, Rabbi Yisroel Dovid Weiss, was reported to have praised Ahamadinejad's "enlightening" statements denying the Holocaust and threatening Israel.

The Neturei Karta believes fervently that the creation of the State of Israel was a heretical intervention by human beings into the affairs of God. Only the Messiah, they believe, can establish a sovereign Jewish state, not man. But the group and its leader, Rabbi Moshe Hirsh, have not left their theological disagreement to the realm of religious disputation. Over the years, they have very visibly laid hands of encouragement upon the shoulders of Israel's enemies. Last week's display, however, crossed all boundaries of doctrinal difference. It was not merely an in-your-face, political-theological protest.

By lending support to Ahmadinejad's rabid anti-Israel policies, the Neturei Karta echoed his call to "wipe out" the State of Israel. The implications of that call are too horrible to imagine, yet not too horrible for haters of Jews to attempt. Only God, ultimately, can rebuke Neturei Karta's theology, but we can rebuke and reject their behaviour. It was vile, disgusting and a source of great communal shame.

Echoing a call to build

One week before the Neturei Karta delegation visited Iran, a delegation of some 20 affiliates of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) visited Israel. Led by AFN national Chief Phil Fontaine, the delegation toured Israel as part of an educational and cultural exchange with the Canadian Jewish Congress.

During their visit, the group met with Israeli President Moshe Katsav, who urged his visitors to "keep your heritage and revive your language." It was a message that Fontaine and his colleagues took to heart, for one of the group's goals was to see if the revitalization of Hebrew holds useful lessons for the preservation and revitalization of Canadian indigenous languages.

"The trip was overwhelming," Fontaine told *The CJN*. "Israel and the First Nations share a common interest," he said. "Our interest is in building bridges."

The difference in the visits by the Neturei Karta to Iran and the AFN to Israel is telling and sad: between advocating tolerance and peace or advocating hatred and terror. We stand with, and thank, the AFN.

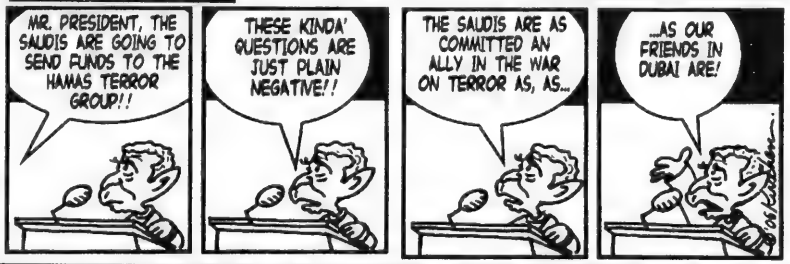
25 years ago in *The CJN*

• For the second time in a year, the House of Commons passed a motion condemning the Ku Klux Klan. The motion, by York East MP David Collenette, followed a visit by Klan members to Don Mills Collegiate Institute in Toronto.

• Ben Sherman, founder of downtown Sherman's Hardware, celebrated his 110th birthday with a party at Mount Sinai Hospital.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones


MR. PRESIDENT, THE SAUDIS ARE GOING TO SEND FUNDS TO THE HAMAS TERROR GROUP!!
THESE KINDA' QUESTIONS ARE JUST PLAIN NEGATIVE!!
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Jewish Canadians and Israeli policies

Israel does not and has never claimed to speak in the name of Jewish people around the world ("Group opposes Israeli government policies," *CJN*, March 9). Governments of Israel do what they think is right for Israelis. Michael Benazon and Michael Mandel (and co-signatories), if you wish to tell the government what to do, move to Israel, pay your taxes and cast your votes there. Jewish Canadians have no right to tell Israel what is right or wrong. I may have different opinions, but I will always support Israel irrespective of what government Israelis choose: whether it be Labor, Kadima or Likud, it's their choice – not mine. After all, Italians, Germans or Russians living here have no right to tell Italian, German or Russian governments what to do.

Hilliard Cohen
Toronto

* * *

Day school funding (1)

The article "Assessment of World Jewry" (*CJN*, March 2) included a table that compared day-school attendance rates of Jewish communities in various countries all over the world. Canada was listed as having a very impressive rate of 55 per cent. However, it is important to contrast this rate with the rate in Ontario. The numbers, often used by the community, are apparently much lower, hovering somewhere between 25 and 35 per cent of school-aged children. This difference between day school attendance rates in Ontario and the rest of Canada is alarming, considering the size of the Jewish community in Ontario (which is the largest in Canada).

The reason for this discrepancy should be obvious to all. All other Canadian provinces that have Jewish day schools, including British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Quebec, provide a significant level of support to their faith-based schools. This enables these schools to maintain their tuition fees at a manageable level so that no child is excluded for financial reasons.

Ontario is the only province with Jewish day schools that refuses to provide any funding for non-Catholic, faith-based schools. Consequently, tuition fees are skyrocketing. This means that many lower- and middle-income families cannot even consider Jewish day school education as an option unless they are willing to live in a compromised situation (that is, not able to pay their household bills on time or provide basic necessities to their families). If this situation continues unchecked, it will pose an increasing threat to Jewish continuity, not only in Ontario but also in all of Canada.

Statistics such as these prove the dramatic negative effect that Ontario's ongoing discrimination against non-Catholic, faith-based school users has on the struggle of minority communities like ours for cultural continuity.

Sharlene Cantor-Bagola
Vaughan, Ont.

* * *

Day school funding (2)

I am writing with respect to the status of the two publicly funded school systems that exist to preserve the so-called "minority rights" of a particular denominational religious group in Ontario, namely, Roman Catholics. The preferential treatment accorded to this religious group is in direct violation of not only several United Nations articles, but is inimical to any sort of progress in terms of Canada and Ontario being taken seriously nationally and internationally. For how can we condemn human rights violations occurring in other states if Canada is itself in violation of acts that it condemns other jurisdictions for perpetrating? As well, the duplication of services and added tax burden (approximately $200 million per year) bestowed upon the hardworking taxpayers of this province as a result of operating two publicly funded systems demands reform. Reform, contrary to statements made by Ontario MPPs, could be facilitated with or without amending the constitution.

Catholic parents are the only religious group in Ontario that can consider factors such as academic performance and reputation, school culture, availability of programs and location in determining which of their fully funded options to exercise. Ontario is now the only jurisdiction in the free world that practises such discrimination since Quebec and Newfoundland abolished denominational school funding in 1999 and 1998, respectively.

Justin S. Abrams
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Group dedicated to Falash Mora

The article "Canadians see dire conditions of remaining Ethiopian Jews" (*CJN*, March 2) presented the conditions of the Falash Mora and the impact that United Israel Appeal-Federations Canada's (UIAFC) mission has had on its participants. However, the article did not acknowledge the many years of dedicated work and funding of the North American Conference on Ethiopian Jewry (NACOEJ).

NACOEJ has for the past 15 years funded the exceptional programs highlighted in the article, ensuring that thousands of people are fed every day and educated while awaiting aliyah. NACOEJ has also taken on a supportive role during this transitory period in which the Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) and Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) will take over these extraordinary programs.

Sheila Kornhauser
Director of communications
UIA Federations Canada
Toronto

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350 years of the Jewish community in England

By PAUL SHAVIV

Popular legend has it that 350 years ago, in early 1656, Oliver Cromwell "readmitted" the Jews to England, from which they had been expelled in 1290 by King Edward I.

Cromwell supposedly did this as a result of the lobbying and pamphleteering of an exotic Amsterdam rabbi, Menasseh ben Israel, who persuaded Cromwell that the Redemption would never come until the Jews were dispersed to all corners of the earth. Thus, if the Jews were not permitted to live in England, was this not impeding the coming of the Messiah?

As is the case with many historical traditions, the facts are a little different. This romantic view of the "readmission," perhaps more correctly called the "resettlement," seems to have had its birth in 1906, when its 250th anniversary was celebrated by a sumptuous London banquet, attended by the "great and the good" of Victorian Anglo-Jewry. As a perceptive contemporary historian wrote, there was a "search for founding fathers" – and what better contrasting pair could the Victorian romantics suggest than the dashing, mysterious, mystic Amsterdam rabbi, patron and friend of Rembrandt, and the Puritan, upright, biblically inspired lord protector of England, Oliver Cromwell?

But Cromwell never made any decision to readmit Jews to England. In the face of opposition from his clerics, he seems to have been reluctant to take a stand on the matter. On the other hand, he raised no objections to the increasingly public profile of Jews in London's busy commercial life who were using a number of thin subterfuges, presenting themselves as "Portuguese" or other merchants.

By the middle of 1656, the identity of these people as Jews was public, but not necessarily because of Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel's activities. The London Jewish community was led by Antonio Fernando Carvajal, an established merchant with close government ties in the bullion market. Signing himself as "Abraham Israel Carvajal," he and others petitioned Cromwell as "Hebrews at present residing in this citty [sic] of London" for official permission to conduct public worship, to acquire a burial ground, and for "protection."

On March 24, 1656, Cromwell endorsed their petition with his signature, making their status unchallengeable. Caravajal thus has a much more persuasive claim than Rabbi Menasseh ben Israel to the title of "founder of the modern Anglo-Jewish community." The rabbi, isolated and suffering the tragedy of the death of his son in London, returned to Holland where he died in poverty.

From the middle of the 17th century, Jews immigrated to England in increasing numbers. For almost a century, Sephardim from Amsterdam were the community leaders, although there was an underclass of Ashkenazi pedlars, orange-sellers and old clothes dealers.

By the late 18th century, Jews were well-established in British society. At this time, the great Anglo-Jewish aristocratic dynasties of the 19th and 20th centuries were founded – the Goldsmids, the Cohens, the Rothschilds, the Montefiores, the Samuels, the Montagus and the Mocattas – overwhelmingly the offspring by descent or marriage of Levi Barent Cohen (1740-1808), a Dutch merchant who married off his children exceedingly well.

The German Ashkenazi immigration of the early 19th century was entirely swamped by the great Polish-Russian immigration of 1880 to 1914. Hundreds of thousands of Jews arrived in the East End of London and other provincial centres. Their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren were to constitute the backbone of the Anglo-Jewish community of the 20th century.

From the end of World War I, the Jewish community in England grew and prospered. Anti-Semitism, World War II and the tension at the time of the British Mandate over Palestine all served to shape community policy and community consciousness. Britain, never a nation of immigrants, expected social and cultural conformity, and a high measure of assimilation. There was no prestige attached to ethnic identity.

Seven London Jews, headed by Rabbi Manasseh Ben Israel, sent this petition to Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell in 1655 asking that Jews be given the right to hold services in their own homes. [Encyclopedia Judaica]

Anglo-Jewry kept a meek and low profile, and tried very hard to model itself on the Anglican Church. Its institutions – the United Synagogue, the Board of Deputies (its representative body), its welfare organizations – never achieved, or even aspired to, the power, the funding or the determination of their North American counterparts. Sedate communal reticence ruled. When Rabbi Israel Brodie became chief rabbi of the British Empire in June 1948, six weeks after the creation of the State of Israel, he did not mention that event once in his induction speech, referring only obliquely to a biblical verse mentioning ancient Israel.

In the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, British Jews flourished economically and politically. The old "cousinhood" – Levi Barent Cohen's ennobled aristocratic family – relinquished their leadership of communal institutions in favour of the second generation of the eastern European immigrants. Under friendly prime ministers of different political parties – Harold Wilson (Labour) and Margaret Thatcher (Tory) – Jews achieved exceptional political prominence in government and politics. (The last of the great aristocratic Tories, Sir Harold Macmillan, noted acidly of Margaret Thatcher's cabinet that there were "more old Estonians than old Etonians" running the country.)

Marks and Spencer (the Sieffs and Sachars), Tesco (Sir John Cohen), and Great Universal Stores (Sir Isaac Wolfson) were powerful forces in British retailing. The community enjoyed less the publicity about the large number of its members in the property development sector. The doyen of British academia was Sir Isaiah Berlin in Oxford.

Despite the outstanding Jewish contribution to every field of culture, science, commerce, industry and politics, the Jewish dimension of Anglo-Jewry was stagnant. It retained a definite Victorian flavour, and it was regarded as faintly embarrassing to be Jewish.

Jewish scholarship in England has never flourished and has never attracted the community support – or participation – that it has in North America. The faculties of Jewish studies in U.K. Universities (such as they are) are peripheral to Jewish community life, even though in the British Library, the Bodleian Library at Oxford and the University Library in Cambridge, the United Kingdom holds three of the world's most important collections of Hebrew and Judaica.

Thinkers and scholars, especially those of an original or radical inclination, are not favourite sons (let alone daughters). Rabbi Louis Jacobs was frozen out of the U.K. Jewish establishment. Two successive chief rabbis, the late Lord Immanuel Jakobovits and his brilliant successor, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, have both had to navigate stormy waters within their own constituencies – the former for his doveish political views on the Arab-Israel conflict, the latter for his theology. Paradoxically, both immeasurably enhanced the status of the Chief Rabbinate and of Judaism generally in British public life.

With no equivalent to a North American federation, British Jewry is organizationally fragmented. There is no central fundraising, little co-operation between a series of "stand-alone" organizations, and, to the North American observer, a strange lack of "community" feeling. Its numbers are declining – most community organizations talk about some 300,000 people, a significant drop over the last 50 years.

The "glue" of Anglo-Jewry is the world's oldest independent Jewish newspaper, the *Jewish Chronicle*, still going strong after more than 160 years. So great is its position in the community that its most famous and beloved columnist, the late Chaim Bermant, once suggested as a solution to the "Who is a Jew?" question, at least as far as the U.K. was concerned: "anyone who reads the *Jewish Chronicle*."

Despite many signs of grassroots revival in the last few years, British Jewry is more uneasy today than it has been for decades.

Positive signs include remarkable growth in (mainly government-funded) day schools, although with much weaker Judaic curricula than in other communities, a remarkable resurgence of the traditional community and a perceptibly higher interest in Jewish cultural and adult educational projects. The non-denominational Limmud conferences started in the United Kingdom, and the U.K. event now attracts over 2,000 participants a year.

However, a significant Muslim minority in the U.K., outnumbering the Jewish community several times over, has caused a perceptible cooling toward Jews and Judaism in political circles. It is no longer fashionable, or comfortable, to be Jewish in polite society, especially when admitting to any Israel connection or visit.

Anti-Israel sentiment is fierce and increasing, characterized by threats of boycott in academic and commercial spheres, movements led largely by anti-Zionist Jews and former, and in some cases, present Israelis. The Church of England Synod voted recently to "recommend" disinvestment from Israel – a move which the present Archbishop of Canterbury supported, but to which his predecessor angrily and publicly objected. British newspapers and the BBC have published numerous grossly offensive cartoons, articles and news reports about Israel and Jews, to the point of obsession – certainly well past the point of reason.

In a rapidly-changing Europe, Anglo-Jewry is facing challenges not faced – and perhaps not even imagined – in the 3½ centuries of its modern existence. Its past may be celebrated; its future – and its preparedness for that future – is a lot less certain.

Paul Shaviv, director of education of the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto, here writing in a personal capacity, was born and educated in the United Kingdom.

Opinions

Beat the deadline

An e-mail arrived recently from my ever-patient editor stating: "Reminder: Today is the deadline for your column." Of course, I had forgotten about the deadline, and I hurried to finish in time.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

Deadlines work. They motivate procrastinators to finally get something done. They also push people to make quick decisions. That's why the Home Shopping Network will announce that "there are only 23 minutes left to buy this item." Deadlines come when a window of opportunity is closing, and people don't like missing opportunities.

There's something jarring about the word deadline. And when that e-mail arrived, the word reminded me of that ultimate deadline: death.

We often ignore this ultimate deadline. Woody Allen put it this way: "It's not that I'm afraid to die, I just don't want to be there when it happens." Indeed, the midrash says that the ability to repress thoughts of death is a divine gift, without which we'd become depressed and cease to be productive.

But disregarding death is a mistake. The Bible says "the heart of the wise man is in the house of mourning." A house of mourning can be a house of learning, with the ultimate deadline teaching the lessons.

Life is easily wasted. The famous proverb, "Live each day as if it were the last," reminds us that the key to life is beating the ultimate deadline. Enjoy life before it's too late. The Talmud says, "Grab and eat, grab and drink, for this world we will leave is like a banquet." Live a meaningful life right now. Rabbi Eliezer says you must repent every day, because each day may be your last. Life's too short to ignore our spiritual possibilities.

Death also teaches us what's truly important. Our priorities change if we consider what our legacy will be. A French newspaper prematurely published an obituary for Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite. Nobel read his own "obituary" and, disturbed by its critical tone, decided to create a better legacy for himself by establishing the Nobel Prizes.

You don't need to establish (or win) a Nobel Prize to create a legacy. Even small acts of greatness count. The Talmud tells of an elderly man who planted a carob tree, which takes 70 years to bear fruit. A rabbi asked him: do you expect to eat carob fruit 70 years from now? The man answered that he was planting the tree for his children, much as his father before him planted trees for him. This simple tree was his legacy, an act of intergenerational love that lives on, well past any deadlines.

I hope my editor is happy this column was on time. I also hope that some day, when I face the great editor upstairs, I will have everything in order – in time for the deadline.

May his memory be a democratic blessing

Headlines like "British Historian David Irving jailed for denying the Holocaust" make me cringe. Irving uses historians' tools to give lies a seemingly authoritative veneer. But does such despicable conduct deserve three years in an Austrian jail? At a time when enlightened democrats should be defending newspapers' rights to publish Danish cartoons, even if some Muslims find them offensive, imprisoning anyone for a thought crime is foolish. Ideas – be they noble or noxious – cannot be jailed.

Gil Troy in Montreal

For three weeks this winter, while Muslims rioted against cartoons and Irving was being sentenced, a gang of mostly Muslim kidnappers in France tortured to death a 23-year-old cellphone salesman. During some ransom calls, relatives heard Ilan Halimi scream as his torturers read verses from the Qur'an and burned him. Skittish French police, press and politicians first characterized the crime as financial, not anti-Semitic, even though the kidnappers assumed Halimi's modest relatives could meet their demands because "Jews are rich." One kidnapper later admitted: "We put our cigarettes out on him because he was a Jew."

The Austrian authorities' heavy hand and the French authorities' initial neglect highlight the difficulties in fighting poisonous ideas. In our age of big government, hate crime legislation seems a natural response. It clarifies society's moral stance, gives leaders political cover, and seeks to scare bigots. But criminalizing thought violates one of free societies' central building blocks. It is self-defeating to sacrifice our faith in liberty to fight those who violate that faith.

Yes, enlightened secular democracies require leaps of faith. We choose to believe that the people can pick better leaders than insiders could. We choose to believe that the chaos of maximizing freedoms promotes more individual happiness and fairness than more orderly, centralized, decision making and standard-setting by elites. And we choose to believe that the free marketplace of ideas can best distinguish workable, noble ideals from outmoded reprehensible prejudices.

Hate crime laws are lazy, undermining that sifting process. Does anyone need the Austrian government – which has denied its own people's complicity in Nazi crimes – to teach that denying the murder of six million people is illogical and immoral? And while the French establishment's resistance to recognize Halimi's kidnapping as a hate crime frustrated his family and offends those committed to combating this evil by exposing it honestly, French hate crime legislation was no more effective in inhibiting the barbarians than were French laws prohibiting kidnapping.

Law is best at regulating deeds not thoughts, punishing actions not motives. Civil society must tackle more abstract challenges of fostering openness, acceptance, civility and equality. The response to Halimi's murder should be humanistic, not legalistic, and democratic, not autocratic. We need mass outrage, educational initiatives, social sanctions, enlightened debates, sweeping denunciations, not thicker law books.

Muslim clerics, French leaders, local celebrities, state educators, and parents should use their smarts and moral power to root out this rot from French society – and other corners of the world – as part of a broader assault on intolerance. European leaders should connect the dots and shun Hamas representatives until that organization repudiates its anti-Semitic, anti-Western, terrorist-romanticizing ideology. Only bold steps will change attitudes toward Jews and other targeted groups, especially in France where the *New York Times* reported that one Christian charity distributes free pork meals to serve "their" poor people, not Jews or Muslims.

Last month, hundreds of thousands of people in Paris, along with others in smaller rallies in Marseille and elsewhere, showed that they could meet this challenge peacefully, without rioting. Muslim, Jewish, and Christian clerics marched together. "ILAN TORTURED, FRANCE WOUNDED," one banner declared, while protesters cried, "Vive la France" and "la Justice," thus transforming the fight against anti-Semitism from a Jewish issue into a more universal French and human issue.

The protesters chose to believe that their voices, passion, and idealism could change hearts and minds. The marchers joined a proud, historic democratic parade, trusting vision, not violence, and liberty, not law, to help us all, individually and together, create the kind of world where a David Irving would be shamed and shunned, not jailed, into silence, and an Ilan Halimi could have lived the long, happy life he deserved.

May Halimi's memory be a blessing and spur all of us to embrace the kinds of democratic ideals his murderers should have learned at home, in school, in the mosque and on the street.

The way we were, or weren't

I've always been a bit in awe of historians and the way that they bring the light of knowledge into the world. They resemble the dashing private investigators that glamorize detective fiction, piecing together bits of this and bits of that – fragments that, to the untutored eye, seem inconsequential, but to the skillful, reveal important aspects of times past.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Historians do three important things. They fill gaps in our knowledge, telling us things about the past that we did not know before. They reinterpret the past, compelling us to take a fresh look at what we thought we knew, but now need to rethink. And they shatter some of the myths we have of the past, pressing us to critically examine our ideas about the way we think we were.

Jews have a special relationship to the past. Jewish festivals involve not only ritual but recounting. Most of us draw our ideas of the Jewish past from vaguely remembered history textbooks and lectures, historical novels and television programs that play fast and loose with facts, and Hollywood productions that mix it up with romance, drama, and sensationalism. Overlaid on all this, our present sense of values and identity shapes the version of the past to which we feel strongly bound. The way we are, in other words, influences our ideas about the way we were.

Take the subject of women and Judaism. I recently heard two presentations about the role of Jewish women. Each presenter was an Orthodox Israeli woman, and each began from the same assumption: that the role of Jewish women in the past had been constant and unvarying, and that our own era was bringing unprecedented changes. Jewish women had "always" been relegated to the home, to child-rearing and domestic chores, and kept out of the public sphere. One woman cautioned her listeners against departing heedlessly from what she described as the values of the Jewish past. The other woman, in contrast, urged her listeners to plunge courageously into what she described as the world of the Jewish future.

Although the two women disagreed on the appropriate steps, they shared a unified vision of the past. If they had been mapmakers, we might say that they agreed on the configuration of roads, but not on the direction to travel.

But the work of contemporary historians who study the Jewish people questions the accuracy of that map. In both Israel and North America, researchers of Jewish history and Jewish texts offer findings that prod us to complicate our understanding of the past, overturning common assumptions.

According to the latest research, for example, the Jewish regulation of marriage and divorce offered women more power at certain times and places in our history than it does today.

According to Israeli historian Renee Levine Melammed, who studies the Cairo Geniza, for instance, a repository for Jewish documents from the 10th century onwards, ketubot (marriage documents) in the Geniza frequently contained a clause forbidding a husband to take a second wife or concubine without the express permission of his wife.

In Europe, notes Avraham Grossman, a Hebrew University professor who researches Jewish history in the Middle Ages, women performed a range of ritual acts that had been reserved for men, and took leadership roles in the community. In certain moments in Jewish history, he observes, Jewish men and women approached equality in marriage. And both Grossman and Elimelech Westreich, a Tel Aviv University professor and former Israel Defence Forces rabbi, note that Jewish women were effectively able to initiate divorce proceedings during the Middle Ages.

Along with other Jewish historians, they point out that the status of women in Jewish society is linked to economics. During periods of affluence, woman's stature rises, in large measure as women attain some measure of economic independence.

These new historical findings enrich our sense of the Jewish past. Rather than projecting present values onto the past, we are offered a window onto a complex and dynamic society. To return to the metaphor of the map, we see not only the footpaths that grew into today's highways, but also the hidden trails and scenic roads that fell into disrepair but might yet be refurbished.

The Kirshner File

Welcome to the club, Krystyna Lagowski

It happened one day more than a decade ago, when Krystyna Lagowski was 32. Her parents, Andrew and Dorota Joanna, had just split up, ending a "hellish" marriage. Shortly afterward, Lagowski's father showed her a remarkable affidavit in which her mother stated that she was born Jewish and accused her husband of having been an anti-Semite.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

"I thought she was nuts, out to lunch," said Lagowski, a feisty redhead of medium height who has a rapid-fire style of speech. "I couldn't get in touch with her at the time, so I asked my father if she was indeed Jewish. The answer was yes. When I asked why no one had ever told me, he said, 'You never asked.'"

The revelation jolted Lagowski, a freelance automotive journalist and former advertising copywriter who had always been proud of her Polish Catholic heritage, but who, nevertheless, had been inexplicably drawn to Judaism.

"I felt stupid and thrilled," she explained one recent afternoon. "Stupid, because my mother had been dropping hints about her Jewish past. Thrilled, because I was Jewish."

Having stripped away and exposed a family secret, Lagowski suddenly felt liberated, free to explore her Jewish roots.

"Welcome to the club," a Jewish friend exclaimed, greeting the news of Lagowski's newfound Jewishness with a sense of joy and perhaps even a touch of giddiness.

Lagowski was thus launched on an extraordinary journey of self-discovery, an odyssey that has sharply clarified her childhood memories and prompted her to look at the world through Jewish eyes.

But Lagowski is hardly unique. She has several friends and acquaintances who have had similar experiences.

Only now, with a smidgen of annoyance, does she realize that she missed all her mother's clues about her dual ancestry.

She knew that her mother had gone through difficult times during World War II and had spent a few years as a kitchen maid in the Bavarian town of Berchtesgaden, near Adolf Hitler's Eagle's Nest summer residence in the Alps.

But she attached no significance to these facts. Nor did Lagowski ascribe any importance to her mother's offhanded disclosure that some of her distant relatives were Jewish.

As well, Lagowski missed other clues. On Christmas eve, gefilte fish, a signature Jewish dish, would magically appear on the dinner table. When they watched *White Christmas*, a film starring Danny Kaye, Lagowski's mother took note of Kaye's Jewish pedigree. Her mom also made a point of taking Lagowski to *Funny Girl* – the movie in which Barbra Streisand portrays the Jewish entertainer Fanny Brice – and leaving a copy of Anne Frank's diary on her bed.

Born in Toronto, Lagowski was raised in a traditional Polish home, complete with all the trimmings. She and her older brother, Larry, a lawyer, were baptized and learned Polish, a language in which she is fluent. "I speak Polish to my cats," she said. "Polish has a wonderful rustling sound to it."

On certain occasions, Lagowski dressed up in a Polish folk costume, and she liked listening to Polish songs. Lagowski also played Poland's national anthem on the piano and was partial to Polish cuisine, especially jellied pig's feet. A regular churchgoer who dutifully recited her prayers in Polish, she met Karol Wojtyla then a Polish cardinal and later Pope John Paul II – when she was 13. And like many of her friends, she spent blissful summers in Barry's Bay, a Polish resort in Muskoka.

"I was a real Polish girl," she chortled.

Her parents settled in Canada in 1948, living first in Montreal and then in Toronto. They were hardworking immigrants who scrimped and saved to give their children a bright future.

Lagowski's mother, now 87, comes from Czestochowa, a city that has drawn pilgrims to the Black Madonna shrine, or Jasna Gora, for centuries. Born as Dorota Salome Milstein, she hailed from a very assimilated Jewish family. She studied domestic science and, by all accounts, was a gifted pianist. When the Nazis invaded Poland on Sept. 1, 1939, she was in Warsaw. There she caught the last civilian train to Lvov to join her parents, Maurycy and Bronislawa (Davidowich).

In 1941, after they were placed in Lvov's ghetto, Maurycy was taken into custody, never to be seen again. Bronislawa was rounded up in 1942 and disappeared without a trace. Dorota, having obtained papers identifying her as Joanna Litniowska, a Christian, sneaked out of the ghetto. "She just walked out and kept on walking," said Lagowski.

Several Poles "outed" Dorota as a Jew, but without any dire consequences. Dorota successfully passed as a Catholic as she made her way to the German resort of Berchtesgaden. Perversely enough, she believed that she would be safer in Germany than in Poland. She met her husband-to-be, Andrew Lagowski, a soldier in the Polish army who had been captured and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp in Berchtesgaden, after the war.

When hostilities ended, he climbed aboard a special freight train in Berchtesgaden that had been commandeered by none other than Herrmann Goering, a top-flight Nazi. Much to his amazement, he found looted art treasures and Goering's personal possessions in the carriages. "He didn't grab a Rodin or a Matisse, but a radio," said Lagowski in mock exasperation. She used the radio until it stopped working in the 1970s.

Since Lagowski's mother had no desire to return to Poland or live in Israel, she immigrated to Canada, where she met Andrew Lagowski yet again. After a brief courtship in Montreal and her conversion to Christianity, they were married in a church. Lagowski believes that she adopted Christianity to please her husband and disengage from Judaism.

Lagowski had a happy childhood, thanks in no small part to her father, who is now 88. An electrical engineer who also holds a law degree, he was an incredibly charming man whom all her friends adored. He took her everywhere: skating, tobogganing, fishing and to ballet lessons.

"I was daddy's girl. He had a big influence on me."

A University of Toronto dropout and a Sheridan College graduate, Lagowski has no childhood recollections that he was anti-Semitic. But before she severed ties with him seven years ago, in a painful incident that she will never forget, he allegedly told her that Jews are avaricious moneylenders.

Their relationship broke apart after a bitter dispute during which he sided with his girlfriend, a fervently religious Polish woman half his age.

Nor is Lagowski on speaking terms with her brother, who, she said, denies his Jewish background and claims that Jews in Nazi-occupied Poland built the ghettos themselves.

Lagowski, however, maintains excellent relations with her mother, a resident of Oakville. "We have a wonderful relationship that I treasure. But I don't push the Jewish thing."

According to Lagowski, her mother is delusional and reclusive and rarely talks to anyone but her. She continues to conceal her Jewish background and feels most at ease in her role as a Catholic.

"She has a lot of emotional problems, the result of the war and my father's attitude toward her Jewishness."

Lagowski, who wore a Star of David necklace during the interview, is completely comfortable in her own skin and considers herself thoroughly Jewish. As she put it, "I was born with a Jewish soul."

Krystyna Lagowski holds a photo of her mother.
[Rochelle Michaels photo]

"But I'm not a particularly nice Jewish girl," she quipped. Being non-traditional, she neither goes to synagogue nor keeps kosher. But she makes a point of attending the seders and family picnics of Shirley Shnier, a Torontonian who "adopted" her.

For the past two years, she has been an active member of the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation, which tries to build bridges of understanding between Jews and Poles.

Although she has never set foot in Poland, she hopes to visit some day. Lagowski is deeply interested in Polish Jewish history and the Holocaust and, not surprisingly, is sensitive to anti-Semitic slights and slurs.

She has not formed an attachment to Israel, but may one day.

"A lot this is still developing. Like Farfel, my cat, I've discovered my Jewish identity late in life. I'm still a new Jew."

A divorcee whose former husband was an ethnic German, Lagowski looks forward to exploring and consolidating her Jewish identity.

"I'm fiercely proud of being a Polish Jew," she said. "This is a rich, vibrant culture that should be celebrated."

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Jewish Toronto

Tel Aviv One brings future leaders together

Mission highlights local achievements in Israel

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

Like many Jewish Torontonians, Miriam Elmaleh donates money to UJA Federation, but, until now, hadn't seen its effects firsthand.

That all changed with a recent trip to Israel.

Elmaleh was part of a group of 10 Torontonians who participated in the recent Tel Aviv One mission.

The mission, sponsored by United Jewish Communities' (UJC) National Young Leadership division, brought more than 1,200 young Jewish leaders, ages 25-35, from across North America and around the world to Israel for the opportunity to forge connections among themselves and with Israel, and to ensure a new generation of committed Jewish leadership.

"Our goal is to create an experience that will engage, involve and make you think in new ways about you, Israel and your local community," Tel Aviv One co-chair Cindy Attias told delegates at the opening plenary session. "We want to give you many reasons to connect with us."

Programming featured speakers, entertainers, interactive learning and international relationship-building.

Elmaleh, who has been to Israel twice before, says that Tel Aviv One was a "good opportunity to meet people from all over North America, and see how the communities are doing."

Prior to the conference, the Torontonians visited Eilat, UJA Federation's twinned city through its Partnership 2000 (P2K) initiative.

There they took a tour of the old neighborhood, and were shown the Project Renewal area. The group also had the opportunity to visit some of the projects that receive assistance from Toronto's Jewish community.

"It's a wonderful opportunity to see and meet the people," says Maya Talmon-Chvaicer, UJA Federation's Israeli emissary, who travelled with the group. "You can see the changes, and feel that people are making a difference. Not only from Torontonians giving money, but also Israelis who are giving their own time and energy."

The first stop was a community centre built by Toronto. Then, at the local fire station, participants saw a fire engine donated by the Toronto Jewish community.

At Begin High school they met grade 11 students who participated in a group called pre-Atidim, and at the local campus of Ben Gurion University they met with scholarship students who patrol the streets of Eilat at night.

"Every group that we went to visit we connected with immediately," says Elmaleh.

The Toronto contingent of the recent Tel Aviv One Mission spent a day in Eilat, Toronto's twinned city through UJA Federation's Partnership 2000 (P2K) initiative. Here, participants spend some time at the Eilat Fire Station.

For Elmaleh, though, the most touching activity was a visit to Or Shalom, a group home that houses at-risk Israeli children. There they played with the kids and shared the special treat of a pizza dinner. "Seeing the hope in their eyes and the smiles on their faces, emotions came over me."

The trip will have a lasting effect. Elmaleh and her fellow participants plan to hold a fundraising event when they return to Toronto. "I'm really proud of what Toronto's doing here," she says. "People should know more what we're doing to help the people of Eilat. We will definitely come home and spread the word."

Abbas must determine his role with Hamas, says Middle East expert

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

Palestinian Authority President, Mahmoud Abbas has to make a momentous decision, whether he will be a "counterweight or fig leaf" towards a new Hamas government.

That's the opinion of David Makovsky, Senior Fellow and Director of the Washington Institute's Project on the Middle East Peace Process. Makovsky was in Toronto recently as the keynote speaker at UJA Federation's Partners' Circle Dinner.

Partners' Circle, a special initiative of UJA Federation's Professions Cabinet, is comprised of lawyers, accountants and, beginning this year, medical professionals, all of whom contribute a minimum gift of $3,600 to the annual UJA Federation campaign. Partners' Circle is chaired by Stephen Altbaum, Berl Nadler and Joseph Steiner.

The Professions Cabinet has raised close to $8 million towards UJA Federation Campaign 2006, which is expected to reach a final total of $58 million.

David Makovsky

"The dinner was the culmination of the Partners' Circle speakers' series which brought out a number of experts who provided us with behind the scenes information," said Beverly Lyons, who along with Fred Myers, chairs the UJA Federation Lawyers and Accountants Division. "It was very gratifying to see more than one hundred of our dedicated professionals enjoying the evening while learning from someone as knowledgeable as David Makovsky. His address was a real eye-opener."

According to Makovsky, the question surrounding Abbas' effectiveness is whether or not he will stick to his own conditions that he laid out when he came to office.

"These conditions included accepting all United Nation resolutions and that he would be responsible for all security services, something which he appears to be backing off on already," said Makovsky. "There is reason to be skeptical. There must be a determination at one point as to whether Abbas goes from being a counterweight for Hamas to a fig leaf."

"In the event that Abbas is ineffective, Israel will need to decide how it deals with him or at all. I don't expect any Israeli strategy towards Abbas to be formulated until after the Israeli elections," said Makovsky. "We are now between two elections, and this gives time to see how Abbas will relate to the new Hamas government. Once Abbas decides how he relates to Hamas, a new Israeli government will need to fashion a strategy about how it relates to him."

Israel's Olympic gold medal winner coming to Toronto

If you're suffering from Olympic withdrawal, take heart. Gal Fridman is coming to town.

The Hadera-born windsurfer made history in 2004 when he became Israel's first Olympic gold medalist. "To win their first Olympic gold was very exciting," says Fridman. To this day he thinks of standing on the podium in Athens every time he hears Hatikvah.

Fridman is proud that his Olympic gold—won for the Mistral event—lets people see "the other side of Israel—not only the bad side that they see in the media."

Fridman will be in Toronto on Sunday, May 7 to participate in the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre (MNJCC) Sports Celebrity Benefit.

Gal Fridman will be in Toronto on May 7 for the Miles Nadal JCC Sports Celebrity Benefit.

The event, which will be held at Olympic Spirit Toronto, will allow attendees to see, feel, hear and touch the Olympics through interactive displays and virtual competitions. In addition to Fridman, the Sports Celebrity Benefit will feature celebrities such as Keith Pelley, president and CEO of the Toronto Argonauts, and Michael Landsberg of TSN's "Off the Record".

The fully catered event – co-chaired by MNJCC board members Harold Wolkin and Stephanie Steen - will also feature a live auction.

The funds raised at the Sports Celebrity Benefit will go towards expanding and building sport and educational programs offered by the Miles Nadal JCC to the downtown Toronto community.

"This is the major fundraising initiative for our facility," says Wolkin. "We have been able to partner with all of Toronto's major professional sports teams, who have become our sponsors and have made a commitment to assist us in raising the funds necessary to continue providing the services and programming to our members and the broader downtown community."

And Fridman knows a thing or two about community. Once a week he bikes with at-risk kids through the Joint Distribution Committee—a program that he initiated and built. "I like to work with kids," he says. He is very conscious of the effect that a man in his position can have. "I know that everybody's watching, and I try to be a good role model. It's quite a responsibility that you cannot do things other people can do."

Fridman began windsurfing at age 7. By 12 he began training seriously. In 1996 he won a bronze medal at the Olympics, and was named Israel's Sportsman of the Year. Other career highlights include a bronze medal at the European Championships in 2001 and gold at the World Championships in 2002.

He is now beginning to train for the 2008 summer Olympics in Beijing. "I'm hoping that I can win and represent my country."

Fridman, who has visited Canada a few times in the past, wasn't surprised by the record number of medals Canada received at the recent Olympics in Torino. "Canada is known as a good place for winter sports," he says, noting that Israel's climate encourages summer sports like windsurfing instead.

Fridman knows that he's an inspiration not only for Israelis, but for Jews around the world. "It's a great feeling that I made so many people happy," he says. "That they're proud to be Israeli or Jewish."

For more information, or to order tickets, please call 416.924.6211 Ext. 255, or email at sportsceleb@mnjcc.org, or visit www.mnjcc.org

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Lebovic Jewish Campus will cater to the needs of community

New centre will keep pace with Vaughan's continued growth

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

When Jason and Aviva Fudem were looking for a new home for their expanding family, they wanted a certain type of community: a place with a neighbourhood feel, a place where their kids could make friends easily, a place with the services and facilities needed by a growing family. They chose a home in Thornhill Woods.

"This is a huge community within Thornhill," says Aviva Fudem. "Everybody has the same goal, because most of the people moving in are around the same age."

Almost two years later, they couldn't be happier with their decision. The one problem: Jewish communal services haven't kept pace with the growth of the flourishing community.

With a Jewish population of over 60,000, York Region is the third largest Jewish community in Canada—only Toronto and Montreal are home to more Jews. The region is also Canada's fastest growing Jewish community. The steady northward migration of the Jewish community, and the area's popularity with young families, have contributed to a growth rate of 13 per cent, which is expected to boost the community to 96,000 by 2016.

To help meet the needs of this flourishing Jewish community, UJA Federation—through its Tomorrow Campaign—is building the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus. The $150 million campus will be situated on 50 acres of land on Bathurst just north of Rutherford. The campus is being funded primarily by private donations.

The Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan will include a myriad of services and facilities catering to the needs of the flourishing community. Included on the new campus will be: (clockwise from top) two indoor swimming pools accessible to physically handicapped members, a Beit Midrash and a branch of CHAT (Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto) which will open its doors in time for the 2007 school year.

The Vaughan community is embracing the project. "We are looking forward to the building of the new Lebovic Campus in the City of Vaughan," says Mayor Michael Di Biase. "As well as providing a community centre with activities for all ages, the campus will house Hebrew day schools and many of the social services that are presently only available in Toronto. This expansion of services will benefit the Jewish community of our city."

The campus' first phase, expected to be completed by 2008/2009, includes the new Kimel Family Education Building, housing the northern branch of CHAT; The Schwartz Reisman Centre, with facilities for a wide variety of activities covering health and wellness, recreation, culture and social activities, among others; Reena; a Mount Sinai Hospital ambulatory clinic; early childhood education facilities, and multi-purpose rooms for meetings and functions serving predominantly campus agencies and schools.

The campus will serve the concrete needs of the community. The area, for instance, suffers from a shortage of childcare. The Lebovic Campus will include a childcare centre with 170 spaces.

"Daycare, preschool programming would be great," says Fudem. "If I think of my one-year-old daughter, Yael, it would be great to have a preschool to send her to. Now she's going to go to somebody's basement."

The Fudem's older daughter, Sarah, 3, takes dance classes at the public community centre. When the Lebovic Campus is built, though, Fudem says she'd rather take her there. "She would be surrounded by other Jewish kids from the neighbourhood. It would reinforce the community."

The Fudems are also happy that the campus will house a plethora of Jewish education options, including day schools, afternoon schools, and after-school programs. They are seriously considering Associated Hebrew School for their two daughters, but many of their friends in the neighbourhood are planning to send their children to afternoon school.

Reena, a non-profit social service agency dedicated to integrating individuals who have developmental disabilities into the mainstream of society, is an excellent example of how the Lebovic Campus will serve the community's needs. "In our centre currently we probably support 400 families," says Sandy Keshen, president and CEO of Reena. "Seventy-five per cent of them are from Vaughan. It will be incredibly convenient from them not to have to schlep."

In addition to serving concrete needs, the campus will also address the need for community. The Schwartz Riesman centre, in addition to providing a fitness centre, child care and after school programming, will be a point of community gathering—a place to hang out, a place to meet friends.

"We moved up here because we wanted to be around other families we're friends with—Jewish people with young kids," says Fudem. "That's the kind of community that's growing here."

"To put a Jewish campus of this magnitude near my house reinforces that it's going to stay this way."

Correction

In the November 24, 2005 edition of Jewish Toronto, this photograph of the late Yitzhak Rabin was used to illustrate a story about the General Assembly (GA). UJA Federation neglected to credit Al Gilbert as the photographer.

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Jews urged to push for Holocaust education in schools

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

Who owns the legacy of Holocaust education? Mostly, it's Jews – including Holocaust survivors themselves, their children and grandchildren – and they haven't adequately exercised their clout to put it on school curricula.

Lesley Shore

At least that's the view of Prof. Lesley Shore of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE), who addressed the topic in a recent talk sponsored by UJA Federation and Canadian Jewish Congress, Ontario region.

Shore, an expert on the influence of Anne Frank as a Holocaust education tool for adolescents, said Jewish activists have not done enough to press for more or consistent instruction in this area in schools.

"Why have these same activists not championed the cause of Holocaust education in schools?" she asked. "It's important to teach your children. It's not enough to teach just *your* children."

Holocaust survivors, who numbered more than 23,000 in Canada according to the last census, "are a living legacy. Their reticence to talk is mirrored in education."

The Holocaust is not a mandatory part of Ontario's public school curricula, though teachers may teach it using books such as Anne Frank's *Diary of a Young Girl*.

Shore said more than 1,000 schoolchildren representing many different ethnic and religious origins viewed an exhibit on Anne Frank at OISE last year.

Holocaust education is not just a Jewish issue, "but a human issue."

But Shore took her own institution to task, saying OISE allowed a groundbreaking program on the Holocaust to languish.

Its diploma program in Holocaust and genocide education, funded by Toronto businessman Albert Latner, barely got off the ground a few years ago, because OISE "failed" to secure matching funds for it, Shore said.

It has graduated just 20 students to date, she said.

According to OISE's website, the program "is grounded in the contemplation of the educational value of multidisciplinary study of the Holocaust and is committed to the view that the study of the Holocaust must be related to the legal, moral and intellectual dimensions of other genocides."

The website notes, however, that "this program is currently being reviewed and will not be accepting applications until further notice."

Shore said the program died despite the presence of other Jewish staff at OISE.

"Where are my Jewish colleagues at OISE?" she asked.

She said the institute graduates 1,500 new teachers a year who learn "virtually nothing" about the Holocaust. "How can we expect teachers to teach it if they don't learn it?"

Graduate studies in the Holocaust elsewhere at the University of Toronto and other places of higher learning are not the same, she said, because they tend to turn out new professors and "have minimal impact on the real world," whereas the OISE program taught teachers how to teach the Holocaust to young people.

Shore expressed frustration, saying that since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Canadian universities have made 40 teaching appointments in Middle East studies, an area now considered "hot."

She called on Jews to "advocate vigorously, unapologetically and tirelessly" to move Holocaust education in public schools and in teacher training "to the top of your agenda. If we don't take up the cause, how can we expect others to?"

Later, Shore told *The CJN* she doesn't understand "why my Jewish colleagues don't act. We can't keep this as a Jewish issue. It has to be for everyone. Why are we so hesitant to advocate publicly for it?"

U of T prof to pay homage to Pope John Paul II

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

A Toronto academic who has been invited to speak at a conference on Pope John Paul II at the United Nations on March 27 says he's glad to pay homage to "somebody who was so favourably disposed towards Jews and Judaism."

Rabbi David Novak, professor and former director of the University of Toronto's Jewish studies program, met the late pontiff in 1985.

"We have a notion of 'Hakarat hatov,'" he said. "We're supposed to recognize someone who has been good to us and for us, so I'm happy to be there. I think I'm the only Jewish speaker there."

The conference, "John Paul II: Contributions to Modern Thought on Social Justice and Peace," is being offered under the patronage of the Prince and Princess of Lichtenstein, and will be opened by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan. Other speakers include former U.S. national security adviser Zbigniew Brzezinski, former Polish president Lech Walesa, and Canadian political philosopher Charles Taylor.

Rabbi Novak was born in Chicago and studied at the University of Chicago and the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. He received a Ph.D. in philosophy from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.

For 23 years, he was a congregational rabbi holding several pulpits, including one in Far Rockaway, Queens, N.Y. He taught at the University of Virginia prior to coming to the University of Toronto in 1997. He has since become a Canadian citizen.

"My wife and I like it here very much. We've especially enjoyed the Jewish community," he said. "I [also] enjoy the fact that in Toronto there are really some fine talmudic scholars that I'm meeting with on a regular basis."

Rabbi Novak teaches a weekly course at Princeton University in New Jersey and is the founder and vice-president of a right-wing Conservative breakaway group, the Union for Traditional Judaism, which has a yeshiva in Teaneck, N.J.

He also teaches a long-running Talmud class in a private home in Toronto. He is scholar-in-residence at Shaarei Shalom Synagogue in Thornhill and a member of Shaarei Shomayim Congregation in the Glencairn-Bathurst neighbourhood.

He is the author of 13 books, including the newly released *The Jewish Social Contract*, published by Princeton University Press. Shaarei Shomayim is hosting a book launch next week.

The book is a study of how Jews have negotiated their status in host societies and countries of the Diaspora, from biblical times to the present.

"It's about how I, as a Jew, can be a full participating citizen of a secular democracy in good faith, without regarding my participation in that secular democracy as being more important than my commitment to the Jewish people and the Jewish tradition," Rabbi Novak said.

He's planning to speak at the book launch, at the Shaarei Shomayim, 470 Glencairn Ave. at Bathurst, Sunday March 19, at 9:30 a.m. (after morning prayers). Admission is free for members, $5 for non-members.

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BJCC PURIM CARNIVAL: Kids of all ages celebrated Purim on Sunday at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre's annual carnival. A constant stream of visitors enjoyed the arts and crafts, face painting, jumping castle and slide, clown and balloon artist, and partook of the traditional Purim treats – hamantaschen.
[Carolyn Blackman photos]

Kingston board OKs *Three Wishes*

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Following a review by a committee of educators, a Kingston-area school board has decided not to remove a controversial book about the Palestinian-Israeli conflict from a prestigious reading program.

The Limestone District School Board has decided *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*, will continue to be available to children in grades 4, 5 and 6 as part of the Ontario Library Association's Silver Birch recreational reading program.

The book had been removed from school library shelves pending the review.

"The review has been completed, and the result is that the committee felt that it agreed with the Ontario Library Association [OLA] that *Three Wishes* is appropriate for the Silver Birch" program, said Pat Warren-Chaplin, superintendent of instruction.

Warren-Chaplin, a member of the review committee, which included another superintendent, a school principal and human rights experts, said the book raises sensitive issues. As a result, teachers who dispense the book will be required "to read it first before students, to provide context and an introduction.

"We felt it was important that teachers put it in context so children could move forward with it," she said.

Three Wishes, by anti-war author Deborah Ellis, consists of interviews with children who discuss their lives and name three things they would wish for. Ellis provides an historical introduction before each child's story. Concern over the book was first raised by Toronto-area teachers and later by Canadian Jewish Congress, who argued the book is not appropriate for children aged nine to 11. They say it demonizes the Israeli army and suggests suicide bombing is a legitimate recourse for Palestinian youths.

The York Region school board removed the book from the Silver Birch program, but the Toronto District School Board decided to permit children in Grade 6 to read it, while requiring kids in grades 4 and 5 to present a note from their parents in order to do so.

School boards in Ottawa, Niagara Region and Windsor have also limited access to the book for children in younger grades.

The book is one of 10 non-fiction nominees chosen by the OLA as part of the Silver Birch program. The books are not part of school curricula, but are available for after-school recreational reading. At the end of the school year, children vote on their favourite book.

Warren-Chaplin said even before the controversy, *Three Wishes* "was a fairly popular book."

Israeli 2006 Decision

Watch Israeli election results live from Israel on March 28

Amir Peretz
Labor

Ehud Olmert
Kadima

Binyamin Netanyahu
Likud

On March 28 the public is invited to three locations around the GTA to follow the Israeli election and hear analysis from a variety of expert speakers.

Israeli

The three convenient locations are:

- **Bathurst Jewish Community Centre (4588 Bathurst Street) 2:00 pm - 8:30 pm • 416.636.1880**
  Featuring a panel discussion comprised of Cobie Brosh, Israel's Consul-General; David Goldberg, Director of Research & Education, Canada-Israel Committee, and Yonatan Dahoach, Managing Editor, Shalom Toronto. Co-sponsored by Shalom Toronto.
- **Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life (36 Harbord Street) 1:00 pm - 11:00 pm • 416.913.2424**
  Featuring Professor Derek Penslar, Director of the Jewish Studies program.
- **Bernard Betel Centre (1003 Steeles Avenue West, Thornhill) 3:00 pm - 11:00 pm • 905.770.4720**
  Featuring a panel discussion of media experts, headed by Cobie Brosh.

Admission Free • Food will be available

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Jewish Life

What's true versus what feels true

By RABBI MICHAL SHEKEL

RABBINICAL REFLECTIONS

"Seeing is believing" may be a cliché, but in the modern world, perception is truth.

Take, for example, the film *Munich*. It contains a great deal of archival news footage and depicts historical figures that are still fresh in our memories. However, many viewers don't stop to think how these people are merely used as elements to enhance a story, a fictionalized account. The average moviegoer does not consider Steven Spielberg's warning that this film is not a documentary but "historical fiction."

Too often this is our experience with various media. Perception becomes truth: if it feels true, it must *be* true. We do not differentiate between fiction and reality. We have even created an oxymoronic category known as the "docudrama." What is real or fiction doesn't matter, as long as it feels true.

How else can we explain the continued popularity of James Frey's *A Million Little Pieces*? It's touted as a memoir, but the author has reluctantly acknowledged that sections of the book have been embellished to make it a better read. And it's working! This book is currently at the top of the best-seller list in Canada. It doesn't have to be true to inspire– it only needs to feel true.

Feeling true as opposed to being true is an ancient problem, as we see in this week's parshah, Ki Tisa. Previously, in the book of Shmot, we experienced God in a dramatic fashion: God has taken us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; God has given us the Torah as we stood at Sinai; and God has given us detailed instructions on how to construct a tabernacle so that the Divine Presence may dwell in our midst.

Yet, in this week's parshah, Moses is on the mountain too long. God is absent, and things just don't feel right to the people. We demand a deity that we can comfortably perceive, hence the people construct a golden calf. It feels comfortable, it feels right, hence it must be true.

As Moses descends the mountain, he hears the cry of the people celebrating around the idol: "It is not the sound of the tune of triumph, or the sound of the tune of defeat; it is the sound of song that I hear!" (Exodus, 32:18)

What is important to us is not that we are right or wrong, but that we are comfortable. It was true for our ancestors who danced around the calf they made, and it's true for us who are easily seduced by the tantalizing images that pass for truth in contemporary life.

Our ancestors learned in dramatic fashion that just because you are comfortable with a perception does not make it true.

It's a lesson we must relearn constantly.

Rabbi Michal Shekel is spiritual leader of Temple Har Zion in Thornhill, Ont.

The 'mitzvah' in bat/bar mitzvah

By RABBI
REUVEN TRADBURKS

Guest voice

I think the "mitzvah" is really starting to get back into the bat/bar mitzvah.

Now, I need no convincing that the bar has been winning. The conspicuous consumption of our bat and bar mitzvah parties is not something to be proud of.

But I think the mitzvah is catching up. And we should be proud of that.

I am only speaking anecdotally. I am not a social scientist – I haven't done any studies as to how much mitzvah and how much bar. I am only speaking from my own perspective. But it seems to me that a lot of young people, with their parents' help, are wanting to emphasize the right things in their celebrations.

In particular, I am proud of what I see has become the "in" thing to give tzedakah as part of the bat or bar mitzvah. Kids get a lot of gifts – how many pens can you use? Or maybe now it is iPods. There is nothing wrong with getting gifts, and enjoying them. But when a young person makes a donation to a tzedakah at their bat mitzvah, it is a life-transforming moment. For a young person to donate $500 or $180 or $1,000 – that is something you remember the rest of your life.

'When we have good trends, and good copy-catting, ... we have every right to be proud'

I think this trend, and I believe it is a trend, to give tzedakah is one of those proud developments in our Jewish world. As parents and educators have wanted to reclaim these celebrations and to infuse meaning into them, a whole subculture of bar and bat mitzvah programs has sprung up – in the day schools, Hebrew schools and based in synagogues – all different types of programs. Through the programs different types of mitzvahs are working their way into the bat mitzvah year, but at the head of the list is tzedakah. Some programs are emphasizing chesed and I am proud of that. Some emphasize some Torah learning – that is great.

'Tzedakah has become the universal mitzvah'

But tzedakah has become the universal mitzvah that all these programs whether Orthodox, Reform, Conservative, unaffiliated, boys or girls – emphasize.

I had this little dream – and, truthfully, didn't really do anything about it until this year. This dream was to get young Jewish people from all walks of our city together to sing and dance and do a mitzvah. Now, I got this idea from the thrill I get every Yom Ha'atzmaut to see hundreds of young people dancing to the Moshav Band in Earl Bales Park. It brings tears to my eyes because it is happy, singing, smiling, energy, Jewish, and it includes all types of kids. That is a dreamy thing: happy Jewish.

So, how could we have happy Jewish focused around another mitzvah? Due to my involvement in the Koby Mandell Foundation and the sense that bar and bat mitzvah tzedakah has become as close to a universally held mitzvah as any for young people, we decided to have a city-wide concert with Shlock Rock for all bar and bat mitzvah kids.

The concert was great: a few hundred kids and parents, lots of energy, happy and focused on a mitzvah – donating to Camp Koby. It fit great for the kids because Koby, *alav hashalom*, was just past his bar mitzvah when he was brutally murdered. And I feel that Camp Koby is one of those line-crossing tzedakahs it is Israel; it helps kids who have lost family members to terror and that crosses all lines; it helps young people, which also brings out universal feelings; and for our bar and bat mitzvah kids, it is a bar mitzvah-aged boy whose memory is being perpetuated.

There is plenty of social criticism we can level at our Jewish world. But when we have good trends, and good copy-catting, and when a mitzvah takes off as tzedakah has, we have every right to be proud. I am proud of the educators, the parents, and especially the kids, who are getting the mitzvah back into their bat and bar. And I hope this trend, with the help of the educators and the parents, will become truly a universal aspect of every bat and bar mitzvah.

Rabbi Tradburks is spiritual leader of Kehillat Shaarei Torah in Toronto.

Jewish Life

The day after Purim

By RACHAEL TURKIENICZ

The celebrations of Purim have come and gone, and once again we return to the regular routines of living in Canada as Canadians and as Jews.

The many themes of Purim resound with us in the modern world. They're both entertaining and timeless. The ongoing parties, the political intrigue, assassination plots and contests of beauty are all elements of society that echo from the ancient world and touch on issues of today.

With the threat of annihilation at the doorstep of every Jew in ancient Persia, Mordechai and Esther write a letter that they send through time. They record their story and they command every Jewish community to read the tale, every word of it, in each and every generation for all time. There are even some Jewish commentators who insist that reading the Megillah and celebrating Purim will extend even into the messianic era.

But Mordechai and Esther do not only present us with the dilemmas of Jewish history and racism on a grand scale. The Megillah and their message detail the solution and not just the problem. According to Mordechai and Esther, every community is commanded to celebrate this festival by sending presents to the poor and treats to each other. It seems so frivolous and somewhat reminiscent of the ongoing parties that weave through the Megillah, yet their solution is timeless.

While facing war, hatred, assimilation and all of the other topsy-turvy threats that Purim embodies, Mordechai and Esther have told all future Jews that the answer to everything is to strengthen the community. By sending presents to the poor and treats to each other, we are all forced to head out into our communities to ensure that the needy are attended to and that connections are made and maintained between each of us.

Whatever challenges await us in the outside culture, a weakened community will only strengthen those challenges. We understood this message quite well as we prepared ourselves for Purim, and we rushed around on the day of Purim to deliver all of our treats to each other.

Yet, what happens the day after Purim?

The teaching, or perhaps the warning, to maintain a strong community is echoed through rabbinic literature. The tension that exists between personal fulfilment and the needs of the community is ever-present in text and in each of our lives. And yet, the rabbis warn us not to separate ourselves from the community, regardless of how frustrating it can become.

There is a talmudic teaching that points out that when the priests are blessing the people, they are facing the people. This subtle detail places the priests with their faces to the people and their backs to God, that is the degree to which the community is to be respected and strengthened.

At times when our community can become so divided over questions of leniency or strictness in ritual or expression, it's important to remember that the lessons of Purim are equally relevant on the day after the holiday.

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Israeli elections, Part 1

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

As Israelis prepare to vote on March 28, they'll be sizing up hundreds of candidates for Knesset, scrutinizing the candidates for prime minister and clicking through dozens of political websites.

Even if you don't have a vote, you can follow developments in this crucial election.

Although it feels like it happened long ago, it was only November when Amir Peretz, the new leader of the Israel's Labor party, withdrew from Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's coalition government, setting in motion elections for March. Shortly after that, Sharon changed the political landscape when he declared he would be leaving Likud to create the new Kadima party. And then Sharon's hemorrhagic stroke in January left him off the candidate list of the party that he had just founded. Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia, has a concise summary of the events of the last few months. The page also includes regularly updated information about the country's most recent opinion polls. **[http://tinyurl.com/flbyw]**

Of course, these crucial elections are not escaping the scrutiny of world media. But if you would like to follow local issues from an Israeli perspective, there are plenty of opportunities on the web. *Ha'aretz*'s election section has many feature articles, political cartoons and several blogs. **[http://tinyurl.com/r9363]** Also check out the English site of *Yediot Achronot*, the country's best-selling newspaper. **[www.ynetnews.com/]**

The *Jerusalem Post*'s Election 2006 section also has the backgrounders you'd expect about the parties and the candidates. But I enjoyed some of the other features, including the the political bumper stickers and these quotes from the campaign trail:

- "Labor's Knesset slate is a list of 'gefilte fish.'" – Shas chair Eli Yishai complaining that Labor's list comprises mainly Ashkenazi candidates.
- "They want us to go to the 'chupah' without a 'ketubah.'" – National Religious Party chair Zevulun Orlev commenting on coalition negotiations with the National Union.
- "We would be happy to supply him with towels to wipe off his sweat." – Kadima adviser Lior Horev on Benjamin Netanyahu's tendency to perspire.
- "Amir is already able to construct sentences on his own." – Amir Peretz's English teacher reporting on the progress of his famous student. **[http://tinyurl.com/fr8l9]**

Kol Yisrael, the Voice of Israel, provides live streaming of the Hebrew Reshet Bet radio network **[http://tinyurl.com/bofrl]**, as well as daily English language newscasts. **[http://tinyurl.com/rcrx6]** Or you can watch daily TV coverage in English from the Israel Broadcasting Authority. **[http://tinyurl.com/qkd85]**

According to the Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Israeli law does not provide for absentee ballots. Voting takes place only on Israeli soil, except for Israelis serving aboard Israeli ships and working in Israeli embassies and consulates. **[http://tinyurl.com/9fxj8]** But that isn't stopping thousands of people from voting at dozens of colleges abroad. They'll be "voting" in mock elections organized by Israel Votes 2006. The project wants to drive home how Israel's political process works and has put together a comprehensive website. **[www.iraelvotes2006.com]**

All three prominent candidates for prime minister provide background in English on their sites: Likud leader and former prime minister Netanyahu **[www.netanyahu.org/]**, Labor's Peretz **[http://tinyurl.com/ehbty]** and acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert of Kadima. **[http://tinyurl.com/fty9z]**

And what about the footsteps that one of these candidates will have to walk in? Wikipedia's prime-minister-of-Israel page has background and links to biographies of all of Israel's PMs. **[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Prime_Minister_of_Israel]**. Study well. Because when you're done, you can test your knowledge at the Israeli prime ministers game. **[http://tinyurl.com/rwqha]** Match up a historical fact while clicking on the picture of a prime minister and the computer will tell you in a perfect Hebrew accent whether your choice is *nachon* (correct) or *lo nachon* (incorrect.)

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

Treasures in Jewish Literature

THE GOLEMS OF GOTHAM

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Ruby Newman

Associate Professor, Department of Women's Studies and Humanities at York University.

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On Campus

Ryerson image arts students mount new media exhibition

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Fuse, the 2006 New Media Festival at Ryerson University's School of Image Arts, celebrates the work of the graduating class of the new media department this month.

While the image arts students put together an exhibit each year in order to graduate, this is the first time it will be open to the public.

"I'm very excited about the show. This is new for all of us," said Malka Greene, 30, in her fourth and final year studying image arts at Ryerson and the project manager of Fuse.

"We're hoping this will become an annual event."

Greene said that there is no particular theme to the exhibit, in which 30 students show a range of projects – installations, photography, performance work, animation and web design.

In the arts, the term "new media" refers to works that use multimedia, computers or communications technologies in creative expression. New media also involves interactivity and experience, said Greene, who is one of five students on the curatorial team.

"It's how you engage people on the other end of the computer."

Josh Schwartzman, 21, is one of the students who created a project that combines technology with interactivity.

Schwartzman's project, titled "Self Sufficient Sustainability," involves the proper equipment needed to "live a simple, low-energy, ultra-light, independent lifestyle that can easily fit on one's back," he said.

For the physical part of his installation, he taught himself how to sew so he could make his own lightweight backpacking gear and his own clothing, and he even began dehydrating food.

The virtual aspect of his project includes a website.

"On the website, which I called Make It Eco, people can make and share their sustainable lifestyle, sustainable being – anything that is eco friendly," Schwartzman said.

"If you're a climber, a hiker, a biker, or if you just like walking around the city instead of driving everywhere, you can come on the site, share your travels and learn to make your own gear instead of having to buy it."

He said that this approach can help people have fun doing something good for the environment.

"Doing this with an environmental message is not easy because most people are not willing to take action. What I'm trying to do is take it one step at a time and give people a way to make a small change in their lifestyle that will bring about a larger change."

While the projects will be spread out on the four floors of the image arts building on Bond Street in downtown Toronto, Schwartzman plans to present his installation by camping out in front of the building.

Other projects include one by Gabriel Kastner who created an animated series called "Details," which is "an interactive series of works predicated by a hypothesis: that we lead rich, full lives when we pay attention to the minute details – however small or mundane – of our surroundings, people we come across and items we encounter."

Ahmed El-Khuffash created an online photoblog "designed to create a community of Torontonians and unveil the beauty within their city."

The opening reception will be held on March 23 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the School of Image Arts and the exhibition will run on the 24th and 25th from noon to 5 p.m. Admission is free.

For more information, visit www.imagearts.ryerson.ca/fuse.

Josh Schwartzman poses with his self-made clothing and lightweight back-packing equipment, which are part of his installation, called "Self Sufficient Sustainability," on display at the Fuse festival at Ryerson University. [Malka Greene photo]

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On Campus

Complaints pending over Israeli Apartheid Week

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

It's been more than a month since Israeli Apartheid Week was held at the University of Toronto, but the controversy over the event is far from over, as both Hillel and Betar-Tagar say they will be filing complaints about it with the university.

"We are investigating one lecture in particular," said Tilly Shames, Israel affairs director of Hillel of Greater Toronto.

While she wouldn't share details of Hillel's complaint, so as not to hinder the investigation, she said Hillel takes issue with the language used by a speaker at one of the Israeli Apartheid Week lectures.

Jonathan Jaffit, director of campus affairs with Betar-Tagar, a Zionist student group, and one of the organizers of Know Radical-Islam Week – which took place prior to Israeli Apartheid Week in an attempt to counter it, and was itself controversial – said Betar-Tagar is also taking action against the Arab Students' Collective by filing a complaint about one of the lectures.

"Betar-Tagar is filing a formal grievance with U of T student affairs against the Arab Students' Collective for that week, which incited hatred against Jews and Israelis," Jaffit said.

"We are also taking it to the Toronto Police Services hate crimes unit with fully documented evidence."

He, too, didn't want to comment on specifics of the complaint before the university and police had a chance to formally address the issue.

Jim Delaney, assistant director of student affairs at U of T, said last week that Hillel and Betar-Tagar had yet to formally file complaints, but he said he has been in contact with both groups. "This is the time that people may be considering whether they are going to file a complaint, but at this point nothing is in writing," Delaney said.

"If we do get complaints, we'll determine whether they went against student policy. If they incited hate or violence, the complaint will be turned over to Toronto Police," he said, adding that he's heard complaints about both Israeli Apartheid Week and Know Radical-Islam Week.

Pekka Sinervo, dean of U of T's faculty of arts and science and chair of the Jewish studies program advisory committee, said that while some people were offended by the events, for the most part, both went unnoticed by the majority of U of T students.

"If you ask a typical student what they thought about the events, they'd say, 'What events?' These events weren't very in-your-face," Sinervo said.

"The number of students who participated was small. There were no marches, no protests, no rallies. It was low profile, except for the content. For the two groups, the intent was to create a profile."

Sinervo doesn't think such events do much to improve dialogue on campus. "It's not the most helpful dialogue on campus – it's not a dialogue at all. They've already made up their minds."

Such events only "preach to the choir," he added. "The lectures began from a polarized point of view. It was not meant to stir up informed debate. I don't think it helped people's fundamental understanding," he said.

"Was it disruptive? I don't think it had a big impact among students. Not to minimize them, but I don't think they were particularly effective."

But Shames said some people were upset by the polarization the two events created on campus. She said that after attending a recent student forum, she heard complaints from students about the events, and many came from Muslim students who were unhappy about both lecture series.

Shames said that after Know Radical-Islam Week and during Israeli Apartheid Week, *The Strand*, a U of T campus newspaper, printed a cartoon that portrayed Jesus "making out" with the Muslim Prophet Muhammad in the "Tunnel of Tolerance."

Shames said someone pasted the cartoon on the door of the Muslim Students' Association's room. "I feel for them. I'm sure they are feeling targeted. They were intentionally offended," she said. "If the situation was reversed, we'd be just as upset."

Coast to Coast

Native group rejects criticism of trip

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is "completely unapologetic" about a recent visit to Israel that has drawn the ire of a collection of Arab groups, AFN communications director Don Kelly stated last week.

Chief Phil Fontaine's trip to Israel from Feb. 17 to 22, along with several First Nations leaders, was part of an educational and cultural exchange with the Jewish community, Kelly said.

Fontaine was invited by Canadian Jewish Congress, and "our interest is in building bridges, not in turning groups away," he said, adding it's "very telling that none of our regional groups or chiefs signed on to the letter."

The AFN's visit was criticized in an open letter published by the Vancouver-based Canada Palestine Association (CPA) and endorsed by an assortment of organizations, including the Al-Huda Muslim Society, the International Solidarity Movement, Palestine House, and Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights.

CPA said it's "saddened, hurt and shocked by the visit of a delegation of the AFN to Israel" as well as Fontaine's statement that noted the shared values of Israelis and Canadian indigenous people. The letter accuses Israel of colonialism, ethnic cleansing, genocide, apartheid, brutality and other crimes.

The AFN responded with a statement by Fontaine noting, "Israel and the First Nations share a common interest and goal in rebuilding from inflicted harms and commemorating catastrophic pasts. Israel's resiliency and determination were inspiring and hopeful."

The AFN statement stressed the benefit of the trip and said, "we hope we can return some of the hospitality and education we received from the Jewish community in the near future."

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Coast to Coast

Memorial service recalls Ilan Halimi

By BARRY FISHMAN
Special to The CJN

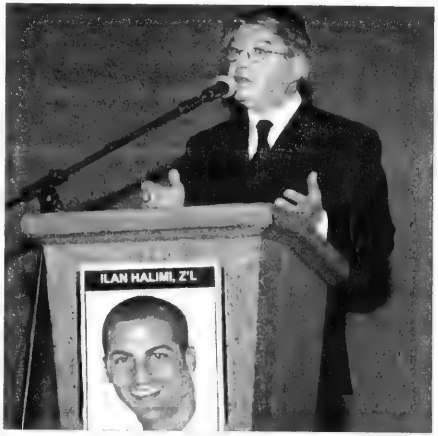
OTTAWA — It was a remarkable turnout for an event that was organized in little more than 72 hours.

Nearly 300 people attended a March 8 vigil at Ottawa's Soloway Jewish Community Centre (SJCC) in memory of Ilan Halimi, the young French Jew who was brutally tortured and murdered in a Paris suburb last month.

"Tonight we raise our voices with all those who manifest their outrage and their righteous anger in the deliberate torture and suffering inflicted to this young man," the vigil's lead organizer, Cantor Daniel Benlolo of Beth Shalom Synagogue, said in his opening remarks.

Speakers included Ron Prehogan, chair of the Jewish Federation of Ottawa, Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, Ronen-Gil-Or, deputy head of mission at the Israeli embassy, French Ambassador Daniel Jouanneau, and Andy Kusi-Appiah, senior policy adviser to Ottawa Mayor Bob Chiarelli.

Prehogan said the torture and murder of Halimi was an attack on all Jews.



French Ambassador Daniel Jouanneau addressing the gathering. [Peter Waiser photo]

"The Jewish community of Ottawa, in solidarity with our Jewish brothers and sisters the world over, pledges to continue to be front and centre in the fight against anti-Semitism, intolerance and hatred of all kinds, to sensitize the authorities and media whenever we can, to never be silent, to never stop doing everything we can to bring the perpetrators of hate crimes to justice," he said.

Holding the vigil shows the Halimi family and the Jews of France that they're not alone, Farber said.

"Your presence here tonight at this vigil of support and solidarity closes the distance between us and our brothers and sisters in France and all around the world. It provides courage to them, sending a crystal-clear message to them: You are not alone."

Jouanneau expressed his condolences to the Halimi family, thanked the organizers for the opportunity to address the Jewish community and emphatically noted the resolve of the French authorities and people to bring the perpetrators of this anti-Semitic crime to justice.

"The fight against anti-Semitism is an absolute priority for my country… Indeed anti-Semitism is a negation of our republican spirit. As President [Jacques] Chirac said, any attack against a Jew is an attack against the Republic."

The ambassador said that because of special measures the French government has put in place, anti-Semitic incidents fell by 47 per cent in 2005 compared to 2004.

"This is because everyone has been mobilized. But w still want to be more vigilant and new measures have been decided," he said.

They include better security at Jewish institutions and monitoring illegal behaviour on the Internet.

Gil-Or praised the French government for its efforts to fight anti-Semitism and bring the criminals to justice.

"This kind of brutality, like the sickening torturing and murder of Ilan, belongs to the – to the medieval Inquisition, to the Nazis and their collaborators, and the anti-Semitic pogroms against Jews," he said.

Speaking on behalf of Chiarelli, Kusi-Appiah condemned Halimi's murder.

"What makes it even more horrifying is the fact that there were people who knew what was going on and yet chose to turn a blind eye just because Ilan was Jewish," he noted.

The evening was organized by the Jewish Federation of Ottawa and SJCC in collaboration with the French and Israeli embassies of Israel and France.

Barry Fishman is the editor of the Ottawa Jewish Bulletin.

Coast to Coast

Historic plaques placed on Hungarian shuls

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Some of the majestic former synagogues of Hungary have been recognized for their historic legacy because of the discreet efforts of a Montreal Holocaust survivor.

Until recently, the buildings were not identified as having once been houses of Jewish worship. Over the last two years, Paul Herczeg has seen large commemorative plaques affixed – at his personal expense – to 10 former synagogues across his native country.

The synagogues – most of which are tall, stately and capacious – are now mainly libraries or cultural centres. But, to Herczeg's chagrin, one is a furniture store and another is a television studio.

The plaques pay tribute to the fact that before 1944 – the year the Germans physically occupied Nazi-allied Hungary – the edifices served as a "place[s] of worship for the Jewish community.

"From here they proclaimed the glory of God," the plaques read, but then they "became silent. These walls are a reminder of the martyrdom of the victims."

The project has received wide media attention in Hungary, with plaque dedication ceremonies in the presence of Hungarian politicians who, Herczeg said, have eloquently borne witness to what Hungary lost with the murder of her Jews.

The Kecskemet synagogue was the first to receive a plaque, and then plaques were affixed to former synagogues in Buda, Kisvarda, Szolnok, Gyongos, Mateszalka, Szolnoki, Szekscard and Budapest. Ten more synagogues have been designated to receive future plaques when funding is available.

Until now, Herczeg, a 76-year-old retired retailer, preferred to remain quiet about his instrumental role in the project, to the point of requesting that his name not be put on the plaques, although it ultimately was.

The buildings' status as previous places of Jewish worship would almost certainly have continued to be unrecognized had it not been for Herczeg.

He got the idea for the plaques about five years ago, while making his annual trip to Hungary to see his sister, Erma, who is now deceased. While visiting Kecskemet, he noticed a small, almost imperceptible, Star of David in an upper window of a library some non-Jewish friends had brought him to visit.

"I thought to myself, 'This was a synagogue'" Herczeg said, "and it gave me an idea: why shouldn't there be plaques to let people know what was once here?"

It took several years, however, for Herczeg to actually achieve his goal.

In 2004, on his annual trip to Hungary, Herczeg visited a friend, Gabor Vero, of Hungary's Holocaust Documentation Centre and Memorial Association, and brought up the subject of identifying the former syngagogues with plaques.

Vero thought it was a "fantastic idea," Herczeg recalled.

He was then put in touch with the Hungarian-Jewish Association, which helped with the logistical end of things by acquiring the needed licensing and surmounting bureaucratic hurdles.

Financing was another matter. The Hungarian government had already invested substantially in the construction of the Budapest Holocaust Memorial Centre, opened in 2004, and Herczeg did not feel comfortable making personal solicitations for money, so he ultimately opted to pick up the costs of the plaques himself.

"I'm not one to seek the limelight," Herczeg said. "I didn't do it for the *kovod* (honours)."

He decided not to attend the dedications because of the emotional trauma they would engender. His eyes glisten when he speaks about what his family went through.

Herczeg was 15 years old, growing up in the Budapest suburb of Ujpest with his mother Regina, father Geza, sister Erma and brother Andrew, when the Germans arrived on March 19, 1944.

Forced labour had already begun five years earlier for Hungarian Jewish males between the ages of 18 and 50. Within a few months after the Germans' arrival, Ujpest's 10,000 Jews – out of a population of a total population of 100,000 – were deported.

Herczeg's mother was gassed upon arrival at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Herczeg and his father, 52, were sent to a notorious slave-labour camp in Germany, where his father succumbed to the effects of lugging bags of cement all day with almost no food. His sister survived Auschwitz and the war, as did his brother. Herczeg himself made it through in part by scrounging for potato peelings.

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The plaque identifies former synagogue in Kecskemet, Hungary, left, as a place where Jews "proclaimed the glory of God."

"I had to survive in order to tell the story," he said. He tells the story often to students as a member of the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre's speakers bureau.

The plaque project makes Herczeg smile when he thinks about the non-Jewish Hungarian population who have come to appreciate the great Jewish legacy that once existed in their own towns, and it makes him cry when he thinks about his lost parents and the other half-million Hungarian Jews who were murdered.

"There are sometimes tears in my eyes when I think about how this came about," he said. "It's just been beyond all expectations."

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Coast to Coast

Cornwall shul closes its doors on an 80-year history

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

April 2 will be a sad day for the small and dwindling Jewish community of Cornwall, Ont., as that's when the town's only synagogue, the 80-year-old Beth-El Congregation, will close its doors for good.

Mark Goldhamer, 83, who has been president of the shul for 25 years, said the decision to close it was made last summer because it has so few members that getting a regular minyan together had become nearly impossible.

Cornwall has had a Jewish community since the 1860s, but in recent years, it declined drastically, as younger generations of Jews moved to bigger cities, Goldhamer said.

Information provided by Ellen Scheinberg, director of the Ontario Jewish Archives, shows Cornwall has a rich Jewish history that dates back to Alexander Vineberg, who settled in the eastern Ontario town in 1858.

The community grew from 15 Jews in 1881 to 210 by 1931.

Beth-El Congregation was established in 1925, and the cornerstone was laid by Aaron Horovitz, who later became the mayor of Cornwall in the 1950s.

Goldhamer said that at its peak in the mid-1950s, the shul had about 275 members, including people who lived in and around Cornwall.

But in the late 1960s, the number began to steadily decline.

"The last time we had regular weekly services was two years ago," he said.

Joyce Miller, 73, Goldhamer's sister-in-law, was once president of the Hadassah sisterhood in Cornwall. She said she was involved with every part of the shul, "including washing the floors."

She moved to Cornwall from Montreal in 1944, when the synagogue had a thriving congregation of about 90 families.

In the 1960s, "people were becoming elderly and the younger people began leaving. Families would move out of town. Of our four children, only one of them stayed in town. There was nothing for them here," Miller said.

"Today [the shul has] a main list of about 18 people. Very small. It's a terrible thing that happened," Goldhamer added.

"The older people who came here can't live forever and the younger people all moved away," he said.

Montreal-born Peter Loebel, who lived and worked in Cornwall for five years in the 1950s before moving to Toronto, is also upset at the loss of the shul.

"It's just sad, but this is part of the way that towns change," he said, adding that living in Cornwall and being a part of its Jewish community was an important part of his life.

Speaking about Cornwall's proud Jewish history, he noted that Nathan Phillips, the first Jewish mayor of Toronto, who served from 1955 to 1962, grew up in Cornwall.

"The younger generation moved away, and the older generation is living in nursing homes and dying. They are the ones who have kept [the shul] going."

In an attempt to help Cornwall's Jewish community stay active, other small Jewish communities in northern New York state – including Lake Placid, Malone, Massena, Ogdensburg, Potsdam and Tupper Lake – formed a coalition with Cornwall in August 1992 to share in joint activities.

Goldhamer said he can't be sure where the remaining 18 members will go for services once the shul closes, but he guessed they will probably join congregations in Ottawa and Montreal.

"We just can't keep up with the synagogue anymore. And it's not about the money. We just don't have the people. No young people have come back."

On April 2, Beth El will hold its final service. Goldhamer said he will give a speech and a rabbi will attend, as will representatives from Canadian Jewish Congress and United Israel Appeal-Federations Canada.

The 125-seat, one-floor shul has been sold and will be turned into a private home.

"On Rosh Hashanah, I broke down a couple times. It's very sad. The loss of the synagogue is a terrible blow to the city," Goldhamer said.

Miller said that in an effort to continue weekly Shabbat services, the shul began to count women in the 10 people needed to make up a minyan.

"Now, even when we count women, we don't have a minyan. We have people in their 90s, and we can't expect them to come here every Saturday morning.

"When you're down to less than 20 people, it's hard to keep a shul open for [even] three days a year," she said, explaining that the fewer members a shul has, the fewer donations it gets.

"For years we talked about [closing Beth-El], but we would say, 'We can't close. We can't close,' but the building began to deteriorate."

As Miller began discussing the final ceremony, she broke down into tears, apologizing for her emotional state.

"This is just very difficult," she said.

"It's a very sad thing. I just don't realize how emotional I am about it until I start talking about it. I feel like once the shul is gone, the community is gone."

STANDARD-FREEHOLDER

'Sad time' for Jewish community

Dwindling population leaves no choice but to sell beloved synagogue

The *Cornwall Standard-Freeholder* reports on the closing of Beth-El Congregation. Pictured is shul president Mark Goldhamer, 83.

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Coast to Coast

Canadian survivors to get 'Gold Train' funds

By JANICE ARNOLD and RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporters

Needy Hungarian Jewish Holocaust survivors in this country may begin making claims on the nearly $1.5 million (Cdn) allotted to Canada in the Hungarian "Gold Train" settlement.

The funds will be paid out over five years to three Canadian Jewish agencies: UIA Federations Canada, the Cummings Jewish Centre for Seniors (CJCS) in Montreal and Circle of Care in Toronto.

Canada received about six per cent of the historic $25.5 (US) class-action settlement finalized last autumn between Hungarian Holocaust survivors and the U.S. government.

Allocations to 27 Jewish social-service agencies in seven countries were announced in January.

Circle of Care in Toronto will receive $170,000 (Cdn.) a year, an amount expected to continue for the ensuing four year; about $105,000 a year will go to the CJCS in Montreal for five years; and Toronto-based UIA Federations Canada will distribute $17,600 annually over five years to "unfederated" small Jewish communities outside major urban centres.

The funds are intended for needy Hungarian survivors for emergency care and home services.

According to the 2001 national census, Hungarian Jewish Holocaust survivors numbered 1,455 in Toronto, 1,140 in Montreal, 95 each in Vancouver and Ottawa, 65 in Winnipeg, 20 each in Kitchener and Calgary, about 15 in Edmonton, and 10 in Hamilton.

How many of those are needy is unknown. But an extensive study by Jewish community planners in 2004 found that one-quarter of Canada's 23,000-plus Holocaust survivors were poor, that more than 3,000 were poor and lived alone, and that more than 10,000 had one or more disabilities.

The "Gold Train" settlement – $21.5 million (US) after legal fees and expenses – was approved in September by a judge in Florida, ending a lawsuit filed in 2001 by a group of survivors led by Irving Rosner.

The suit alleged that the Nazis and their Hungarian collaborators stole thousands of valuables – paintings, jewelry, stamps and coins, Oriental rugs, fine china and glassware, lace, silver and religious items – from Hungarian Jews and packed them onto 24 freight cars bound for Germany.

Shortly after the Allied victory in Europe in May 1945, the U.S. Army captured the train in Austria.

But survivors charged that the U.S. government never returned the valuables to the Hungarian victims or their heirs. Much of the property went missing. Some of it was requisitioned by officers to furnish their homes during the occupation of Austria, while some was apparently looted by American soldiers and civilian employees. The rest was eventually auctioned in New York.

After the lawsuit was launched, the United States denied any legal liability, but it did issue an apology. It agreed to pay into a fund that will benefit needy Hungarian Jewish victims of the Nazis now living throughout the world, rather than attempt to track down and directly compensate those who claim they were the owners of the lost property.

The New York-based Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, known as the Claims Conference, which is acting as steward, is disbursing the funds in accordance with the court-approved plan it developed. The initial disbursement was $4.2 million.

The money is being given to eligible survivors for "emergency assistance," such as food, shelter and health or home care, said CJCS spokesperson Benita Goldin.

The main criteria for eligibility are that a person be a Jew born before May 8, 1945 (not necessarily in Hungary) and have lived within the 1944 borders of greater Hungary some time between 1939 and 1945, and be in financial need.

The gross annual income of an individual must be below $22,540, or $30,360 for a couple, and assets should not exceed $23,000 for a single person, or $34,500 for a couple (excluding primary residence and a car.)

The maximum amount a person can receive in the current calendar year is $2,900.

Some examples of possible claims for funds include medical or dental care not covered by the government; prescription drugs; and rent to prevent eviction or utility payment if threatened with being cut off. Also considered will be home care, including heavy housecleaning, respite for caregivers, home repair and transportation.

In Montreal, allocations won't be paid directly to beneficiaries, but by the CJCS to service providers, Goldin noted.

The CJCS is also offering its case-management services to people eligible for benefits. It has a Hungarian speaker on staff.

As part of the settlement terms, the CJCS is setting up an advisory committee composed of Hungarian survivors to help oversee the implementation of the program, Goldin said.

"An intake professional will review the survivor's eligibility and work together with him or her to determine how the funds can best be used to meet the survivor's needs," she added. The CJCS has a list of cities and towns that were within Hungary's borders in 1944.

The same is true at Circle of Care in Toronto, where about $90,000 a year will go toward ongoing services for Hungarian survivors, including homemaking, home and respite care, and transportation, and $55,000 will be allocated annually for emergency services, including wheelchairs, dentures, hearing aids and rent.

Executive director Arnold Foss said recipients will have to provide tax returns and other documents attesting to income, but he said the agency plans to be "flexible and human."

He said that as a result of the new money, he expects the agency to begin serving another 100 or so Hungarian survivors, in addition to the 50 it serves now.

A lay committee has been struck in Toronto to help disburse the funds. It is headed by local Holocaust survivor and educator Judy Cohen.

In addition to providing for survivors' welfare, the U.S. government has earmarked another $500,000 to create an archive of documents and materials relating to the Hungarian Gold Train events and the fate of the Hungarian Jewish community in general. It will be available for scholarly research and educational purpose.

Survivors who think they may be eligible should contact the CJCS intake department at 514-342-1234, Circle of Care at 416-635-2860 or UIA Federations Canada at 416-636-7655.

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Sosumi sets new standard for sushi at Gladstone's

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It was only a matter of time before Raphy Amar addressed the growing demand for sushi among his discerning clientele by introducing it at **Gladstone's Wine Bar & Grill.** But incorporating sushi the Gladstone's way was not a matter of days or weeks. Amar and general manager Gino Falcitelli devoted months to the process of planning and tweaking the kind of elaborate menu that would satisfy even the most demanding sushi connoisseur, in cooperation with a distinguished chef capable of doing it full justice.

"Everything we've done here to date has been consistent with world-class standards," says Amar. "The same applies to Sushi. Simply adding it to the menu would not have been acceptable. We needed to create our own little restaurant-within-a-restaurant — not just another sushi bar. If you're not going to go all out, why bother? Sosumi is now an important part of the Gladstone's dining experience."

This ambitious approach and uncompromising modus operandi have served Amar well at Gladstone's, and Sosumi and its sushi afficionados are clearly the culinary beneficiaries.

The name "Sosumi" is shrouded in myth and legend, but the Gladstone's version of Sosumi is quickly building its own legend — for exquisite taste and presentation. Sosumi's variety is spectacular, from à la carte to combination platters to maki and handrolls. Try the Matsu Maki, a succulent combination of fresh tuna sashimi, diced tomatoes, avocado chunks and masago, tossed in a light special sauce and scattered over Gladstone's classic California rolls. Or the Sakura Sushi — a delectable combination of tuna, salmon, tai, hamachi, pepper-seared tuna, butter fish, egg, pepper-seared albacore, salmon roe, spicy tuna roll and handroll ... just two of dozens of tantalizing specialties.

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But the Sosumi sensation at Gladstone's goes far beyond daily dining. Planning a catered event? Give the festivities a Japanese flair and treat your guests to the kind of exotic dining experience and dramatic presentation that only Gladstone's can deliver. Sosumi Sushi catering packages are available for virtually any size of group. For smaller gatherings in your home or office, Sosumi's Maki and Sushi platters will satisfy the most discerning of palates. Of course, even a simple take-out order for two receives Gladstone's trademark attention to detail.

Gladstone's world-class international cuisine, wine list, beverage menu, and dessert selection dovetail naturally with Amar's ongoing catering activities through Beverly Hills Caterers. "It's a privilege to be able to serve others, both on a daily basis and for the milestone events in their lives," says Amar. The process of spending long hours meeting with customers to determine their needs and develop menus that resonate with their palate only adds to the pleasure, he says. "When you love what you do, it isn't really work ... it's pleasure. You're always in the moment."

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After 43 years in Canada, grandmother still keeps Moroccan Pesach traditions

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

After 43 years in Canada, Marcelle Benaim, born in Portugal but brought up in Casablanca, Morocco, still follows Sephardi Passover customs.

"It's my heritage and I don't want to lose it. My seders now are almost identical to the ones [I attended] growing up.

"The one major difference, though, is that I make matzah balls. My nine grandchildren insist upon them."

She recalls, as a child, cleaning the house "like crazy" for Passover, and giving the kitchen a fresh coat of paint every year.

"It is a spring festival, so we did our spring cleaning and made new spring dresses for the seder. The weather was beautiful during Passover and we always went to the beach."

Their life wasn't easy, she says, because her mother died when she was seven, and she was brought up by her grandmother and her older brothers.

"Our festivals were joyous, though. We sang Sephardi melodies and we had lots of kidding around. It was a good time then, in Morocco. There was little anti-Semitism."

Her daughter Esther, a cook and co-owner of the culinary centre Great Cooks on Eight, says her own kids love the Sephardi tradition. "My mother has made them feel Moroccan, and they insist on keeping up the customs."

Marcelle Benaim says the seder service is similar to an Ashkenazi service, "but the food is a world apart. Our charoset is made of dates, walnuts, raisins, wine and cinnamon.

"We usually start with a fish appetizer, but instead of gefilte fish, we form balls and bake them in a tagine with tomatoes, peppers, garlic, coriander and paprika.

"Then we serve an assortment of salads such as carrot, green and red pepper, eggplant or tomato. During the year, we mop these salads up with bread, but during Passover, we do the best we can with matzah."

She says the soup to which her grandchildren add their matzah balls is "always made with fresh fava beans, white onion, celery, coriander and potatoes. It's a very traditional soup and we don't change it. It's expected."

The main course is usually chicken with almonds, prunes and "lots and lots" of onions, Benaim says. "Moroccan food is comfortable and intricately flavoured. We do a fair amount of mixing fruits with meats and chicken."

Dessert, she says, is a ritual. "We never bake. We serve dried fruits and unshelled nuts and we sit around cracking open the nuts and taking handfuls of fruit.

"We also make 'sandwiches' out of dates and walnuts and hand them around."

A favourite mid-week treat, she says, is a piece of matzah dipped in milk and sugar, and then heated. "We also make it in order to use up the last bits of matzah."

What she still misses from her childhood, she says, is Mimouna, the festival held on the last day of Passover. "I remember heaping tables of food, including wine and special jams made with orange, carrot or eggplant. Some people made crepes of honey and butter, and some made pasta and milk.

"Every house set up a table and we would go from house to house. As we entered, we were given a piece of lettuce dipped in honey to signify a sweet year.

"That's not the same anymore. People live too far away from each other, and people are busy. They don't take the time to spend a whole evening."

Esther (left) and Marcelle Benaim

MARCELLE'S PASSOVER SOUP

1 small chicken or 2 large beef bones with marrow
1 celery heart, chopped
2 lb. green fava beans in pods either fresh or frozen – peeled
2 large white onions- chopped
3 large potatoes – cubed
1 bunch fresh coriander
salt and pepper to taste
a few threads of saffron or ½ tsp. turmeric

Place all ingredients in a large pot with enough water to cover. Bring to the boil, then turn heat down to simmer. Cook covered for about 1-1½ hours till all ingredients are cooked through. Remove chicken or bones and puree soup to a chunky consistency, not too fine.

If the soup seems too thick, add a bit of hot water. Bring to boil again and then simmer for about 15 minutes. Serve with soup nuts or matzah. Serves 6.

TANGINE OF CHICKEN WITH ONIONS AND RAISINS

1 medium chicken cut in pieces
3 large white onions, sliced
½ tsp. saffron mixed in ½ cup water
½ cup raisins
vegetable oil
salt to taste

In a medium size pot, sauté the sliced onions in oil till golden. Add the chicken pieces and season with salt. Cook uncovered till chicken turns golden. Cover and let simmer for 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, soak raisins in cold water for 5-10 minutes. Add raisins and saffron to chicken and onions. Simmer either in a 350-degree oven or on stovetop for another 20 minutes or until chicken is fully cooked. If needed, add a bit of hot water. Serve hot.

Memories and customs

Beginning in this issue, until Pesach, The CJN *will share with our readers the memories and customs of individuals we spoke to, who have come to Canada from other parts of the Jewish world.*

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Food, Scrumptious Food

Gourmet dinner raises funds for trees in Israel

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

In celebration of Tu b'Shvat, Ariel Porat, executive chef of Dan Accadia Hotel in Herzliya, in co-operation with chef Alex Austriaco of the Windsor Arms Hotel in Toronto, recently prepared a five-course gourmet dinner for a capacity crowd of more than 200 people at the Windsor Arms.

The dinner, held as the culmination of Jewish National Fund of Canada's celebration of the holiday, was sponsored by JNF Canada, in co-operation with the two hotels, the Consulate General of Israel and El Al Israel Airlines.

Ben Prossin, executive director of JNF Toronto, says funds raised for the dinner are earmarked to plant olive trees in Israel.

"Olive trees, which were the focus of this year's Tu b'Shvat campaign, are a symbol of growth, ancient times, Jewish settlement and peace with Israel's neighbours," he said.

"Tu b'Shvat is a major [JNF] celebration each year, but this is the first time we've had a dinner. It's a different kind of JNF event, and we'd like to make it an annual affair."

Dinner guests feasted upon such gourmet dishes as Jerusalem artichoke soup with shitake mushrooms, halibut encrusted in kadaif pastry with roasted tomatoes and fennel coulis, grilled lamb patty with trio tahini sauce, baked chicken supreme stuffed with apricot compote served on a bed of saffron Israeli couscous and pomegranate, and for dessert, halvah parfait with marinated berries.

The intermezzo between the lamb patty and the chicken was passion fruit sorbet with rose water.

Porat supplied the following recipes:

LAMB PATTIES WITH 3-COLOURED TAHINI

100 ml tahini paste
150-200 ml very cold water
juice of one big lemon
salt to taste
1 small beet, grated
1 tsp. turmeric + 1 tsp. yellow curry powder
1 bunch parsley leaves

Mix the paste with water until there are no lumps. Add salt and lemon juice. Divide tahini into three parts and mix each part with a different flavour (one with beet, one with turmeric and curry, one with parsley). Let marinate in fridge for 12 hours.

LAMB PATTIES

1 kg fresh minced lamb meat
1 big bunch of mint chopped
1 big bunch of parsley chopped
150 gm pine nuts (lightly roasted)
1 large onion finely chopped
4 garlic cloves minced
½ tsp. each of black pepper, cinnamon, nutmeg, English pepper (amounts may change according to personal taste)

Mix all ingredients and place in fridge for 6 hours. Divide into small patties and grill. Serve on plate with three-coloured tahini sauces.

The Canadian Jewish news

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Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

Mazel tov to Jason Grayeme Miranda on your 10th birthday from mom Julia Gray, dad Roberto Miranda, and godparents Sholom Wargon & Erminia Tonelli.

Mazel tov to Phil & Helene Rudolph, celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary on March 18. Love from their children and grandson.

Mazel tov to Carly Reed & Loren Erlich on your engagement! Congratulations and best wishes from your family and friends.

Mazel tov Lori & Boris on your engagement from parents Jack Donsky & Marla Hebscher, Alex & Lily Rabinovich, and bubbies Florence DeBonis and Faina Okun.

Mazel tov to Jason Abram & Sandra Srebrolow on their engagement. Proud parents, Marilyn & Alvin Abram and Michelle & Norman Srebrolow.

Mazel tov! Logan Sierra was born Feb. 12. Parents, Michelle & Ian Baer. Ecstatic grandparents, Sylvia & Lou Kirshner, Bonnie & Rick Baer, great-grandmother, Ruth Kirshner.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, March 20, is the deadline for the March 30 issue. Monday, March 27, is the deadline for the April 6 issue. PLEASE NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES: Wednesday, March 29, is the deadline for the April 13 issue, Monday, April 3, is the deadline for the April 20 issue and Wednesday, April 5, is the deadline for the April 27 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, March 16

IDENTITY THEFT

National Council of Jewish Women presents **Wayne Peirce**, fraud squad commissioner of the Toronto Police Department, and **Michelle Chibba**, manager of policy and compliance of Ontario's information and privacy commission, speaking about how easy it is for a criminal to assume your identity and how to protect yourself. 7:30 p.m. at 4700 Bathurst St. $10, non-members $15. 416-633-5100.

HONEST REPORTING

Adath Israel Congregation presents **Dov Smith**, of Honest Reporting Canada, speaking about promoting fair and accurate media coverage of the Middle East. For those in their 20s and 30s. 8 p.m. No charge. Reserve at 416-635-5340.

Friday, March 17

CELEBRATING OUR ROOTS

Oraynu Congregation for Humanistic Judaism Oneg Shabbat, "Celebrating Our Roots," a trip through time discovering shtetls in Ukraine and Russia at Banbury Community Centre, 18 Wynford Dr. 7:45 p.m. Non-members $15. RSVP 416-385-3910 or roby@oraynu.org.

Saturday March 18

PARSHAH DISCUSSION

Lionel Sharpe discusses the weekly portion, Ki Tisa. 9:30 a.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433.

DAFNA IZRAELI LECTURE

Torah in Motion presents **Hindy Najman**, of the University of Toronto. 9 p.m. For location, call 416-633-5770.

Sunday, March 19

BROTHERHOOD BREAKFAST

Beth David Brotherhood presents "Israel Update" with **David Goldberg**, of the Canada-Israel Committee. 9:15 a.m. Minimal charge. 416-633-5500.

BOOK LAUNCH & BREAKFAST

Shaarei Shomayim sponsors the launch of **David Novak**'s book *The Jewish Social Contract*, a study of how Jews negotiate their status in host societies and countries in the Diaspora. **Morris** and **David Moscovitch** introduce the book. **Ralph Wintrob** reads from the book. Novak will answer questions. 9:30 a.m. Members free, guests $5. 416-789-3213.

ARYEH BARAF BREAKFAST

Aryeh Baraf Chesed Network for Jewish Singles hosts a breakfast and opportunity to meet and help other singles. 10:30 a.m. at Adath Israel Congregation. $5. 416-221-0459.

SINGLES WALKING GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc. for singles 50+ for a visit to the early Jewish neighbourhood of the south Annex. Meet at 483 Bloor St. W. at 10 a.m. For information, e-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

ARCHEOLOGY IN ISRAEL

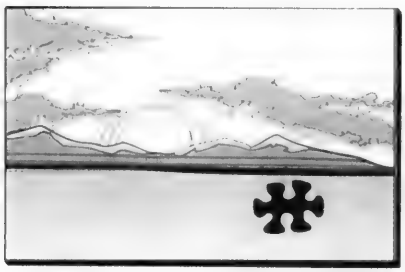
Adath Israel Congregation Adult Study presents "The Diary of an Israeli Archeologist," a seminar and slide presentation by **Eli Shenhav** of the Jewish National Fund. 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. 416-635-5340.

YIDDISH CONCERT

Friends of Yiddish present "From Cantor's Chant to Yiddish Song," a musical examination by **Mitchell Leonard Smolkin** of the songs of **Moishe Oysher**, **Aaron Lebedev**, **Jan Peerce** and **Louis Danto**. 2 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. Members free, guests $10.

Continued on page 29

Helping you discover what's **missing**



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The Memory Project Road Show & Conference
DATE: Tuesday March 28, 2006
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Conference: 1:30pm - 3:30pm
COST: Free

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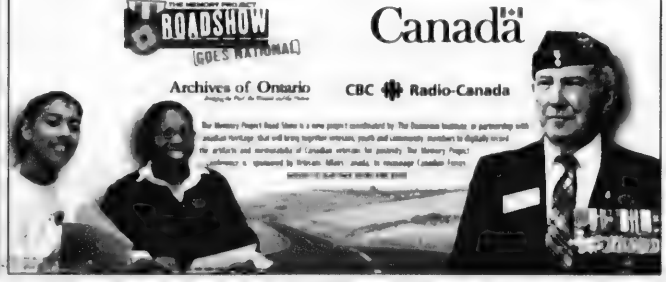

What's New

Continued from page 28

CHARITY AUCTION

Delta Pi Sorority presents its annual auction benefiting breast-cancer research at the Princess Margaret Hospital. 6 p.m. at Earl Bales Community Centre. Tickets $5, from 416-280-6482 or at the door. Enjoy refreshments, purchase trips, sports tickets and more.

HEALTH & JEWISH LIVING

Temple Kol Ami presents **Dr. Thalia Charney** speaking on naturopathy and health as it applies to Jewish living and belief. 7:30 p.m. 905-709-2620.

KLEZMER MUSIC

Join Congregation Bnai Torah for an evening of klezmer music with **Brian Katz** and **Jonno Lightstone**. 8 p.m. Reserved tickets $12. At the door $15. Call 416-226-3700.

Monday, March 20

VE'AHAVTA MEETING

Avrum Rosensweig speaks at a meeting of Ve'ahavta Chaverim Vaughan about how to make a difference in the lives of others through community awareness and fundraising projects. New members welcome. 7 p.m. For info, call **Marleine**, 416-964-7698, ext 19.

NIGHT OF COMEDY

United Synagogue Day School presents "United We Laugh: A Night of Comedy" with Les Aaron and friends, 7:30 p.m. at Leah Posluns Theatre. $50. For information, call 416-224-8737, ext. 175.

JEWISH DIABETES MEETING

Serena Beber speaks on "Surviving Passover: Helpful Tips to Control Your Blood Sugar" at the Jewish diabetes chapter meeting. 8 p.m. Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. $1. 416-363-0177, ext. 7403.

JEWISH COMEDY

Join Beth Emeth Sisterhood for "A History of Jewish Comedy and Film Presentation," an evening of laughter and fun with **Alf Kwinter**, humorist and raconteur. 8 p.m. 416-633-3838

Tuesday, March 21

LUNCH AND LEARN

Beth Tikvah presents **Andrea Most** speaking about "Jews on Broadway." Excerpts from the film *Oklahoma* will be shown, and the Jewish connections will be pointed out. Reservations required. Call 416-221-3433, ext. 352. $10 for the lecture, lunch is free. 12:15 p.m.

THE WORLD OF PUBLISHING

Join Holy Blossom Temple for the panel discussion "The Place of Jewish Values in the World of Publishing." Moderated by **Adam Sol** with **Cynthia Good**, **Malcom Lester** and **Margie Wolfe**. 7:30 p.m. 416-789-3291, ext. 235.

A PASSOVER CONCERT

Enjoy the voices of Jewish youth as five choirs from the GTA perform a Passover concert, "Ashira L'AdoShem: From Generation to Generation," featuring Renanim Youth Singers, Varsity Jews, Kol Neshama York University Singers and both Miles Nadal JCC choirs. 7:30 p.m., at Leah Posluns Theatre. For ticket, call 647-438-5603.

Wednesday, March 22

DEALING WITH CANCER

The Wellness Library at Baycrest Hospital hosts a free information session on ways to help and support people affected by cancer. Speakers include **Lois Bloch**, Baycrest social worker; **Macushla Ginivan**, cancer survivor and speaker with the Canadian Cancer Society; and **Rosie Sherman**, cancer survivor and speaker with L'Chaim Cancer Support for Jewish Women. 2-3:30 p.m. at the Baycrest Wellness Library. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 3374, to register.

'HAND IN HAND' CONCERT

Come out to "Hand in Hand," special children helping special children musical extravaganza. All proceeds supporting Reena after-school program. Silent auction at 7 p.m. Concert at 8 p.m. Also raffle and gifts with every ticket. Leah Posluns Theatre. Tickets are $36, $54 and $150. Call **Carla** at 905-763-8254, ext. 3034.

ISRAEL'S FUTURE

Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel, Beit Halochem Canada, presents **Moshe Ya'alon**, Israel's former chief of staff of the IDF, speaking about "Israel: Today and Tomorrow." 8 p.m. at Beth Emeth Synagogue. 905-695-0611.

Other news

JEWISH SURVIVAL

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents "Jewish Survival," with **Sander Gilman**, of Emory University, on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 21 and 22. Gilman speaks on "Jewish Self-Hate," March 21 at 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec; on "Multiculturalism and the Jews: The Melting Pot," March 22, noon, at the Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St.; and "Modern Parallels in Weimar Germany and Today," 7:30 p.m. at Beth Tzedec. 416-781-3511.

ARTS FEST SERIES

Women of Temple Sinai present a musical evening and sing-along with Israeli singer **Yitzhak Argaman**. Thursday, March 23, 7 p.m. Tickets $15, includes light supper. Reserve at 416-487-4161, ext 271.

50 YEARS OF STRUGGLE

Beth David Congregation continues the series "Tkuma:The Conflict," a historical documentary about Israel's struggles and achievements, with commentary by **David Goldberg**. Thursday, March 23, 7:30 p.m. 416-633-3988.

MOM AND TOT DROP-IN

Shaarei Shomayim Moms and Tots program takes place Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, 9:30-11 a.m. This drop-in program for tots and their caregivers includes free play, crafts, snack and circle time. $7 session. For info, call **Robin**, 416-789-3213, ext. 217.

MUSICAL SHABBATON

Temple Anshe Sholom, Hamilton, hosts a musician-in-residence weekend March 24-26, featuring **Noam Katz** in Erev Shabbat services, Shabbat song session for children, a youth group *Havdalah*, a Saturday night concert open to the public and a performance at Shalom Village. For information, contact 905-528-0121.

GLUTEN-FREE GOURMET

The Canadian Celiac Association, Toronto chapter, hosts a meeting Tuesday, March 28, 7:30 p.m. at the Hospital for Sick Children. Meet **Jodi Bager** and **Jenny Lass**, authors of *Grain-Free Gourmet*, and learn about eating gluten-free. RSVP to **Susan Schacter**, 416-932-1765.

SUSIE FISHBEIN

NCSY presents a dinner and cooking demonstration for women by cookbook author **Susie Fishbein** at the Copper Creek Golf Club. Wednesday, March 29. Cocktails 6 p.m., dinner 7:00 p.m. For tickets, call 905-761-6279, ext. 32.

ROOM AT YOUR SEDER?

JIAS, Jewish Immigrant Aid Services Toronto is looking for host families to invite recent immigrants to their Pesach seder. Join families who have made an annual Passover tradition of opening their hearts and homes to immigrants for a seder night. Call 416-630-6481, ext 30.

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Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Diane**, 416-638-7800, ext. 246, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Adolescent Social Skills Group, an eight-week group to help teens 14-17 enhance social skills, self-esteem and confidence, enhance problem-solving skills, become more aware of verbal and non-verbal communication, and make new friends. Wednesdays, beginning March 22. No sessions April 12 and 19.

FOR SENIORS

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. Call 416-630-9444.

Association of Jewish Seniors meets on Thursday, March 23, at 9:30 a.m. at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation. **Jennifer Scott** speaks on "Navigating the Long-term Care System." Call **Tammy Parker**, 416-635-2860.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Casino Rama, Wednesday, March 22; Sunday dance, March 26; Casino Niagara, Wednesday May 24. Call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. March 16, Purim celebration. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Learning Experience offers "Analyzing Handwriting" with **Simon Zelcovitch**, Tuesday, March 21, 1-2:30 p.m.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Kafka and Son, through March 18 at the Al Green Theatre. Tickets $15-25, 416-504-7529 or www.artsboxoffice.ca.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Baycrest is looking for a bilingual Russian-speaking volunteer on a weekly basis to make outreach phone calls to shut-in seniors. Fluency in both English and Russian is necessary. Call 416-785-2500, ext. 2572.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 22

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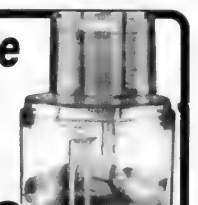

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Katon, Minna	Feb. 26/06	Private
Dassas, Reine	Feb. 27/06	Private
Epstein, Lionel	Feb. 25/06	Florida
Cherry, Reuben	Feb. 26/06	134 Viewmount Av
Naftaliev, Semen	Feb. 27/06	6171 Bathurst St
Ryman, Sydney	Feb. 28/06	10 Newbury Lane
Gonick, Shirley	Feb. 28/06	Private
Glazenberg, Izaslav	Feb. 28/06	Vancouver, BC
Kornberg, Rose	Mar 1/06	393 Hounslow Av
Zamler, Harvey Irving	Mar 2/06	333 Clark Av W

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Faith Grossman	Feb 26/06	447 Walmer Rd
Sam Pukerman	Feb 26/06	24 Danby Av
Eileen Schacter	Feb 27/06	8 Worth Blvd
Bill Buckler	Feb 27/06	4005 Bayview Av
Jacob Herscovic	Feb 28/06	2111 Finch Ave W
Dr Albert Goldhar	Mar 1/06	126 Ava Rd
Etta Nelson	Mar 1/06	3560 Bathurst St
Jack Frimet	Mar 1/06	80 Antibes Dr
Leonard Levine	Mar 1/06	515 N. Flagler Dr
Mikhail Binevich	Mar 2/06	1463 Eglinton AvW
Ety Segal	Mar 3/06	55 Ameer Av
Ella Himel	Mar 3/06	135 Antibes Dr
Lily Rosenthal	Mar 3/06	260 Seneca Hill
David Simons	Mar 3/06	3174 Bathurst St
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Edited by: ALEK SILVER
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רעדאגירט פון: אַלעק סילווער

טאָראָנטאָ צייכנט אפ די 90סטע יאָרצייט פון שלום עליכם

פון מאָרווין שיף

די קאָליפּאָלע וועלט פון **שלום עליכם**, מיט אירע געלעכטער און טרערן, וועט בולט קומען צום לעבן אין אַפּריל, וען איינער פון דער וועלטס העכסט־טאַלאַנטירטע יידישע טעאַטער־אַרטיסטן וועט אויפטרעטן אויף דער בינע אין טאָראָנטאָ וווּ די הויפּט־אָטראַקציע אין אַ מאָרשטעלונג לכּבוד דער 90סטער יאָרצייט פון דעם באָרימטן יידישן שריפטער.

רפאל גאָלדוואַסער פון פּאַריז, פראַנקרייך, אַן אינטערנאַציאָנאַל אַנערקענטער אַרטיסט, טעאַטער־היסטאָריקער און לערער, וועט מאָרשטעלן אַ צאָל מאָנאָלאָגן אין יידיש — מיט אויסטייטשטנגען אין ענגליש — אַרויסגענומען פון די ווערק פון שלום עליכם. עס וועט אויך אָנטייל נעמען דער כאָר פון דער „ביאַליק יידישער טאָג־שול", וועלכער וועט זינגען אַ צאָל יידישע לידער.

די מאָרשטעלונג, צייטווייליק אונטערן נאָמען „ס'ברענט", איז מאָטיווירט געוואָרן ווי אַ ווידערקלאַנג פון דער יידישער שפּראַך און קולטור, פון אַן אינטערעס אין אַנטדעקן אַלטע וואָרצלען, און אויך אַ וויכטיקע מיינונג פון דער יידישער שפּראַך און קולטור, פון אַן אַראָפּגיין אין דער אַראָפּגיין פון דער יידישער שפּראַך און קולטור, פון אַן אַראָפּגיין אין דער אַראָפּגיין פון דער יידישער שפּראַך און קולטור.

ווי אַ שוישפּילער און פּראָדוצירער איז דער 58־יאָריקער גאָלדוואַסער באַוווסט און האָט געווּנען קריטישע אַנערקענונג אין אַ ריי אייראָפּעישע לענדער, ווי דייטשלאַנד, פראַנקרייך, רומעניע, אין דעם פריערדיקן סאָוועט־פאַרבאַנד און ישׂראל, וווּ אירע אין טאָראָנטאָ ביים 2004 אַשכנז פעסטיוואַל. אין זיין פרעזענטאַציע נעמט ער אַריין וועלט פון מאָרשיידענע יידישע שריפטער, וווּ אייזיק באַשעוויס־זינגער, יצחק קאַצענעלסאָן, פרץ מאַרקיש, מרדכי נעבירטיג, איציק מאַנגער און, מאָרשטענדלעך, שלום עליכם.

אין זיין טאָראָנטער אויפטרעט וועט גאָלדוואַסער (אגב אַ נעבירענער אין אַרגענטינע) אויספּירן דריי מאָנאָלאָגן פון שלום עליכם — אין יידיש מיט ענגלישער אויסטייטשונג. גאָלדוואַסער גיט צו, אַז דער נאָמען פון דער מאָרשטעלונג, „ס'ברענט", קען אַמאָל נעבן דעם אייגנדרוק, אַז דאָס איז אַ טראַגישע פּרעזענטירונג, ווייל עס איז אויך דער נאָמען פון אַ חורבן־ליד פון מרדכי נעבירטיג. „אָבער עס איז באמת נישט טראַגיש", דערקלערט ער. „מיין מיינונג איז צו זאָגן, אַז יידישע קולטור ברענט נאָך היינט, עס עקזיסטירט בין אינט און עס ווערט מאָרגעוצט. ווען איך גיב־צו, אַז די מאָנאָלאָגן זינגען פון שלום עליכם, מאָרשטיין באַלד די מענטשן, אַז עס איז נישט טראַגיש".

די מייערונג פון שלום עליכם 90סטער יאָרצייט וועט נעבן דעם יידישן עולם אַ נעלעגענהייט אָפּצוגעבן כּבוד אַ פּולסירנדיקע ליטעראַרישע ירושה פון אַ גרויסן יידישן שרייבער. אין דער וועלבער צייט וועט עס זיין אַ מעגלעכקייט אָנטייל צו נעמען אין, און ביישטייערן צו דער מאָרגעצונג פון דער יידישער שפּראַך און קולטור.

דער פּראָגראַם וועט מאָרקומען

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Israel's Iran policy a 'delicate balance'

By DAN BARON
JTA

JERUSALEM — In handling Iran, Israel has long combined tough rhetoric with tactical reticence.

Motivating this delicate counterpoint was the need to prompt international action against Iran's nuclear program and, simultaneously, nourish the idea Israel could strike first in self defence, all the while avoiding sabre-rattling.

Some say remarks made last week by a retired Israeli general upset this delicate balance, ahead of the UN Security Council's discussing possible sanctions against the Islamic republic this week. Israeli officials consider these talks the triumphant culmination of years of quiet lobbying in Washington and European capitals.

"In the end, we want to cause the international community to prevent the Iranians from developing non-conventional capabilities," interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert told Israel Radio.

But there are no promises of a quick resolution, and with some experts asserting that Iran is just months away from having the ability to produce nuclear weapons, Israel is not ruling out a military last resort.

The problem is the Osirak attack. In 1981, Israel bombed Iraq's main reactor. That preemptive move, while depriving Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein of the bomb, also deprived Israel of the element of surprise in any similar actions against Iran.

"We have an excellent military, but in this sort of conflict, originality of thought in planning is the top priority," said a senior Israeli security source. "It is also a major challenge, given that the world is watching the space between Tel Aviv and Tehran so closely."

Moshe Ya'alon, the former chief of Israel's armed forces, unwittingly provided a gauge for the depths of jitters in Jerusalem.

The retired lieutenant-general was quoted as telling a Washington, D.C., think tank, the Hudson Institute, last week that Israel, with the help of American and European air forces, could feasibly attack Iranian nuclear sites.

The remarks set off a political firestorm in Israel, with Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz accusing Ya'alon of rashly speaking out of turn.

Ya'alon responded that he didn't give away operational secrets, and he accused political rivals of using him as a scapegoat ahead of the March 28 election.

"I don't understand the uproar in Israel," Ya'alon told Israel's Channel 1 TV on Friday. "Nothing from what I said should harm Israel's national security." He noted that he didn't emphasize Israel's role in a possible attack and that he stressed that it could be a joint effort with NATO and the United States.

Ya'alon's military career was curtailed last year by Mofaz, a senior member of the ruling Kadima Party, and Ya'alon is widely assumed to be close to the rival Likud.

"I will not allow anyone to co-opt me for their cause," Ya'alon told Army Radio Sunday.

According to one military analyst, Ya'alon may have ruffled feathers in Israel not by revealing secrets, but by revealing limitations.

Rather than giving a perfect prognosis in his speech, he said that an attack would at best retard the Iranian nuclear program, rather than destroy it. He also said Iran was likely to retaliate with missile fire or by ordering its Lebanese proxy Hezbollah to step up violence against Israel.

"His remarks, ironically, show to what extent Israel lacks an aggressive option against Iran," Ofer Shelach wrote in *Yediot Achronot*.

"If, as Ya'alon put it, what is needed is a protracted aerial assault against dozens of targets inside Iran, along with a capability for real-time intelligence, it is clear that the situation is far different from the smashing single blow delivered against the Iraqi reactor in 1981."

Former Shin Bet head and Kadima MK candidate Avi Dichter came to Ya'alon's defence on Saturday.

Dichter told Israel Radio that while he might have chosen to refrain from making certain statements that Ya'alon made, he identified with Ya'alon 's message that Israel is much more secure than Iran, despite the threat posed Iran possibly achieving nuclear capability.

Asked if he would repeat his remarks again, Ya'alon told Channel 1 "certainly," adding that the reason he brought up the possibility of attacking Iran was to serve the interests of Israel and the West.

"The need to raise this now is because of the discussion going on in the West, which includes what I see as a baseless claim that there is no military option. That is why it was important for me to say what I said without hurting Israel's security".

After hearing the harsh reaction to his speech, Ya'alon said that not one person who criticized him in Israel bothered to call him and ask about his remarks. "The uproar is coming from sources that are not relevant to this issue and might cause more damage to Israel than the remarks themselves," he said.

Ya'alon is now a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and is expected to return to Israel in June.

With files from Jerusalem Post

Straw makes pledge on Israeli nukes

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Israel will not make an issue over British Foreign Minister Jack Straw's statement last week that after the world deals with Iran's nuclear "threat," it will deal with Israel's.

Straw gave a lengthy television interview in Britain last Thursday, following the decision to send Iran's nuclear dossier to the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions. When asked about a "double standard" regarding Iran, Straw replied: "I want a nuclear-free Middle East. It's the policy of her majesty's government. We've been working to achieve that. We have ensured over the last few years that two of the four countries [in the Middle East] which posed a nuclear threat, Libya and Iraq, have had their nuclear weapons removed," he said.

He then added, "If you want to see a nuclear-free Middle East, you've got to remove that threat from Iran, including the rhetorical threat to wipe Israel off the face of the map... and once you've done that, then we can get on to work at, in respect of Israel."

Straw's remarks were analyzed carefully in Jerusalem, but it was decided not to make an issue of them because Straw made clear that Britain remained "on board" on the Iranian nuclear issue.

"That is the most important thing," one government official said, saying that Israel did not want to deflect from the Iranian issue by drawing attention to itself and creating a diplomatic issue over Straw's comments.

"This isn't the time to discuss this," he said. Besides, he added, Israel has also made it clear that it was in favour of a nuclear-free Middle East, but that discussions about this could only take place in the distant future, after Israel has concluded peace agreements with all the countries in the region.

That the Iranian nuclear issue would ultimately spotlight Israel was not something that has been unexpected, and Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has said that U.S. President George W. Bush's famous letter of April 2004 included a line pledging U.S. commitment to Israel's deterrence capacity.

That letter reads, "The United States reiterates its steadfast commitment to Israel's security, including secure, defensible borders, and to preserve and strengthen Israel's capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any threat or possible combination of threats."

Sharon interpreted this as a U.S. promise to back Israel when there were attempts – which he believed would follow the international community's handling of the Iranian nuclear issue to dismantle what he referred to as "Israel's deterrence ability."

Ironically, Straw's interview appeared the same night that a BBC *Newsnight* report appeared claiming that the United Kingdom supplied Israel with quantities of plutonium while Harold Wilson was prime minister in the 1960s.

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Controller slams Disengagement Authority

By DAN IZENBERG
Jeruslem Post

JERUSALEM — In a special report released for publication last week, State Controller Micha Lindenstrauss blasted the Disengagement Authority (Sela), the Prime Minister's Office and the Finance Ministry for their poor performance in handling the evacuation and resettlement of 1,750 families from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

"A supreme and concentrated national effort was required of all the ministries that dealt with the disengagement, and above all by the Prime Minister's Office and Sela," wrote Lindenstrauss.

"I especially emphasize the bureaucratic procrastination in the conduct of the Ministry of Finance as it emerges in the [previous] report on reinforcing the Jewish communities on the Israeli side of the Gaza Strip and, now again, regarding Sela. The Finance Ministry and its head ought to have initiated a speedy and concentrated action to remove the obstacles and impediments [to the financing of the authority] in time," he wrote.

The trouble began immediately after the government decision on June 6, 2004, to establish Sela, wrote Lindenstrauss. It took at least 2½ months for the Treasury to submit its request to the Knesset Finance Committee for approval of the allocation to establish the Disengagement Authority. Formal approval of the request was given on Sept. 26, almost three months after the projected date, according to the government timetable.

By Dec. 12, people were working for Sela, but by April that number was only up to 17. Another 38 were hired in the months before the disengagement began on Aug. 17, most of them in June. Some of the delay was bureaucratic. It was only in July 2005, after Sela had filed requests to hire additional workers in February, March and May that a special government committee agreed to lift a hiring freeze for 42 positions. Lindenstrauss also found that the Disengagement Authority had often submitted requests for workers much later than it should have.

Sela was aware of the lack of manpower caused by bureaucratic delays, but according to Lindenstrauss, Sela head Yonatan Bassi "did not warn senior managers of the Prime Minister's Office and the Treasury about the problems with the necessary urgency."

The state controller also examined how Sela handled the resettlement of the evacuees in the aftermath of disengagement.

Despite knowing ahead of time that it would need short-term housing for about half of the families (870), Sela only prepared 800 hotel rooms. On the day the evacuation began, Sela rented another 1,000 rooms, and by the end of the evacuation, it had rented a total of 2,800 rooms. More than six months later, hundreds of families still reside in hotels.

The move to longer-term temporary housing has been delayed because it took longer than expected to complete construction of the mobile homes and other temporary housing in Nitzan, Karmiya and Yad Hanna, and of the 840 rental apartments in Ashkelon reserved for evacuees, only 63 were rented.

In a second report also issued on Wednesday, Lindenstrauss criticized the government for not properly preparing local authorities for absorption of the 1,750 evacuee families.

The government also failed to specify who would pay for some of the special services that had to be provided to the evacuee families.

Lindenstrauss, however, accepted in part the claims of government authorities that they could not provide more detailed information because of the Hof Gaza Regional Council's refusal to provide information and files about the settlers and their needs. In fact, the head of the council threatened to fire any employee who co-operated with the government authorities. Many of the settlers themselves also refused to co-operate with the authorities, wrote Lindenstrauss.

But even with those evacuee services that were set to be financed by the government, it took many months to determine how the grants would be calculated, and consequently, exactly how much money each local authority would receive. It was only in September, two weeks after the evacuation, that the government finally decided on the criteria for allocating funds.

Until then, because they could no longer wait, some of the local authorities began providing necessary services to the evacuees without government approval and in violation of the law.

Also, during the period in which funding guidelines were unclear, the heads of the local authorities put pressure on the government to give them money to cope with the immediate emergency. These allocations were not granted equally, but rather according to the skills and connections of the individual local leaders.

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Will hold internal dialogue

Continued from page 1

that Israel had frozen the controversial building plans in the wake of American pressure.

The long-planned construction of 3,500 housing units on the outskirts of Ma'aleh Adumim, as part of a decade-old government proposal to link the suburban Jerusalem settlement to the capital, has been subject to fierce Palestinian and international condemnation and to American resistance.

Olmert's chief political rival, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, has repeatedly used the freeze on building in E1 to call into question the government's determination to strengthen both Jerusalem and the major settlement blocs.

Olmert said if he wins the election, he will wait a "reasonable" amount of time to see whether Hamas recognizes Israel, disavows terrorism, disarms, accepts previous PA-Israel agreements and acts according to the guidelines of the "road map" peace plan.

"We will wait, but I don't intend to wait forever," he said. "If, after a reasonable time passes, it becomes clear that the PA is not willing to accept these principles, we will need to begin to act."

Before acting to draw the borders, however, Olmert said he would hold an "internal dialogue inside Israel to get to a definition that reflects a wide national consensus about what Israel's permanent borders need to be. I intend to speak to everyone, and first and foremost, the public that lives in the territories."

At the same time, he said, he hopes to have a dialogue with the international community to shape an international atmosphere that would "create a change in the PA." If that fails, he said, Israel will determine the border, but will do so with as wide an internal consensus and as much international support as possible.

Olmert said the security fence will eventually be moved to become the country's border, in accordance with the country's interests.

Once a border is determined, he said Israel will "not lose any option for security action in line with our needs in the fight against terrorism, which is to a large degree the case today in Gaza."

Olmert said there are currently no restraints on IDF actions to prevent terror from the Gaza Strip, and he doesn't think there is a need to introduce IDF ground troops into the area.

"The U.S. doesn't restrain us or encourage us. We worry about Israel's security, we don't take advice from the U.S. on what to do," he said. "We do what we think we must, according to our understanding and depending on the circumstances."

Resolution was not balanced

Continued from page 1

Fogel said CIC had lobbied the previous Liberal government to establish objective criteria by which it would evaluate resolutions. The criteria would serve as tools to determine whether resolutions should be supported. The criteria are whether the resolutions single out Israel; whether they employ excessive language; and whether they are balanced in the treatment of an issue.

When they were in opposition, the Conservatives shared those criteria, he said.

CIC had argued that this approach would "reflect longstanding Canadian values." Canada's vote last week demonstrates Canada's commitment to "resolutions that are constructive and contribute towards moving the process away from conflict to resolution," Fogel said.

In the *Globe and Mail* report, Gilbert Laurin, Canada's representative at the UN council session, said the UNESC resolution was not balanced and the issue of refugee return is one that should be part of a peace settlement.

The Canadian Coalition for Democracies (CCD) applauded Canada's vote, calling the string of UN resolutions targeting Israel an "abuse of process that has gone on for decades."

The CCD, an advocacy organization that promotes democracy, urged Canada to oppose all other anti-Israel votes until the UN shows balance and moral authority in its resolutions.

"The UN has been corrupted to support the genocidal goals of Israel's enemies, and Canada must not legitimize such a process by its participation," the CCD stated.

Israel Briefs

Israel advised to join NATO

Spain's former prime minister said Israel should become a member of NATO as a warning to Iran. If Israel becomes part of the Western alliance, Iran "will behave differently," Jose Maria Aznar said at a conference organized by Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe, one of NATO's two main military commands. Aznar is now a security analyst. In recent months, Iran's president has alluded repeatedly to a desire to destroy Israel. NATO officials have said the issue of Israel joining the alliance is not being considered right now.

Israel aids Nigeria

Israel sent 1.5 tons of equipment to Nigeria last week to help that country deal with an outbreak of bird flu. The emergency equipment included medical supplies and protective clothing. According to the Foreign Ministry, Nigerian officials contacted Noam Katz, Israel's ambassador in Abuja, about potential assistance.

Voter apathy in Israel

Most young Israelis don't plan to vote in this month's general election, a poll found. The *Yediot Achronot* survey said only 44 per cent of eligible Israeli voters under age 32 will cast a ballot in the March 28 poll. The apathy is especially pronounced among young immigrants, 72 per cent of whom don't plan to vote. Almost 20 per cent of respondents said their main source of information on Israeli politics is the hit weekend TV satire *It's a Wonderful Country.*

Dershowitz offers his services

Alan Dershowitz pledged to defend in court any Israeli army officers sued while travelling outside the country. "Israeli military and political figures should have no fear of walking free and proud in any democratic nation, nor should they fear justice," Dershowitz said in Brussels, according to the *European Jewish Press.* He added: "No part of Europe should become Judenrein to any Israeli leaders who have promoted Israeli policy." The Harvard University law professor was in Brussels as part of his European "Tour for Democracy" aimed at responding to Israel's critics.

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Israel & the Jewish World

Polls predict Kadima will win around 40 seats

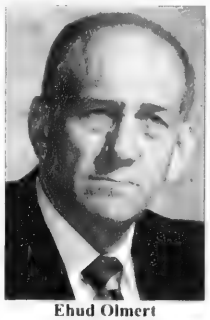
By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

If the Israeli election was held today, Kadima, the centrist party created by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, would receive between 40 and 42 seats in the 120-seat Knesset, political scientist Asher Arian told a luncheon briefing of the Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) last week.

Though pundits say there is slippage in that number by one seat a week, Kadima looks to be the choice of the plurality of Israeli voters, Arian said. He predicted the party led by acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert would win 35 to 40 seats on election day, March 28.

Though there have been 16 elections in Israel's history, none has produced a majority government.

"I don't want you to get your hopes too high," Arian said. "I'm not sure that [this year's] elections will be the breakthrough elections" many expect them to be.



Ehud Olmert [Israel Sun photo]

Arian, a political science professor at Haifa University and the City University of New York, along with Tamar Hermann, director of the Steinmetz Center for Peace Research at Tel Aviv University, briefed a select group of business and media people last week at the CIJA luncheon. CIJA is a non-partisan, umbrella organization for Jewish community advocacy aimed at increasing support for Israel.

The popularity of a centrist party such as Kadima is unusual in Israel. Parties of the left (Labor) and right (Likud) have traditionally formed the government in coalition with smaller parties. This time, options on the right and left are not as attractive for voters, Arian said.

A longtime monitor of Israeli public opinion attitudes on peace and security, Arian said former prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who heads Likud, is unpopular with many voters, while Moroccan-born Labor leader Amir Peretz has been "unable to attract the Sephardi masses to the Labor Party."

Considering the opposition, Olmert "becomes an attractive alternative," he said, adding there was little in Olmert's past that suggested he would one day become Sharon's successor.

As a member of Likud, Olmert was only 34th on the party's electoral list, and his appointment as deputy prime minister was seen at the time as a "symbolic" and "harmless" gesture.

Arian said while the election may be an important contest, it's not one Israelis are particularly engaged in. "It's not a burning campaign," he said.

Following the onset of the Palestinian intifadah, polls showed that Israeli Jews despaired of the conflict ending. Today, only 33 per cent believe a peace treaty could bring an end to the conflict.

That "lack of belief that a settlement is possible… fits nicely with the notion of unilateral disengagement," Arian said.

Hermann – a specialist in Israeli public opinion and a creator of the Peace Index, a broad measure of support for the Oslo process from 1994 to 2005 – agreed the upcoming election would not mark a turning point in Israeli politics. She predicted a plurality of voters would support Kadima because they don't like the Labour and Likud alternatives.

Turning to the Peace Index, Hermann said that even from the earliest days, only about half of Israeli Jews were confident the Oslo process would bear fruit. Support moved up under Netanyahu and began to erode under Barak – even before the intifadah began, she said.

Today, only about 30 per cent support Oslo, though support for an alternative negotiation process stands at around 50 per cent, she said.

Turning to other polling results, Hermann said voters' priorities shifted between November 2005 and February 2006. When voters were asked in November whether the election should focus on economic and social issues or on security matters, 53 per cent said the economy and 36 per cent security. In February, only 37 per cent said the economy, versus 47 per cent for security.

Those findings will likely hurt Labor, which has tried to focus on economic matters and is perceived as weak on security issues, she said

Other polling findings suggest there is more support for talks with Hamas than the government's hardline policy would suggest. Asked in January whether Israel should negotiate with a Hamas-led government, 42.5 per cent of Israeli Jews said yes, down from 50 per cent who would have approved of such talks in May 2005.

Asked in February if Israel should transfer funds to the new Hamas government, 63.5 per cent of Israeli Jews said no.

Forty-seven per cent said Israel should continue to act unilaterally if Hamas backs a "hudna," or ceasefire, Hermann said.

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This year, the Celebration of Stars Wedding, Bar and Bat Mitzvah Show will take place on Wednesday, March 22, 2006 at Meron Banquet Hall. It starts at 6 p.m. and runs until 10:00 p.m. This year Manieh Fanaian Couture will be presenting their 2006 bridal collection on a fabulous runway fashion show, which will begin promptly at 8 p.m.

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"Every Celebration of Stars Bridal, Bar and Bat Mitzvah Show that I have organized has proven to be so successful for both guests and exhibitors that as soon as I finish one, I begin plans for the next one," says Kay. "Organizing a party is what I do best and I think that it is certainly reflected in my shows."

Come and see for yourself that the Celebration of Stars has got it all and is one show that you don't want to miss. Admission and parking is free. For further information ... contact Marla Kay at **905-669-0777.**

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

AUTHOR ANNA PORTER TO PEN STORY OF HEROIC HUNGARIAN JEW

Veteran Canadian publisher and author **Anna Porter** has signed a two-book deal worth six figures with Douglas & McIntyre, the Toronto-based publishing house. The deal gives D&M rights to reissue *The Storyteller: Memory, Secrets, Magic and Lies*, Porter's portrait of her grandfather originally published in 2000. D&M also plans to publish *Kasztner's Train*, a new non-fiction work-in-progress by Porter.

Kasztner's Train will focus on the heroic efforts of Hungarian Jew **Reszo Kasztner** to save the Jews of Budapest from the Nazis in 1944 and '45. Despite Kasztner's righteous deeds, he was judged harshly in Israel after the war, and was tragically murdered in the street near his home shortly before a judge fully exonerated him.

"I'm anxious to get on with the research in Hungary and Israel, and the exciting challenge of the writing," said Porter of the newly commissioned project, which the publisher plans to promote with a large marketing campaign.

Kasztner's story "might be called the Hungarian *Schindler's List*, and it's every bit as heart-wrenching and searingly important as that story was," said D&M president **Scott McIntyre**. Look for the title on bookstore shelves in the autumn of 2007.

* * *

Her Doc Goes to UN: Brooke Goldstein, a Torontonian who went to law school in New York and has begun practising as a human rights lawyer, has made *The Making Of A Martyr*, a feature-length documentary film that has been accepted for inclusion in *Stories from the Field*, the second annual United Nations Documentary Film Festival.

Contacted by telephone, Goldstein said that she felt compelled to make the film after hearing about a 15-year-old Palestinian child who was apprehended at an Israeli checkpoint with bombs strapped to his waist. She interviewed the boy, his family and even the people who recruited him for the 58-minute film, which is her first production.

The film is to be screened at the United Nations in late April and is also in the running for an Audience Choice Award. We wish the former Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) student every success with the film as well as with her budding law and film careers.

* * *

Pre-Passover Concert: Five diverse inter-generational choirs sing at Ashira L'AdoShem, From Generation to Generation, a pre-Passover concert. The choirs are the **Renanim Youth Singers**, the **Varsity Jews** (from the University of Toronto), **Kol Neshama** (York University) and the Miles Nadal JCC community and youth choirs. Patrons $350, adult $50-$35, students $15. Leah Posluns Theatre, March 21, 7:30 p.m.

* * *

Names in the News: Helen Levine, former professor of the school of social work at Carleton University in Ottawa, describes herself as "an 82-year-old feminist." The sometimes-essayist has also proven to be an avid letter writer, as she demonstrated in a year-long correspondence with close friend **Oonagh Berry**, also of Ottawa.

Although Levine and Berry saw and spoke to each other often during the year, they exchanged dozens of handwritten letters, having chosen to express their political and personal thoughts via the old-fashioned medium of pen and paper. Their missives, which explore their deepening friendship as well as various feminist-related issues and other matters, have been preserved in *Between Friends: A Year in Letters*, a softcover book published by Second Story Press of Toronto.

"Maybe some people will be turned off by the feminist emphasis – that wouldn't surprise me – but I think in general the book will have broad appeal," Levine told Eye on Arts. "We've already had very good feedback from a lot of people."

Many people today "yearn for a letter that's handwritten," Levine observed, noting that the book seems to "trigger something in the reader that makes them want to have a handwritten correspondence." The year she and Berry were writing letters to each other "was one of the happiest years in my life," she said.

Levine received the Governor General's Person's Award in 1989 and is the mother of **Karen Levine**, author of the bestseller *Hana's Suitcase*, which was also published by Second Story.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Friends of Yiddish presents **Mitchell Leonard Smolkin** in From Cantor's Chant to Yiddish Song, a musical examination of the songs of **Moishe Oysher**, **Aaron Lebedev**, **Jan Peerce** and Toronto's own **Louis Danto**. "All of these men have in common the distinction of having brought their brilliance in cantorial music to the Yiddish song," said Smolkin. Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue, 100 Elder St. Sunday, March 19, 2 p.m. Members free, guests $10.

• There's still time to see "Windows, Gables, Gingerbread and Gargoyles," an exhibit of some 50 works in various media by artist **Linda R. Goldman**, who has been capturing details of Toronto buildings in her work for 35 years. The show, which includes watercolours, photographs and textiles, continues at the Market Gallery, St. Lawrence Market, until March 26.

• "Through Others' Eyes," an exhibition of photos from Givat Haviva, Israel, reflects the co-operative work of Jewish and Arab youth from neighbouring villages, documenting their visits to each other's homes and communities. The show is on view in the lobby of the Berkeley Street Theatre until April 1 to complement the current production of *The Arab-Israeli Cookbook*.

• **Jeffrey Shandler**, author of *Adventures in Yiddishland*, and **Michael Wex**, author of *Born to Kvetch: Yiddish Language and Culture in All Its Moods*, discuss the power of Yiddish and sign copies of their books at New York's Jewish Museum, Thursday, March 16, 6:30 p.m. The event is moderated by **Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett**, professor of Hebrew and Judaic studies at New York University. Wex is a Torontonian and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett a former Torontonian.

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Arts & Travel

Controversial films lose out at Oscars

By TOM TUGEND
JTA

Munich and *Paradise Now*, two films that caused considerable controversy in the North American Jewish community and Israel, came up empty-handed at this year's Academy Awards.

Non-controversial was the selection of Rachel Weisz as best supporting actress in *The Constant Gardner*, in which she played an activist fighting an international pharmaceutical company.

Weisz was born in London, after her father and mother came to England as Jewish refugees in the 1930s, from Hungary and Austria respectively.

Host Jon Stewart left no doubt about his ethnic heritage in his opening monologue. After pointing to Steven Spielberg in the audience, Stewart mentioned the director's films *Schindler's List* and *Munich*, and then cracked, "I speak for all Jews when I say I can't wait for what happens to us next."

Munich, Spielberg's take on the Israeli hunt for the Palestinian killers of its athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games, struck out on all of its five nominations, including best picture and best director.

The film has been criticized, particularly in Israel, for allegedly drawing a moral equivalence between the terrorists and the pursuing Mossad agents, as well as for historical inaccuracy.

Paradise Now, an entry in the foreign-language film category, has drawn even more heat from a small but vocal part of the Jewish community, which said the film "humanized" two suicide bombers on a mission to blow up a Tel Aviv bus.

The film had originally been listed as coming from the non-existent country of "Palestine," though it was made by an Israeli Arab. At the March 5 award show, its provenance was given as the "Palestinian territories."

Stewart, apparently trying to beat previous Oscar host Billy Crystal in the Jewish gag category, also took note of presenter Ben Stiller, who appeared onstage in a green unitard that covered his body from head to toe.

"It's nice to have proof he's really Jewish," Stewart cracked.

In the documentary short subject category, the Oscar went to *A Note of Triumph: The Golden Age of Norman Corwin*, celebrating the 95-year old Jewish writer who is noted for his inspiring radio dramas.

Waters says Israel show must go on

Jerusalem Post Foreign Service

TEL AVIV — British rocker Roger Waters' upcoming trip to Israel has aroused the ire of Palestinian artists.

However, Waters, who is most famous for being the singer-songwriter of the classic band Pink Floyd, was not deterred by their complaint, the *Guardian* reported last week.

The Palestinian Association for Contemporary Art and the League of Palestinian Artists wrote to Waters to express its dismay.

"Palestinian as well as several international artists asked in shock: how can the artist whose name around the world was for many years associated with breaking walls of injustice be in any way complicit with the monstrosity of Israel's wall, declared illegal by the international court of justice?"

Last year, Waters was among several British artists who supported a campaign against the West Bank security barrier. At the time, Waters said, "The poverty inflicted by the wall has been devastating for Palestinians. It has kept children from their schools, the sick from proper medical care and continues to destroy the Palestinian economy."

Last week, Waters refused to consider cancelling his trip. "I have a lot of fans in Israel, many of whom are refuseniks. I would not rule out going to Israel because I disapprove of the foreign policy any more than I would refuse to play in the U.K. because I disapprove of Tony Blair's foreign policy."

The concert in Tel Aviv will take place June 22 at Hayarkon Park.

Correction

In "Actor hopes to land TV role during 'pilot season,'" (*CJN*, March 9) the title of the first movie actor Adam Rodness will appear in, *Sammi Miami: Surviving*, was incorrect. *The CJN* regrets the error.

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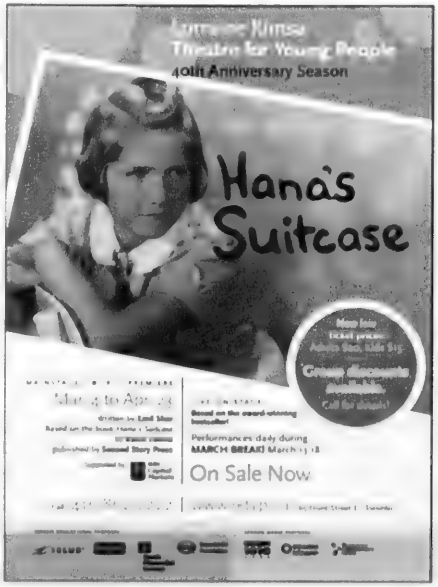

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Arts & Travel

Canadian writes bio of legendary Jewish boxer

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Douglas Century, the Canadian author of a new biography on Barney Ross, one of the greatest Jewish boxers of all time, was figuratively introduced to him when he was a 10-year-old Peretz School student in Calgary in the 1970s.

Century's teacher, a Holocaust survivor whom his students regarded with a mixture of terror and awe, told the class about Ross one morning, and Century was transfixed and hooked.

He promptly looked him up in the *Encyclopedia Judaica* and read that Ross had been an extraordinary athlete who held the world's lightweight, junior welterweight and welterweight championships in the 1930s.

As well, he discovered that Ross, born Beryl Rasofsky in 1909, had been a war hero in the Pacific theatre, an ardent Zionist and, indirectly, a gun runner during Israel's 1948 War of Independence.

Several years ago, Century, a 40-year-old Princeton University graduate and a freelance journalist based in New York City, was asked to write a book about what he describes as "this beautiful, graceful prizefighter."

Last month, after he spent five years on the project, Century's book, *Barney Ross* (Schocken), was published.

Century, who considers Ross as the most-admired Jewish athlete in the United States apart from legendary baseball player Hank Greenberg, said that he was the last of the great Jewish boxers.

Though he was physically unprepossessing, having been weakened from bouts with asthma and poor nutrition, Ross had quick hands and a rock-solid chin, and could absorb almost any punch without staggering.

Embodying "the fantasy of Jewish force" in an era of open and brutal anti-Semitism, Ross was clearly a hero in the eyes of his fans.

"He touched on pivotal moments of history – Jewish immigration to the U.S., the changing status of Jews in American society, the emergence of Israel," said Century in a recent interview in Toronto.

Ross, whose pious father was a dairyman and a small grocer in Brest-Litovsk, Poland, was raised to be a Hebrew teacher and talmudic scholar. Ross drifted away from tradition, but refused to train and fight on High Holy Days, said Century.

Although he was a demon in the ring, he was warm and empathetic and widely beloved.

"He would give you the shirt off his back," Century said.

Wounded in Guadalcanal, where he earned a Silver Star for heroism under Japanese fire, Ross developed a morphine addiction during his treatment in hospital. He kicked the habit, and for the rest of his life he campaigned against drug abuse.

Toward the close of World War II, he allied himself with Peter Bergson, a right-wing Zionist who was associated with Menachem Begin, a future prime minister of Israel.

Diagnosed with cancer in 1966 after feeling inexplicable pain in his jaw, Ross died on Jan. 18, 1967. He was only 57.

In preparing himself to write *Barney Ross*, Century – a former cultural reporter on the staff of the *Forward* and a self-styled jack-of-all-trades writer – read widely.

He scoured Ross' memoir, *No Man Stands Alone*, published in 1957, but found it rife with inconsistencies. Century also waded into such works as Ross' out-of-print primer, *Fundamentals of Boxing*, Harold Ribalow's *The Jew in American Sport* and Allen Bodner's *When Boxing Was a Jewish Sport*.

He was also fortunate enough to talk to Ross' brother, George, who confirmed names and dates, and Ross' first cousin, Alvin, who shared many memories.

The hardest part about writing the book was boiling it down to some 200 pages. Brevity, he learned yet again, is an art to be cultivated.

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Travel Talk

BY BILL GLADSTONE

RAMBLES OF UNCLE JOE – FINDS SHUL IN DEEP SOUTH

My Uncle Joseph is the sort of gentleman who always stops to smell the roses. Recently, he and my Aunt Elizabeth drove to Florida on vacation. Their rambling route took them through many small towns and along many side roads. They spent six days on the road.

They were admiring an old Gothic church in Savannah, Ga., when they noticed a singular Jewish feature of the architecture – a Jewish star suspended above the arched entrance. Turns out they had happened upon Mickve Israel, home of Georgia's oldest congregation. It was established in 1733, only five months after the establishment of the colony of Georgia, and is the third-oldest congregation in the United States.

A Jewish star over the main entrance is the only clue that Savannah's Mickve Israel is a synagogue instead of the Gothic church that it so elegantly resembles. The congregation dates from 1733, the building from 1876.

Joe and Elizabeth were offered a tour, which proved fascinating and memorable. "Where else but in America," he marvelled, "could you get a black, Yiddish-speaking, Christian tour guide in a Gothic synagogue designed to look like a church?"

The community was founded by 42 colonists, mostly Spanish or Portuguese crypto-Jews from London. The congregation disbanded before the American Revolutionary War, but from its minyans came Mordecai Sheftall, the highest- ranking Jewish officer of the American Revolutionary forces. Its minyan resumed in 1786.

Out of deference to the old Sephardi *minhag* or tradition of its founders, it was nearly a century before the congregation took its first hesitant steps toward Reform Judaism, which it ultimately embraced.

The building, designed by an English architect in the style of a 14th-century cathedral, dates from 1876 and replaces an earlier structure. It houses an archival museum in which 10 presidential letters are on display, signed by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, George Bush, Bill Clinton and others.

Uncle Joe was delighted with the combination of Jewish heimishkeit and southern hospitality he met with at Mickve Israel, and heartily recommends a visit to all fellow ramblers. The temple is located in Monterey Square, Savannah. Its phone number is 912-233-1547.

* * *

Kosher Cruises & More: Toronto travel professional David Freudmann of Uniworld Travel & Tours is excited about Intrav's Chosen Voyages, which operates the world's only all-kosher cruise ships. The colourful brochure presents eight enticing packages, including Passover splendour in Holland and Belgium; Jewish history along the Danube; and other routes in Russia, New Zealand, southern Africa, the Caribbean and California and New York state.

Freudmann and his brother, Eddie, who runs Eddie's Travel in Netanya, are also jointly offering additional kosher cruises in the Baltics, the Norwegian fiords, Italy and the Greek Isles, and Alaska. Freudmann is personally escorting a Uniworld Wine Tour to Israel that departs Canada on Oct. 22 via El Al airlines. The itinerary includes visits to various wineries as well as Neot Kedumin Biblical Gardens, the Israel Tank Museum, Mini-Israel, Tel Aviv, Tiberias, Jerusalem and Eilat.

For details, please contact David Freudmann at 416-493-3322, ext. 356, or by e-mail at david@uniworldtravel.com.

* * *

New Centre for Bike Riding: Tzubike, in Kibbutz Tzuba, is the first national centre in Israel for bicycle riding. Located near Jerusalem, the facility offers a new exercise range, school for professional riders, competitions, workshops and other bike-related activities. Also available are guided cross-country tours and road trips for all levels of riders, including weekend trips to the Negev and the Galilee. Details in Hebrew at http://tzubike.co.il.

* * *

Travel Briefs

• Israeli Tourism Minister Avraham Hirchson and his Egyptian counterpart, Zuhair Grana, agreed last week to examine resumption of bus service between Tel Aviv and Cairo. Hirchson pledged that Israel would promote sites of Jewish historical interest in Egypt, while Grana said that Egypt would encourage Egyptians to visit Israel. The duo met at a tourism fair in Berlin.

• Dutch master painter Jacob van Ruisdael's famous painting *The Jewish Cemetery* went on display recently at London's Royal Academy. The painting depicts tombs from a Jewish cemetery at Ouderkerk, near Amsterdam, Holland, in the 17th century. The canvas is on loan from a Dresden museum and remains on view until June 4.

• The deluxe, 294-room Inbal Jerusalem Hotel is offering a "Super Summer Family Special" from May through August, when double, triple, quad and family rooms will be available for up to six people (parents and children) at special rates from $360 to $530 (US) per night. Reservations at rsv(at)inbalhotel.com, online at www.inbalhotel.com, or by phone, +972-2-675-6669.

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Books & Authors

Portrait of Guggenheims is a story of assimilation

The Guggenheims **by Irwin and Debi Unger, HarperCollins.**

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Irwin and Debi Unger's portrait of a great American Jewish family, *The Guggenheims*, is a story of business accomplishments, philanthropy and assimilation.

The Guggenheims, one of America's wealthiest Jewish families, funded the arts like few dynasties in the United States and were influential in publishing, aviation and horse racing.

Their loyalty to their Jewish roots, however, was weak, and by the mid-20th century, the majority of the descendants of Simon Guggenheim, the family's patriarch, had become Christians.

The Ungers are resourceful writers and tell this tale with consummate skill.

Irwin and Debi Unger

Simon and his new bride, Rachel Weil Meyers, left their home in Switzerland in 1847, bound for what they hoped would be greener pastures in Philadelphia. They did not prosper greatly, but their ambitious and driven son, Meyer, acquired the untold wealth that catapulted the Guggenheims into the realm of the super-rich and the "our crowd" Jewish plutocrats.

A peddler of "notions," Meyer started off modestly as a purveyor of a deceptively simple product, stove polish. Branching out, he imported and sold spices and then acquired stocks in railroad, mining and smelting companies.

Meyer and his brothers, Isaac, Daniel, Murray, Simon, Benjamin and Solomon, expanded the Guggenheim holdings. By the 1880s, they had joined the ranks of the German-Jewish elite in New York city, consisting, in part, of the Seligmans, the Goldmans, the Lehmans and the Loebs. None of these families was included in the first edition of the *Social Register* of socially acceptable and wealthy families. Being Jews, they were excluded from the city's and country's finest private clubs and fancy resorts.

When Meyer died in 1904, the Guggenheims were embroiled in a struggle over control of the American Smelting and Refining Company (ASARCO), which extracted and refined copper, silver, lead, tin and gold.

But having gained close to half of its stock, they became its largest shareholders. Worth an estimated $100 million (US) in 1905, the Guggenheims were supposedly the richest Jewish family after the legendary Rothschilds. They grew still wealthier during World War I, when there was an insatiable demand for copper-plated telephone wires connecting command posts and trenches.

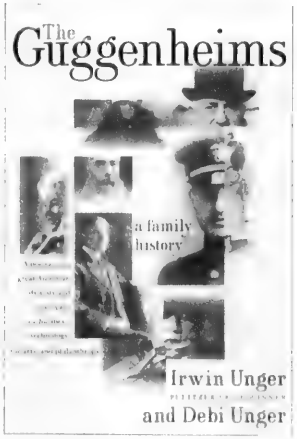
Thanks to mines and smelting plants in the United States, Canada and Latin America, their fortune peaked in the 1920s, only to decline a decade later.

The Ungers' treatment of the clan's business acumen is sweeping and informative, but most readers will probably be more interested in their sketches of family members.

Daniel, one of the most important Guggenheims, left an estate of $13 million when he died in 1930, but he had already bequeathed vast sums for the advancement of aeronautics and civic causes. His funeral attracted the mayor of New York as well as Charles Lindbergh, the famous trans-Atlantic flier.

Daniel's older son, Robert, was self-indulgent, a sexual adventurer and a disgraced ambassador to Portugal. When he married a horsewoman from a *Social Register* family, he converted to Roman Catholicism.

Gladys, Daniel's youngest child, wed Roger Straus, whose uncles owned R.H. Macy, the Manhattan department store, and whose father, Oscar, had been secretary of commerce under President Theodore Roosevelt, the first Jew to hold a cabinet position in the United States. Gladys, who was active in the United Jewish Appeal, carried "the burden" of being Jewish in Guggenheim circles.



Harold, a scion of one of the seven original brothers who enlarged the family's portfolio, met Ernest Hemingway, the budding novelist, in Paris after World War I. They played tennis, boxed and talked about books and literature. Robert Cohn, one of the major characters in Hemingway's 1926 novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, was modelled after Harold.

Harry Frank Guggenheim, Daniel's younger son, was the repository of the family's historical memory during much of the last century. A formidable figure in thoroughbred racing, he was the first Jew to be admitted into the waspish New York Jockey Club. Harry sunk millions of dollars into the promotion of aeronautics, and he and his wife, Alicia Patterson, founded the daily *Newsday*.

Like many Jews of his ilk, Harry was an anti-Zionist. When his friend, Lindbergh, aligned himself with Nazi Germany, excused Adolf Hitler's persecution of Jews and expressed anti-Semitic views, Harry rushed to his defence, claiming that he was politically naive. Harry's son-in-law was disappointed, concluding that he had no compunctions about deceiving himself for the sake of preserving his friendship with Lindbergh. It speaks volumes that Harry brought up his daughters as Christians.

Peggy, one of the most notable Guggenheims, was a huge patron of the arts, one of her leading "disciples" being the abstract painter Jackson Pollock. Yet she could be monumentally parsimonious. Her husband complained that during most of their married life they "lived in a house with orange crates."

When she visited Palestine in the 1920s, she was disgusted by the haredi Jews she saw praying at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. "It mortified me to belong to my people," said Peggy, who once tried, without success, to fix her bulbous nose through plastic surgery. "The nauseating sight of my compatriots publicly groaning and moaning and going into physical contortions was more than I could bear, and I was glad to leave the Jews again."

Peggy's attitude may have been formed by a single searing experience. When she was a teenager, she and her parents were refused a night's lodging in Vermont because they were Jewish. She later noted that this snub "gave me an inferiority complex."

As the Ungers discreetly put it, the Guggenheims' allegiance to their faith was "fragile at best."

During the late 1930s, William Guggenheim married Elizabeth Newell, a WASP of the finest pedigree, and they enrolled their son in the Sons of the American Revolution. William detached himself completely from his circle of Jewish friends and acquaintances and, like one of his uncles, joined the Episcopal church and associated with "only good Gentile society."

Another Guggenheim, Iris Cornelia Love, the great-granddaughter of Isaac and an archeologist in her own right, was raised as an Episcopalian.

According to the Ungers, few of the Guggenheims today cherish their ancestry, and still fewer have a sense of family tree.

But the Guggenheims, even under different names such as Agostini, Kerby and Piven, continue to carve out names for themselves as entrepreneurs, stockbrokers, lawyers, real estate developers, computer experts, business managers, artists and theatre performers.

Many of them are no longer Jewish but are still making contributions to American society in an array of fields.

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Exercise raises concerns about modesty for the Orthodox

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Although the word "exercise" and the term "Orthodox" tend not to go together much in the public mind, in fact, many Orthodox do indeed realize the importance of being fit, eating healthy and, yes, exercising.

Many of the sages have advised it, most notably Maimonides, the 12th-century rabbi, philosopher and physician, who wrote extensively about the importance of taking care of the body. Many others have echoed his words, noting that maintaining good health honours God's creation and enables us to study and carry out His laws.

This is exercise for the sake of health, not for hedonistic reasons. Activities such as bodybuilding, for instance, are considered by many Orthodox as being akin to the ancient Greek worship of the human form.

That being said, there are more serious considerations for the Orthodox person who wants to exercise, than deciding on Pilates or aerobics, particularly for the Orthodox woman. These considerations revolve mainly around *tzniut*, modesty.

Psalms 45:14, generally translated as "the glory of the daughter of the King is entirely within," is taken to mean that dressing provocatively is to be avoided and basically that what is inside is more important than what is outside. This philosophy also implies that men and women are not supposed to look at the other sex immodestly dressed.

Rabbi Reuven Tradburks, spiritual leader of Kehillat Shaarei Torah and secretary of the Vaad Harabonim, said that the Talmud exhorts women to cover certain parts of the body. Sleeves must reach the elbow and skirts are to be below the knee. Slacks, which are considered men's clothing, are not permitted.

Theoretically, Rabbi Tradburks said, women can exercise in skirts, perhaps with tights under them, and in loose tops with long sleeves, but he recognizes that "it would be extremely uncomfortable" for them.

Obviously, these issues do not apply in a home environment or in an all-women gym. Exercising on fitness equipment in the home, however, the rabbi recognizes, is not as satisfactory or as effective.

It is no more acceptable, he added, for women to see men immodestly dressed than it is for men to see women that way.

Matthew and Felicia Taub have operated Sensible Fitness Solutions in the heavily haredi Bathurst and Lawrence area of the city since last fall.

Certified physical fitness professionals, they began their careers giving private lessons in people's homes. Since many of their clientele are part of that community, they became sensitized to their particular needs. Having Orthodox relatives, Matthew said, made them more aware and "supersensitive" on the subject.

When they opened their facility, they wanted to make sure that the Orthodox, particularly Orthodox women, would be comfortable there. Matthew only gives instruction to men and boys. "I have never even seen what goes on in the women's classes," he said.

"We guarantee privacy – doors are locked during classes, and we make sure that there are no interruptions."

In the room where group classes in yoga and aerobics are held, the windows are two-thirds tinted glass. "We left the top clear, so that sunshine, which is rejuvenating, can come in," said Felicia.

These accommodations have made haredi women feel welcome and comfortable, Matthew said. "We even have young girls from the nearby Orthodox high schools coming in to get fit."

There are classes for haredi men and boys, held at separate times and under the same conditions.

Besides the issues of *tzniut*, the Taubs are cognizant of Orthodox cultural norms. Much of the music used in regular gyms is not considered appropriate in the Orthodox world, so even the tapes used as background are carefully vetted.

HONOURING WOMEN: The Israel Cancer Research Fund's fifth annual Women of Action Luncheon on April 5 honours four women for their contribution to society, and establishes research fellowships in their names. This year's honorees are gallery owner Sandra Ainsley, community volunteer Lesley Binstock Offman, developmental biologist Dr. Janet Rossant of the Hospital for Sick Children and *Globe and Mail* columnist Margaret Wente. Pictured from left are Binstock Offman, Rossant and Ainsley. For details, call 416-487-5246 or e-mail won@icrfonline.org. [Al Gilbert photo]

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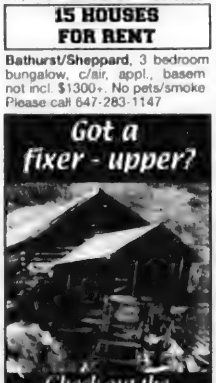

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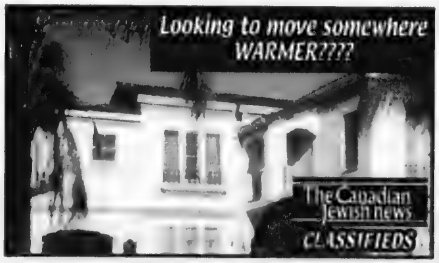

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Arts & Travel

Prof/acting coach set to write his 6th novel

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

David Rotenberg knows a thing or two about juggling multiple careers. The Toronto native is a university professor, an acting coach to internationally known Canadian stars, an artistic director of an acting school and the author of the acclaimed Zhong Fong mystery series.

Recently, Rotenberg signed onto a new project that that adds another challenge to his career-juggling act. He's now set to write an epic novel set in pre-Maoist Shanghai for Penguin Canada. It will feature some Iraqi Jews as main characters, he says. "The Iraqi Jews had a lot to do with the making of Shanghai."

The Penguin deal comes roughly six months after the release of *The Golden Mountain Murders* (McArthur), Rotenberg's fifth thriller featuring the exploits of Shanghai detective Zhong Fong.

Rotenberg, 56, has written the five books in roughly eight years, while holding down a day job as a professor in the drama department of York University, running the Professional Actors Lab and coaching actors.

He's the personal acting coach of some leading Canadian actors, among them, Rachel McAdams, a co-star of such hit films as *The Wedding Crashers* and *The Family Stone*; Scott Speedman, who is currently starring in *Underworld: Evolution*; and David Hirsh, star of *Naked Josh*, on Bravo.

Rotenberg's close connection to McAdams stems from her days at York. He was her professor and has helped guide her career. "We prepare the performances with her. She and I talked her way through *The Family Stone*... She was the best thing in *Wedding Crashers*."

So how does a Jewish drama professor and prominent acting coach end up writing stories about Shanghai? In fact, the books are a byproduct of Rotenberg's theatre work.

He spent 14 weeks in Shanghai in 1995 and while he was there landed a theatre gig as visiting artist at the Shanghai Theatre Academy. "I was hired by the People's Republic of China to direct the first Canadian play ever translated into Mandarin [George Ryga's drama *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe*]."

The Chinese chose him for the project because he had both theatrical and teaching experience. "Half the people in the production were students. They were looking for someone who could direct the students and produce the play at the same time."

David Rotenberg

He says the Shanghai experience inspired to him to write a mystery story about the intricacies of everyday life in modern-day China; the book is centred on a leading character, Zhong Fong – he is named after Rotenberg's "gung-ho translator"– a police detective who "rankles the authorities."

The books tackle topics that are considered to be very controversial in China, he adds. In *Golden Mountain Murders*, Zhong Fong investigates a mysterious AIDS epidemic in An Hui province, while abortion is a central theme of the third book, *The Hua Shan Hospital Murders*, (McArthur).

The other mysteries include *The Shanghai Murders: A Mystery of Love and Ivory* (St. Martin's Press), *The Lake Ching Murders* (St. Martin's Press) and *The Hamlet Murders* (McArthur).

"I write one book every 18 months," Rotenberg says, noting that Zhong Fong is also aging at the same rate that he is. "It was important to me to have him age."

He has also worked extensively in television and film, as a writer and an acting coach. His credits include *The New Kung Fu*, *My Secret Identity*, *Friday the 13th* and *Missing Treasures*.

Rotenberg is married to Susan Santiago, a lawyer-turned fundraiser, and he is the father of Joey, 20, and Beth, 17.

The second oldest of four boys, Rotenberg grew up in the Bathurst and Lawrence area. He became interested in theatre at the age of 15 when he attended a summer theatre camp at Manitouwabing. He later honed his directing skills at a prestigious summer youth theatre program in Rochester, N.Y.

He graduated from the University of Toronto, and received a master's of fine arts degree in directing from the Yale School of Drama in 1976. Rotenberg did regional theatre work, and he directed two Broadway plays, *The News* and *1940's Radio Hours*.

He taught at Tulane University for a year before making the move back to Canada. "New Orleans was a lousy place for kids, but it was a glorious place for adults," he says.

When York offered him a job in 1986, Rotenberg returned to Toronto to be closer to his family.

Rotenberg says so far he has had no difficulty balancing competing career demands. "I can come home after teaching and write for four to five hours."

However, the new Shanghai epic may throw the career juggling off-kilter because of the enormity of the project which is slated to be completed August 2007. "All of a sudden a great many tangents in my life have come together in this novel," Rotenberg muses. "One of the three strands in my life has now moved forward.

"If I had to choose, I would choose writing overall. I will be dedicating myself to writing this novel."

But he says he's not making any major scheduling adjustments at this time. "I may just have to follow the advice of one of my professors from Yale. Whenever we complained about time challenges, he would say: 'You just carry on. Learn to sleep less.'"

Films chronicle Israeli Arabs and Palestinians

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Three interesting documentaries screened recently at Voices Forward: A Festival of Israeli and Palestinian Film and Culture offered revealing glimpses of Israeli Arabs and Palestinians.

In *Since You've Been Gone*, Israeli actor and director Mohammed Bakri, a star of the stage and screen, ruminates on events that have convulsed Israel since the death of his mentor and friend, Emil Habibi, in 1996.

As the film opens, Bakri visits the grave of Habibi, an Israel Prize winner, writer and politician who worked for coexistence between Jews and Arabs. In flashbacks, Habibi observes that the fate of Israelis and Palestinians is inextricably linked.

Bakri, tall, craggy-faced and pensive, suggests that Habibi was fortunate not to have witnessed the outbreak of the second Palestinian uprising, which brought with it day-long riots in the Israeli Arab sector and a succession of suicide bombings that wrecked the already ailing peace process.

There are archival film clips of the brief Israeli Arab insurrection, of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's stroll on the Temple Mount – a walk that touched off the intifadah – and of an Israeli army operation in the West Bank town of Jenin in 2002.

As a result of the controversy surrounding Israel's incursion into Jenin, a hotbed of terrorism, Bakri decided to make a film about it. But *Jenin, Jenin* was generally regarded as pro-Palestinian and set tongues wagging in Israel.

In *Since You've Been Gone*, Bakri documents his legal battle to get *Jenin, Jenin* into Israeli movie theatres and his relationship with his lawyer, Avigdor Feldman, the son of Holocaust survivors.

Since You've Been Gone also deals with Bakri's reaction to the arrest of his two nephews, charged with aiding a suicide bomber who blew up a bus in June 2002 near Mount Meron.

Despite these traumatic developments, Bakri does not lose his faith in Arab-Israeli reconciliation. As he puts it, "There is hope."

•••

Al Jisr, by Ebitsam Marana, turns on a poor Israeli Arab fishing village north of Haifa that was untouched by the 1948 Arab-Israeli war. Its inhabitants did not flee, nor were they expelled. But the village is remote and poor, far off the beaten track.

The film, produced by Yosi Leon and Noam Shalev, unfolds through the eyes of two twentysomething residents during a municipal election: a former Israeli shot-put champion who wants to be a sports teacher and feels she has not fulfilled her potential as an athlete and a wistful fisherman who loves the sea.

The film's message is that Al Jisr is a microcosm of Israel's neglect of Israeli Arab towns and villages. But this message is softened by joyful scenes in which the whole village celebrates a wedding.

•••

Azza El Hassan's *Kings and Extras* is about a missing and irreplaceable film archive that disappeared during Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982.

The archive was an integral part of the Palestine Liberation Organization's Media Unit, which was founded in Beirut during the 1967 Six Day War.

Hassan travels to Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and the West Bank in an effort to track down the reels. She regards her investigation as an important mission since the archive is a treasure-trove of Palestinian images.

Although *Kings and Extras* is something of a road movie, it essentially deals with the nature of Palestinian identity.

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Israeli ice dancers finish eighth at Turin

By MIRAY CHESKES-GRANOVSKY
Special to The CJN

Skating for Israel in their third Olympics, Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovski finished eighth overall in the ice dance competition at the recently completed Winter Games in Turin, Italy.

Still very emotional about their results, Sakhnovski said, "We gave everything for the Olympics, now we are empty. The results are politics."

"They have changed the marking system, but the judges are the same," Chait added. "Judges can use the system to put a team wherever they want."

After Chait stumbled in the compulsory dance, the team found itself in 13th place.

"They [the judges] clobbered us," Chait said. "It was more interesting for us, because we had to fight back."

The couple skated cleanly in the original dance and edged up to ninth place. Sakhnovski described the original dance as "electric."

"The crowd was unbelievable," Chait added.

For their free dance, the Israelis took to the ice immediately after the Italian duo. "We had no connection with the audience," said Sakhnovski.

"The crowd gave all their energy to the Italians. Their hearts were with them," Chait said.

Fulfilling Sakhnovski's dream, the couple skated their free dance to Ravel's *Bolero*, the music from Torvill and Dean's legendary perfect ice dance performance at the 1984 Olympics. The Israelis finished seventh in the free dance and eighth overall.

Galit Chait and Sergei Sakhnovski

Chait and Sakhnovski began skating together 11 years ago. Chait, born in Israel, and Sakhnovski, from Moscow, were both looking for new dance partners when a coach suggested that they try skating together.

After a successful tryout, Sakhnovski left Russia for Israel to train with Chait at the Canada Centre in Metulla. Now training in New Jersey, the Israelis are coached by renowned ice dancers Alexander Zhulin and Evgeny Platov.

"We have never missed a competition in 11 years together. We are strict about our training. We have a strong work ethic," Chait said. The couple practises six days a week, six to seven hours a day.

They speak with great pride about representing Israel.

"Israel has achieved a lot more than other countries in a very short time," Sakhnovski said. "Israel has grown so much in sport and art."

"It's a small country, and you don't necessarily hear about winter sports, but any stadium that we go to always has fans and it's a great honour," Galit added.

The couple's fans can be seen waving Israeli flags and shouting "Yisrael" from the stands. The Israeli team's Olympic performances were broadcast live on Israeli TV and received very high ratings, to the surprise and excitement of Chait and Sakhnovski.

"So many people were behind us. People were watching and were interested. There were so many fans," Chait said.

In the future, Chait and Sakhnovski hope to promote figure skating in Israel by coaching Israeli kids and developing training programs for competitive skaters.

Chait said she's amazed at the number of talented skaters in Israel and feels the country would benefit from a centrally located rink.

"The Canada Centre in Metulla is a great facility. It's just far. If they had a rink in Tel Aviv, that would be unbelievable," she said.

Chait and Sakhnovski are currently training for the World Figure Skating Championships, to be held this month in Calgary.

"Our job is to skate. We skate for the art and the audience, not for the judges," Sakhnovski said.

He'd like to see more transparency and openness under the new marking system.

Under that system, skaters don't know which judges are marking them or the marks from each judge until several weeks after the competition. Even then, only some of the results are released, depriving skaters of the chance to ask judges for feedback on their performances.

When asked how long the couple will continue to compete, Chait replied, "If everything is OK, we would like to continue for another year."

Sakhnovski gave a less definite response. "We'll see [after Worlds]," he said.

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The sheltered young readers of Canada

ARTS IN FOCUS
By Oren Shefa

A recent decision by the York Region District School Board to pull a controversial book from the Ontario Library Association's (OLA) prestigious Silver Birch Award recreational reading program for kids in grades 4 to 6, and the decisions of four other Ontario boards to limit access to it, has provoked a debate over age-appropriate reading material.

The book, *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*, by Deborah Ellis, is based on interviews with kids about their perspectives on the Mideast conflict and growing up in a hostile environment, as well as their general feelings toward one another.

The issue is not one of censorship, as was suggested by OLA director Larry Moore in a recent *Toronto Star* article. The book has not been removed from schools or libraries, and it's never been part of Ontario's formal public school curriculum. It is, however, about policymakers taking action to shelter Canadian youth from harsh realities.

The Silver Birch program aims to encourage recreational reading by Ontario elementary students aged eight to 11. Twenty books by Canadian authors are nominated by the OLA each year, with fiction and non-fiction winners selected by the children. The books are not mandatory reading and as such are not discussed within an organized lesson plan.

This lack of guidance, more than anything else, has evoked concern from a number of organizations, most vocally from Canadian Jewish Congress, which argues that the book unfairly depicts Israelis as "brutal occupiers" and Palestinians as "murderers," and that without the context of history, children will be unable to fully comprehend the complexity of the issue.

Regardless of when children are first introduced to this highly charged and complicated dispute, without any historical context, understanding where the animosity on both sides stems from is exceedingly difficult. It is, therefore, troubling to hear that Ontario school boards are taking the easy way out, rather than seizing the opportunity to educate children on an issue that could greatly affect their futures.

As to whether or not older elementary school children even have the capacity to understand such a multifaceted issue, one needs to look no further than Ellis' book itself as evidence supporting just such an ability. One Israeli child, Gili, shares the following: "I hear a lot about the war. I'm eight, which is not too young to know about wars and bombs." Then, talking about a guard who was killed while protecting a school, Gili continues: "I was very sad when I heard about it… Guards are supposed to protect us, but he couldn't protect himself. If a bomb can kill a guard, it can also kill me or my family."

Children have a greater ability to cope with and understand complicated and disturbing issues than we give them credit for, but they need guidance. Teachers and parents have less to fear from a child's loss of innocence than from the blanket of naiveté that Canadian children live under when compared to their counterparts growing up in almost every other part of the world.

We Canadians are fortunate to live in a diverse and, for the most part, harmonious society where war, overt racism and religious persecution are the kinds of things that usually happen elsewhere. But we are also part of an ever-shrinking global village where those realities are prevalent and require the participation of all nations to ameliorate or solve.

It may be horrific to think about children living and dying in war-torn communities around the world, but, sadly, they don't have the luxury of blinding themselves to what happens around them. Our children belong to that same global community. It's to their benefit, not detriment, to be taken by the hand and exposed to the world that exists beyond the safety of their own borders.

Crunchy Roast Potatoes

The perfect accompaniment to a mouth-watering Shabbat roast.

6-8 medium baking potatoes, peeled
1/3 cup canola oil
1 packet French onion soup.

Preheat oven to 350°F.
In a large mixing bowl, combine oil and soup powder. Mix well; set aside.
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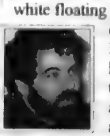
IT'S A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL: Adar brought a new spin to Megillat Esther this year at Netivot HaTorah Day School as art teacher and activities co-ordinator Rochelle Diamond, second from right, and the school's Bnot Sherut surprised students and teachers by decorating the entire second floor with Disney scenes. Pictured with Diamond, from left, are Debi Rada, Yael Rozmarin, Dikla Dekel and Moran Gomri. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

New seasons, new reasons

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER



To every season, there is a reason. To every season, there is a certain character.

Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower. – Albert Camus

Fall is a time, appropriately named, when the leaves turn colour, each one of them looking like the palette of a sloppy painter as they flit and flutter to the ground. Cold winds begin to hijack the hot summer breezes, and we instinctively keep our limbs closer to our bodies so as to stay warm.

Fall prepares us mentally for those private winter days that will soon be upon us. We wonder more, walking with our heads tilted upward, considering the colourful, curious, chilly changes happening around us. Fall is the favourite season of many. It is because nature seems to tuck itself into bed and begin resting for an eventual rebirth – a process humankind continually revisits

Winter dawn is the color of metal. The trees stiffen into place like burnt nerves. – Sylvia Plath

Winter arrives like the unannounced visiting auntie. One morning we look out and spot tiny white floating flakes and announce with mixed emotions, "Oh, look it's snowing." Every year, since my childhood I kind of believed, or perhaps hoped, this year the snow will stay away and the ads will read: "It's February. Visit balmy Canada." But alas the snow always returns and we layer our bodies in down and wool, and one inevitable morning our car slides a bit past the stop sign and we comment in our heads, "Woo, that was a close one."

Winter lasts forever. During the short days of January, on those frigidly frosty nights, we count the months of this hardhearted season over and over, wondering when it will end. No matter though. The winter insists upon staying, teasing us with snowmen and the chance to make angels in the snow. But it is cold and the cold can make us bitter.

Springtime is the land awakening. The March winds are the morning yawn.
Lewis Grizzard

Spring knocks. It a funny season, perhaps underrated, undervalued, and flies past us like the first weeks of a baby's life. But with its appearance, comes the most splendid rebirth of the trees, plants, flora, foliage and shrubbery. Streets that were barren in the winter and lined with naked oaks and ash come alive and form into a natural chupah.

I question not if thrushes sing, If roses load the air; beyond my heart I need not reach. When all is summer there.
John Vance Cheney

Summer then unhurriedly saunters in, and unlike winter, we grip this hale and hearty season as our burning fingers do an overloaded plastic shopping bag. It's June, then July, oh it's August already. Such are the things we hear throughout this spell: "Oh, the summer is so short"… and we rush to shmooze with our neighbours, trying to recall their names, knowing soon we will hibernate away from each other in different forests, disconnected once again.

We live in a land where each season has a distinct personality. The fall is demure, winter is stern, spring is trusting and the summer is sexy. We see, feel, smell and taste the seasons, and if we could talk to them, it would be as if we were conversing with one we love; in which the relationship we share is complex and effortless.

The seasons are powerful. They are mighty. They are reminders – natural bulletin boards of sorts.

Spring is almost here. When it arrives, we will forget these chilly days and embrace its welcoming warmth and the birth of many gardens. To every season, there is a reason.

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This Week

National

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Holding on to ethnic Passover traditions. *Page 33*

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Israeli candidates battle voter apathy

The leaders of the three largest parties – from left, Amir Peretz of Labor, Ehud Olmert of Kadima and Benjamin Netanyahu of Likud – are campaigning hard, but voter turnout on March 28 is expected to be even lower than in 2003, when it dropped to 69 per cent. *[Isranet and Israel Sun photos]*

By DINA KRAFT
JTA

TEL AVIV — Shimon Peres joins a young couple having lunch at a seaside restaurant and asks them who they are voting for in Israel's upcoming election. They smile nervously, glance up at the swarm of photographers and TV cameras that surround the former prime minister and admit the truth: they don't know.

"No one has convinced us what the right path is and we ourselves don't even know, making it harder," said Nurit Novak, 26, as Peres, clad in a leather bomber jacket and campaigning for the Kadima party, moves on to the next table. There are many voters left to woo.

Yarin Yeger, a 20-year-old soldier, strolling along a nearby boardwalk, says she too feels adrift politically.

"I don't see any of the candidates as potentially good prime ministers," she said.

Campaigners in the March 28 election are battling voter apathy and indecision, concepts once alien to this country that for decades had voter turnout of about 80 per cent and in which most people had a political camp to which they were committed.

Polls describe about 20 per cent of the population as "floating voters" – still undecided this close to the election date.

Many voters feel that none of the candidates have the stature or pull of Israel's prime minister, Ariel Sharon, who has been in a coma since a Jan. 4 stroke.

"There is great confusion because Sharon is no longer at the helm, and people have lost their balance," said Nitza Hameiri, 56, a real-estate appraiser.

There is little sense of election excitement despite dramatic changes – a prime minister who lies comatose, leaving behind his new party; a Sephardi Jew leading the Labor party for the first time; and Hamas' recent victory in Palestinian elections.

Voter turnout is expected to be lower than in past elections. In 2003, it was already low, with slightly less than 69 per cent of registered voters casting ballots.

The assumption that Kadima will trounce its rivals contributes to a sense of ennui, observers say. In the most recent polls, Kadima is predicted to win between 37 and 39 seats in Israel's 120-seat Knesset. Those seeking change are finding it in Kadima, breaking down the Israeli electorate from its former pattern of left versus right.

Co

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Gaza settler adapts to new life

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

ASHKELON, Israel — Ronit Balaban has begun her life anew in the shadow of the sky-high smokestack of Ashkelon's massive power plant, a target of Palestinian Qassam rockets.

Here, on three hectares of land developed by the Jewish National Fund, Balaban, a 49-year-old farmer who lived in the adjacent Gaza Strip until recently, tends to her plastic greenhouses in an attempt to resurrect what she painfully lost after Israel's unilateral withdrawal last summer.

Ronit Balaban

"I'm happy and proud of my business," said Balaban, the owner of a nursery that produces potted flowers for markets in Israel and Europe.

In a poetic flight of fancy, she added, "Our essence is to be happy farmers in the State of Israel."

An immigrant from Sweden who arrived in Israel in 1971, she lived in the settlement of Ganei Tal with her sabra husband, Jacob, for 23 years.

One of 21 outposts in Gaza inhabited by some 8,000 Jews, Ganei Tal was evacuated by Israel last August following a tumultuous national debate that altered the complexion of Israeli politics and set the Palestinians on the road toward statehood.

"We thought it was the entrance to paradise," she said dreamily of Ganei Tal, which in Hebrew means garden dew. "We had a very good life there. This is where we raised our three children."

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Israel fights bird flu outbreak in Negev — please see page 45

The News in Brief

CANADA

Jews 'Too Influential'

TORONTO — Canada's "pro-Israel Jewish lobby" is "too influential" on Canadian foreign policy, the Canadian Islamic Congress says. The group was responding to Canada's shift at the United Nations, where a recent resolution backing the right of Palestinian refugees to return to Israel passed 41-2, with Canada and the United States opposed. On March 10, president Mohamed Elmasry said Canada is "blindly follow[ing] the lead of Washington and of the influential pro-Israel Jewish lobby in both countries. This is a slap in the face to traditional Canadian values."

WORLD

Manor Gets Extension

JERUSALEM — Israel's Supreme Court last week gave Boaz Manor another month to turn in $9 million in diamonds he allegedly bought with assets from failed hedge fund Portus Alternative Asset Management, the *Globe and Mail* reported. Manor, co-founder of Portus, faced jail time from a lower court if he did turn in the gems, which he says he doesn't have. Manor, 35, fled to Israel last year after Toronto-based Portus went bankrupt and faces Ontario Securities Commission charges over its collapse.

Yankee Doodlers

TEHRAN — Six U.S. artists have reportedly entered an Iranian newspaper's Holocaust cartoon contest. One cartoon shows an Israeli soldier pointing a gun at a Palestinian's head with the words, "What has Ariel Sharon learned from the Holocaust?" Its creator, left-wing illustrator Mike Flugennock, denied it's anti-Semitic. "It specifically addresses policies of the Israeli state with regard to its behaviour in Palestine, and their similarities to the strategies employed by the Nazi regime in Warsaw and elsewhere," he told AP. The Iranian contest came after a Danish paper printed controversial cartoons of the Islamic prophet Muhammad.

Rabbis Protest at UN

NEW YORK — Some 150 rabbis from the four major streams of Judaism gathered outside the United Nations March 13 to urge the world to halt the deaths of Sudanese fleeing government-backed Arab militias who have killed thousands in Darfur, Sudan. The rabbis likened atrocities there to Jewish suffering in World War II. "It was only two generations ago when we looked around and wondered, where was everyone?" said Rabbi Robert Levine, head of the New York Board of Rabbis.

Rabbi Tours Mosque

ROME — Rome's chief rabbi, Riccardo Di Segni, visited his city's main mosque last week. Muslim leaders gave him the tour as part of efforts at greater dialogue after the Muhammad cartoon controversy.

Falwell Clears Air

LYNCHBURG, Va. — Evangelist Jerry Falwell corrected the "misimpression" that he believes Jews can reach heaven without converting. "While I am a strong supporter of the State of Israel and dearly love the Jewish people and believe them to be the chosen people of God, I continue to stand on the foundational biblical principle that all people… must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in order to enter heaven," Falwell said on the Conservative Voice website in response to a report he accepts the idea Jews have a separate covenant with God allowing them entrance to heaven.

French Comic Fined

PARIS — A French court fined comedian Dieudonné M'bala M'bala for suggesting Jews were slavers. Dieudonné faced controversy over a sketch in which he donned haredi clothing and gave a Nazi salute. He was cleared last year of incitement charges related to that sketch, but was fined more than 5,000 euros for a 2004 interview in which he said, "Those who attack me founded their fortunes on the trade in blacks and slavery." The court called the remark an attack on Jews. Dieudonné is slated to co-host three shows in July at Montreal's Just for Laughs festival, where he has performed the past three years.

Mock Gas Chamber Temporarily Shut Down

BERLIN — Officials in a German town temporarily suspended an exhibit in which a Spanish artist filled a former shul with poison gas after the head of Germany's main Jewish group called it a "tasteless art spectacle."

Santiago Sierra, who said he was protesting the "banalization of Holocaust remembrance," pumped exhaust fumes from six cars into the former synagogue in Pulheim-Stommeln near Cologne. Visitors wore gas masks to enter the installation, titled *245 Cubic Metres*, which was to run Sundays through April 30, except for Easter. There were reportedly long lines waiting to enter on opening day, March 12.

Stephan Kramer, head of the Central Council of Jews in Germany, said it's one thing to question rote forms of remembrance, but filling a shul with poison gas "has absolutely nothing to do with remembrance or the culture of memory."

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation: 42,245 copies
Total paid circulation: 41,398 copies
CCNA verified circulation Feb 9, 2006

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$63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST
U.S.A.: $100 U.S funds, 1 yr.
All other countries: $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr

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Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.

Canada

The Canadian Jewish news
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Rebuilding the Jaslo Synagogue — in Forest Hill

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

The Forest Hill Village, along trendy Spadina Road, is known more for coffee shops, bakeries and boutiques than prayer shawls and outdoor Torah parades.

But the six-year-old Temmy Latner Forest Hill Jewish Centre is quickly changing all that. On March 26, supporters will gather for a fundraising dinner to celebrate the centre's ambitious vision for its own future – a new building that has deep historical roots.

[Jennifer M. MacLeod photo]

Founding Members Lauren Linkner Kaufman and Jesse Kaufman with Rabbi Elie Karfunkel and John Kaplan. Inset: The lost synagogue in Jaslo, Poland.

Starting with just a few individuals and couples, the centre, a branch of the Israel-based outreach organization Ohr Somayach, has grown and now regularly welcomes more than 200 people on Shabbat.

In the heart of the Village, just above Starbucks and across from an orthodontist, Rabbi Elie Karfunkel and his wife Rifky have built a warm, vibrant, traditional congregation that's already bursting out of its new location, one created by merging and renovating three adjacent offices.

But rather than design a new building from scratch, the congregation will recreate the exterior of the lost synagogue of Jaslo, Poland, in what is believed to be the first time a North American congregation has physically rebuilt a European shul.

The original was destroyed in September 1939. German soldiers set it ablaze and the fire was put out by Polish firefighters – who were ordered five days later to burn it to the ground.

Reproducing this stately, old-world building will serve as a living monument to Hitler's failure to extinguish the Jewish spirit, said centre member Jesse Kaufman. "[The Nazis] succeeded in destroying the building 60 years ago. Now it will be rebuilt, filled with singing – people choosing to be Jewish in a vibrant, democratic society."

The town of Jaslo was a deliberate choice. John Kaplan, grandson of the late philanthropists Joseph and Faye Tanenbaum, said that "there were great synagogues in cities like Warsaw," but the centre chose a "nondescript" synagogue to represent "forgotten" communities and people.

Continued on page 18

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Why has Spielberg, a champion of the Jews and the State of Israel made such a film? Why was he compelled to tell this story? Has his thinking towards us changed?
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Out of the news, not forgotten

From the editor's desk

The following small, almost innocuous report was aired on Israeli television last Friday.

"Ariel Sharon, comatose since suffering a massive stroke on Jan. 4, will be moved to a long-term care facility after elections later this month. The [Israeli] prime minister will be moved to the Sheba Medical Center [outside Tel Aviv]."

Prime Minister Sharon's condition is quite grave. But it is now hardly ever mentioned in public discourse. What is more, it probably hardly ever arises now in private thought too.

Such is human nature that the mind cannot too long dwell on the melancholy and the morose without harming its emotional equilibrium.

Such is the nature of nations that a government cannot too long dwell on the individual without harming the national, collective interest.

Sharon is not forgotten. He is simply no longer in the news.

Each day that the stricken prime minister remains in a coma, the prognosis for his recovery worsens. Since a stroke 2½ months ago, he has undergone seven operations, including three brain surgeries.

In five days, on March 28, Israelis will go to the polls to elect a new Knesset. Though Sharon's image is very much part of the election campaign – an unsubtle detail on many of Kadima's campaign posters – the man himself is not. Nor will he ever be again. He is not returning to political life.

But his impact on Israel's political life will be long lasting and long studied.

An insightful, moving essay about Sharon, entitled *The General*, appears in the Jan. 23 and 30 issue of *The New Yorker*.

But what makes the article especially poignant is the fact that it was written by an "ideological foe" of Sharon, the well-known, left-of-centre Israeli journalist, political commentator Ari Shavit.

It is a seamlessly stitched manteau of notes from the last six years of conversations between the two men that adds warmth and dimension to one's understanding of Israeli life.

Even as Shavit chronicles the macro movements and shifts in national policy and social climate over that six-year period, he also paints with richly colourful, micro detail, the inner aspects of the private man who was largely responsible for those movements and shifts.

The differences he discovers between the general he actually came to know and the general whose personality he assumed he knew are profound.

Shavit surprises even himself. He liked and developed great respect for Sharon.

In 1999, Shavit wrote, "Surprisingly, this secular, Israel-born soldier defined himself not as an Israeli but as a Jew. Israel's raison d'etre, he said, is to be the place where the Jews will finally be cured of their mortal illness, their 'eternal wandering'…

"He said that his primary concern was with the Jewish future: what will become of the Jews in 30 years' time, and what will become of them in 300 years' time?"

In reference to a meeting on Sharon's ranch in April 2001, Shavit wrote: "Affable as always, he insisted that I eat a large breakfast with him: salad, cheese, sardines and olives. During the meal, he said he would prefer that we not talk about politics. 'I know more about wheat and olive trees than I do about politics,' he said, laughing. And indeed, he gave me a long lecture about the olive tree: its longevity, the depth of its roots. He told me that in Israel there are olive trees that are 2,000 years old and were harvested by the Jews during the Second Temple period, from 538 BC to 70 AD. He described their precise location."

"I asked Sharon whether he was closer to the settlers he was about to displace or to his new supporters, who come from the trendy Mediterranean streets of Tel Aviv.

"'They are real people,'" Sharon said of the settlers. "'Extraordinary people. Phenomenal people.'

"He asked an aide to bring him his briefcase and he pulled out a letter from a woman from Netzarim, in Gaza. He read it to me, slowly and clearly, pronouncing with strange empathy every one of the words of rebuke that were directed at him…

"'She is right in her arguments,'" Sharon said, "'but she doesn't bear the responsibility for the Jewish people on her shoulders. This responsibility is incumbent upon me'…

"The day before Sharon's catastrophic stroke, I happened to be at Sycamore Ranch (the Sharon family ranch in the Negev) to meet with Omri. I did not see the prime minister, but I did see, once again, everything in which he took pride: his sheepfold, his orchard, his two sons."

The great events of history are the results of the decisions of great men and women. But those great men and women, we often forget, are human beings too, who, like all of us, reach for and hope to hold in their hands the feel of things that last, that remind them that they have a place in the hearts of others. Shavit's article is an excellent read.

Sharon is out of the news, but not forgotten.

– MBD

SeeJN

FROM SCHOOL TO SCHOOL

Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School Grade 4 student Clayton Jacobson keeps track of bids during the school's Free the Children silent auction. As part of Paul Penna's youth in action-tikkun olam club, students organized and ran the auction, which raised over $4,000. Funds will be used to help build a school in Sierra Leone.

Rebbetzins address key issues at conference

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

> ***'I'm not sure what the term implies... the notion that a woman is something because of what her husband is'***

Batya Friedman is a financial analyst, Ilana Kelman is an occupational therapist, Cirelle Rosenblatt is a psychologist and Shelley Zisook is a high school teacher. The four women are also Orthodox rebbetzins who travelled from their homes in Edmonton, Toronto, Vancouver and Fredericton respectively for a rebbetzins' conference held recently in Teaneck, N.J.

"They do have their own identity," said Friedman of modern-day rebbetzins. The three-day Rebbetzins Yarchei Kallah that she attended was a forum for mentoring and mutual support, as well as an opportunity for personal growth, she said.

The event – which included text study as well as sessions on time management and the role of the rabbi's wife ("Community, Confidante, Teacher and Hostess") – was a program of Yeshiva University's Center for the Jewish Future. Organizers believe it was the first program of its kind in North America.

Friedman, a 29-year-old mother of two young children whose career is on hold for the moment, said that the role of a rebbetzin is as a partner and support for her husband. Serving as a hostess – mostly at Shabbat meals, but also on other occasions – is "still a big part of the role."

She also teaches classes at Toronto's Beth Israel Synagogue, where her husband Rabbi Daniel Friedman became the rabbi in 2002, but said she didn't think the teaching was "something that was expected."

Kelman, a mother of six who worked part-time until her youngest was born seven months ago, found the conference empowering. Zisook, 53, whose husband, Rabbi Kenneth Zisook, was a U.S. army chaplain until he became spiritual leader in 2003 at Sgoolai Israel Synagogue – Fredericton's only synagogue – said it was a way of "recharging [her] spiritual batteries."

But there is some discomfort with the term "rebbetzin."

"It doesn't have a connotation that I think feels comfortable to women in their 20s and 30s," said Rosenblatt, a 36-year-old mother of five.

"I'm not sure what the term implies... the notion that a woman is something because of what her husband is," said Kelman.

"I prefer being called Shelley," said Zisook.

Kelman noted that she has never heard of a conference for spouses of, say, doctors or lawyers.

Unlike the other 30 or so women at the conference, Kelman is not married to a congregational rabbi, although her husband, Rabbi Jay Kelman, was spiritual leader of Toronto's Beth Jacob V'Anshei Drildz Congregation for nine years. He is a founding director of Torah in Motion, a modern Orthodox adult education organization in Toronto. Both at the synagogue and with Torah in Motion, Kelman has taken a "behind the scenes" role, mostly helping out with programs.

Among the issues facing rebbetzins, said Kelman, is the spillover from their husbands' work life. "There are a lot of demands on family time," she said. "There aren't necessarily the boundaries of 9 to 5."

Like Kelman, Zisook does "a lot of behind the scenes stuff." She also teaches a Grade 1 Hebrew-school class and is the de facto kosher caterer, cooking for up to 60 or 70 people at events like Shabbatons.

The rebbetzins' conference was "definitely worth the schlep," said Zisook. "You can't talk to congregants the same way you would talk to a best friend who wasn't a congregant."

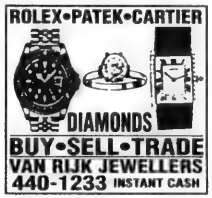
Friendships were formed at the event, the women said, and e-mails are being exchanged.

It was "a good chance for us to learn from each other," said Rosenblatt, whose husband, Rabbi Andrew Rosenblatt, has led Vancouver's Schara Tzedeck Congregation for almost three years.

In a city like Vancouver with a relatively small Orthodox community, she is called on as a resource more than she would be in a large Jewish community, she noted.

At first, she said, she was hesitant about going to the conference because the event coincided with a planned vacation. "Why would I want to go and be a rebbetzin when we're away, instead of having the time to myself?" she thought. But the issues that were to be addressed struck a chord.

"Most of us marry our husbands – and [then] they become pulpit rabbis," she explained.



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Complaint against High Holy Days class cancellations filed by prof

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

A York University professor filed a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission as part of an ongoing attempt to force the university to change its practice of cancelling classes on the Jewish High Holy Days.

Since the fall of 2004, David Noble has challenged the university's practice of cancelling classes on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur because, he said, it violates the 1965 York University Act and is against the law.

He said the act contains a clause forbidding the imposition upon any member of the university community of "any religious observances according to the regulations of any particular denomination or sect."

After having dealt with York president Lorna Marsden, the senate, the provincial Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and Fiona Crean, York's ombudsperson, to no avail, Noble took matters into his own hands and cancelled classes on Eid-ul-Fadr, a Muslim holiday, in hopes this might force the university to rethink its policy.

Noble said that when a Jewish student celebrates Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur, they don't have to worry about missing a class.

"But when a Muslim student goes to celebrate Eid and misses classes, although they are not penalized, they are still missing something."

As York continued to defend its policy that it has enforced since 1974 in recognition that about 10 per cent of its student body is Jewish, Noble filed a complaint in early January with the Ontario Human Rights Commission (ORHC).

Named in the complaint were Marsden, York University senate chair Patricia Bradshaw and dean of the faculty of arts Robert Drummond, as well as the institution itself. All are accused of "discrimination on the basis of creed."

Noble said since he's Jewish, "these practices are not harmful to me. This is sort of a class-action suit. I'm representing the interests of students of other faiths."

Noble added he thinks the university should either extend the practice to students of all faiths or eliminate it altogether.

But York spokesperson Richard Fisher said that to extend the practice to all students would be too difficult.

"There are probably about 100 to 200 religious holidays each year," he noted.

"We have good accommodations for students who need to miss classes for religious reasons or otherwise."

When the university formally responds to the OHRC complaint, which Fisher said it is in the process of doing, the commission will schedule a mediation in an attempt to help the two parties reach a settlement.

But Noble doesn't see how they will be able to come to the middle on this issue.

"Either they stop [the practice] or they don't," he said, adding that he is "cautiously confident" that he will succeed in bringing this policy to an end.

Fisher wouldn't speculate as to what the outcome to the dispute might be, because the process could take months or even years, but he did say the university will be defending its current policy.

Israeli 2006 Decision

Watch Israeli election results live from Israel on March 28

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Likud

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Israeli Decision

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  Featuring a discussion with Professor Derek Penslar, Director of the Jewish Studies program at 3 pm.
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Three Wishes gets pulled

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) has joined the York Region District School Board in removing a controversial book about the Middle East from a children's after-school reading program.

The TDSB announced last week it was pulling *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak* from the Ontario Library Association's Silver Birch reading program and removing it from school and library shelves. Children in Grade 7 and up will still be able to borrow the book from a librarian or school office.

The move came after Canadian Jewish Congress asked the TDSB and other school boards across the province to reconsider whether *Three Wishes* was appropriate for children in grades 4, 5 and 6. Congress argued the book failed to provide sufficient historical context to the conflict while demonizing the Israeli army and making suicide bombing appear as a legitimate recourse for Palestinian children.

In other developments, the Avon Maitland District School Board in southwestern Ontario announced it had evaluated *Three Wishes* and would continue to offer it to its students.

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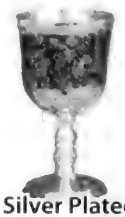

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Publisher and Proprietor:
The Canadian Jewish News, a corporation without share capital
Head Office:
1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4

Choosing a cabinet – and continued conflict

Palestinian prime minister-designate Ismail Haniyeh took one step closer last weekend to forming a new government in the Palestinian Authority. He appointed a 24-member cabinet of colleagues and confederates, all from his own Hamas party, to execute a program of constant conflict with Israel.

So great is the distrust of Hamas' power and ultimate purposes among other Palestinian political factions that none of them in the 134-seat Palestinian Legislative Council joined the cabinet. Indeed, even the murderous Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine refused to take a seat at the table.

According to a report in the *Jerusalem Post*, Hamas' program includes a restatement of its intention to pursue, "in all forms," the struggle against Israel's "occupation."

Hamas' leader-in-exile Khaled Meshal reiterated to a desperately doting western press his utter refusal to concede that Israel has a right to exist in the Middle East, too.

As of this writing, the cabinet has not yet been approved by Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, as it must be under Palestinian law. But in truth, as Israel's foreign ministry spokesperson Mark Regev said , as long as the Hamas-led government was "unreformed and supports terrorism," it makes no difference who held the different portfolios. "The formation of this extremist Hamas government, which refuses to accept the three benchmarks articulated by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan – recognize Israel, renounce terrorism, and accept previous agreements – will not receive international legitimacy and will create a situation under which the Palestinian government will turn into a pariah regime."

Regev's remarks were echoed by some Palestinians, albeit too late. As reported in the *Jerusalem Post*, political analyst Hani al-Masri said Hamas' political program violates international law, which, he pointed out, is predicated upon governments honouring bilateral or multilateral international agreements signed by predecessor governments.

Nabil Abu Rudaineh, a spokesperson for Abbas, said Hamas' objectives would increase the isolation of the Palestinians. "This program does not comply with the requirements of the international community," he said. "Hamas' problem is not with us, but with the international community, which has clear political demands."

Ironically, Rudaineh's comment was like a magnifying glass unintentionally illuminating, in very large letters, the pathology that rots the core of Palestinian society. Hamas *should* have a problem with Rudaineh and Abbas. Hamas' "program" calls for the destruction of the Jewish state. The fact that this is not problematic for even the "moderate" Palestinian parties explains why Israel will refuse to deal with the openly hostile Palestinian government, but act decisively, and without hesitation, to protect the lives of its people.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• U.S. secretary of state Alexander Haig said U.S. troops will probably form the bulk of a peacekeeping force in a demilitarized zone in the Sinai after Israel leaves the area in the spring of 1982.
• A book by Shemon Matlofsky claims that the fierce Pathan tribe of Afghanistan is one of the 10 lost tribes of Israel.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
IRAN WANTS TO TALK BECAUSE THEY CAN'T TAKE THE ANTI-NUKE PRESSURE.
PROBABLY!
OR MAYBE IT MEANS THE U.S. CAN'T TAKE THE PRESSURE IN IRAQ ANYMORE.
YUP.
OR IT COULD BE BOTH!
TRUE!
OR IT COULD MEAN SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.
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Transnistria must not be forgotten

The article "Remember Romanian Kristallnacht" (*CJN*, Jan. 26) described the terrible atrocities committed against Romanian Jews by the fascist Iron Guard legionnaires.

That the Romanian fascists were the most brutal murderers is well-known, especially by those who witnessed their gruesome acts and lived to tell about it. Romania was a very anti-Semitic country and still is to this day.

However, nothing was mentioned about the thousands of Jews who perished in Transnistra.

In 1940, after giving Romania an ultimatum to withdraw, the Soviet Union annexed the two northern Romanian provinces, Northern Bucovina and Bassarabia, and declared them Soviet territory. Both Bucovina and Bassarabia had many well-established Jewish communities. In June 1941, Germany attacked the Soviet Union, and shortly thereafter those provinces were reoccupied by the Romanian and German armies. This was the beginning of a three-day pogrom that resulted in thousands of Jewish people being murdered in the most brutal way.

In total, from 1941 to 1944, some 350,000 Jews perished.

We hope that in the future any one writes about the suffering of Romanian Jewish people will not forget to mention Transnistria.

Leizer Hoffer
Thornhill, Ont.
Joe Leinburd
Toronto
Transnistria Survivors Association

* * *

Cartoon showed disrespect for Yiddish

The cartoon with the dialogue, "You mean a shmitcionary..." (*CJN*, March 2), shows an ignorance, bias and disrespect for the Yiddish language and culture.

The cartoonist shows a woeful lack of proper Jewish education and upbringing.

It has long been acknowledged that we Jews are a richly bicultural and bilingual people who are fortunate to have and live with the Yiddish and Hebrew languages, literatures and cultures.

The vast majority of the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust were Yiddish speaking. They lived, loved, laughed and cried in their (our) beloved language, Yiddish.

The editors should show a little more sensitivity and responsibility, before publishing such ignorant bias.

Dovid Kunigis
Montreal

* * *

A correction to a correction

A correction to the editorial "The issue of fairness," (CJN, March 2), which was printed at the end of the March 9 editorial, stated, "We wrote that Ontario is the only jurisdiction in Canada that refuses to extend any funding to non-Catholic, faith-based schools. But this is also the case in the Atlantic provinces."

As a former Atlantic provinces resident, I feel it is unfair to imply that those provinces discriminate like Ontario. The Atlantic provinces do not fund any faith-based schools, Catholic or otherwise. By contrast, all other provinces, except Ontario, do fund faith-based schools, but have thriving public education systems also. What makes Ontario shamefully unique in Canada and the western democratic world is that it fully funds faith-based schools of one religion only to the total exclusion of others, in open violation of basic international human rights law that Ontario formally committed to observe.

Given that all three political parties in Ontario support Catholic school funding as required by the constitution, under which 93 per cent of Ontario's faith-based schools are already funded, the only fair and realistic way of removing this shameful distinction is to extend funding to the other seven per cent that are excluded solely because they are not Catholic.

Michael Orr
Toronto

* * *

Disgusted by dialogue in 'Dry Bones'

I was disgusted to see the dialogue, "Purim used to be a special time when we Jews disguised ourselves and got drunk so that we'd look and act like the rest of the world," in "Dry Bones" (*CJN*, March 10).

Gerald I. Goldlist
Thornhill, Ont.

* * *

Career-counselling information dated

The article "School says it's making great strides to provide more choices" (*CJN*, March 9) about career and university counselling at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) reflected experiences of graduates who left CHAT years ago.

For the record: in June 2005, CHAT students who knew their destinations for September 2006 – all except six of 300 graduates – were headed to 26 different universities and colleges across Canada, the United States and Israel to study in more than 40 different programs – and a greater variety of courses – covering almost every conceivable choice. More than 40 students deferred entry to take time off in Israel first.

To date, in the present school year, more than 20 Canadian and American universities – and a huge number of Israeli programs have made recruitment visits to both CHAT campuses.

We are proud of all of our students and want to open as many windows as possible for them. CHAT policy is to offer our students the widest number of choices and the fullest information. A CHAT education is a truly outstanding springboard for life – including, but certainly not limited to, careers in medicine and law.

Paul Shaviv
Director of Education
Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto

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UNRWA—a clear case of double standards?

By MICHAEL J. JORDAN
JTA

Armed gunmen roamed freely in United Nations refugee camps. They stockpiled weapons, recruited refugees and launched cross-border attacks.

In response, opposing forces attacked the camps, aiming for the gunmen – but sometimes cutting down civilians in the process.

The international community was troubled both by the instability fomented and the thought of the beleaguered refugees – exploited within the camps, denied a truly safe haven, then caught in the crossfire.

So the United Nations took action.

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan produced a pair of landmark reports singling out the militarization of refugee camps as a cause of conflict and insecurity. He called for the "separation of armed elements from refugee populations" to maintain the camps' civilian character. And he outlined several steps to police the camps.

The UN Security Council followed suit in 1998 with Resolution 1208, defending the sanctity of refugee camps and criminalizing their militarization.

What was the source of this international concern – the Palestinian camps in Gaza and the West Bank? No, it was Africa in the mid-1990s, when civil wars in Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia and elsewhere unleashed torrents of refugees across the continent.

To defenders of Israel, the scenario described above sounds familiar. They question why the world body has never applied Resolution 1208 to the 27 UN refugee camps in Gaza and the West Bank, which were a prime source of attacks during the violent Palestinian uprising that began in September 2000.

Security Council resolutions carry the weight of international law – and Resolution 1208 itself makes note of the fact that it should be universally applied.

The question of the Palestinian exception to 1208 is more than theoretical. Despite moves toward reform in other areas, the UN General Assembly is unlikely to make any changes to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which provides relief and social services to the majority of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Thus, an appeal to the Security Council to apply Resolution 1208 may be a viable option if, as some predict, the intifadah is renewed and terrorists again use UNRWA camps to plan and launch attacks against Israel.

Annan himself underscored the universality of Resolution 1208 in March 2001 when reports of similar abuses emerged from refugee camps in West Timor.

"Not separating combatants from civilians allows armed groups to take control of a camp and its population, politicizing their situation and gradually establishing a military culture within the camp," Annan wrote.

"The impact on the safety and security of both the refugees and the neighboring local population is severe. Entire camp populations can be held hostage by militias that operate freely in the camps, spread terror, press-gang civilians, including children, into serving their forces."

Yet Annan hasn't voiced similar outrage regarding Palestinian militancy in UNRWA camps.

For example, on Oct. 6, 2002, Palestinians in the Khan Yunis camp in Gaza launched a mortar attack on a Jewish settlement. The next day Israel fired a missile from a helicopter gunship, killing 14 people, among them accused militants and civilians.

On Oct. 8, Annan issued a statement deploring Israel's "military attack in civilian areas" and the Jewish state's "reckless disregard" for civilian life. However, he ignored the fact that the original mortar attack was launched from among civilians, settling for a bland "appeal to both sides to halt all violent and provocative acts."

One Jewish group lodged a protest with the UN chief. Harry Reicher, at the time the UN representative for Agudath Israel World Organization, wrote Annan to contrast his outspokenness on West Timor with his "silence" on "the continuing strategy, pursued by the leadership of the Palestinians, of locating terrorists, as well as caches of their arms, in heavily-populated civilian areas" and the "use of civilian men, women and children as human shields."

UNRWA says it acknowledges Israel's security needs and right to self-defence, but that civilian well-being should take priority.

An UNRWA defender agrees.

"Of course there are people trying to use these places, but having armed people inside the camps doesn't legitimize Israel's attacks on civilians," says Raji Sourani, director of the Gaza-based Palestinian Centre for Human Rights.

Yet critics say that if UNRWA is really concerned about civilians, it should speak out against any action that endangers them – including Palestinian attacks launched from among civilians that provoke Israeli retaliation.

What could be more guaranteed to encourage the Palestinian use of refugees as human shields "than the certain knowledge that, if Palestinian civilians are tragically killed, it is Israel that will be blamed by the United Nations?" asked Reicher, a professor of international law at the University of Pennsylvania.

The militarization of UNRWA camps is not a recent revelation. Back in 1982, former U.S. president Ronald Reagan accused UNRWA of allowing its Lebanese camps to become armed bastions of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Forced to investigate when Reagan threatened to withhold U.S. funding for the organization, UNRWA admitted that several camps indeed had been militarized.

While the Security Council hasn't enforced 1208 in the Palestinian territories, it has applied pressure on militant Palestinian refugees elsewhere.

Resolution 1559, passed in September 2004, demanded that "foreign forces" – an allusion to Syria – withdraw from Lebanon. Syria finally did end its 29-year occupation last April, two months after being implicated in the assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri.

Resolution 1559 also calls for the "disbanding and disarmament of all Lebanese and non-Lebanese militias" – a reference to the pro-Syrian Hezbollah militia and to Palestinian terrorist groups in UNRWA's 12 Lebanese camps. That part of 1559 has not been implemented.

After rockets were fired from Lebanon into Israel in late December, Resolution 1559 once again gained the United Nations' attention.

Al Qaeda claimed credit for the attack, reportedly its first on Israel. But some suggested it was carried out by Palestinian terrorists only loosely connected to Osama bin Laden's global terror network.

The next day, Annan called on the Lebanese government "to extend its control over all its territory, to exert its monopoly on the use of force, and to put an end to all such attacks."

Still, from Israel's perspective, militancy in UNRWA's Lebanese camps is far less immediate a threat than militancy in Gaza and the West Bank.

Some Palestinian supporters argue that Resolution 1208 shouldn't apply to the West Bank – or, before Israel's withdrawal last summer, to the Gaza Strip – because Palestinians there are engaged in "legitimate resistance to occupation."

Israel's defenders, though, say it's a clear case of double standards.

"Here the UN has adopted clear criteria for how refugee camps are supposed to be maintained, and consistently fails to apply its own law when it comes to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," said Dore Gold, Israel's former UN ambassador and current president of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

"One of the most compelling arguments for demonstrating how Israel is systematically denied the same rights and privileges given to other [UN] member states is the story of Resolution 1208."

Resolution 1208 clearly should apply to UNRWA, said Astrid Van Genderen Stort, a spokesperson for the UN High Commission for Refugees, known as UNHCR, which handles the world's other 19.2 million refugees.

"The Israelis may say UNRWA is not protecting the camps well enough, or that we can do a better security job, but I don't think UNRWA would ever say 1208 doesn't apply," Van Genderen Stort said. "If UNRWA people knew there were terrorists firing weapons from the camps, they should remove these people from the camps. But I can't speak for UNRWA. I'm not on the ground."

In an interview with JTA, UNRWA Commissioner-General Karen Koning AbuZayd acknowledged that Resolution 1208 officially applies to UNRWA camps, but added that "it requires action to be taken by the authorities where the camps are located, not by the humanitarian agencies."

"We don't run camps. That is the responsibility of the sovereign governments and authorities wherever the camps are based," she said. "It's like asking, 'What has Bethesda Hospital done to combat street gangs in Washington, D.C.?' We do send situation reports to the UN's security department and the office of the secretary general. These are simple, straightforward factual accounts of clashes and other incidents."

Yet a line needs to be drawn somewhere, Van Genderen Stort said.

"For me, a refugee camp is a place where people in need of protection or assistance can find it," she said. "A refugee camp shouldn't be a battleground or a place where criminals are hiding."

If the intifadah resumes and UN camps again become terrorist staging grounds, some pro-Israel activists say they'd revive a push for the Security Council to apply Resolution 1208 to UNRWA's turf.

"I hope the UN will use the same standards to ensure the humanitarian nature of refugee camps in the Palestinian territories as they've mandated for the rest of the world," said Felice Gaer, a human-rights expert for the American Jewish Committee. "Exceptionalism for Palestinian refugee camps would be just another way of revealing the UN has often used a double standard when it comes to the Middle East conflict."

If Resolution 1208 were applied, UNRWA would be obliged to report violations to the UN secretary general, who would be obliged to deliver the information to the Security Council. Observers say it's not inconceivable that, with their actions placed under the microscope, terrorists might be flushed from the camps, cut off from a prime source of recruits and denied a sanctuary from which to plan and launch attacks.

Given the political realities at the United Nations, that may be a pipe dream. But if nothing else, critics say, even the negative publicity might strike a symbolic blow.

A short history

JTA

The UN General Assembly established the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in 1949 as a temporary agency focused on relief work for the Palestinians. It began operating in 1950.

Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians became refugees in the war that began when Palestinians and their Arab allies attacked the fledgling Jewish state the day after its independence in 1948.

Some were purposely flushed from their homes as Jewish forces sought to secure key roads and pacify areas from which Jewish communities had been attacked. Some were encouraged to leave by the Arab states, which told the refugees that they could return shortly to claim the spoils after the Jews were killed. Many simply fled what had become a combat zone.

The Palestinians constituted just one of many refugee populations in the years after World War II, and many outsiders expected their case to be the easiest of the postwar refugee crises to resolve. Many found shelter in neighbouring countries that shared their language, religion and culture, and where many of them had blood ties.

Indeed, the roughly equal number of Jewish refugees who fled or were expelled from the Muslim world during the same period were quickly resettled in Israel or in the West.

Unlike the U.N. High Commission for Refugees, or UNHCR, which serves the world's other 19.2 million refugees, UNRWA was not tasked with finding solutions to the refugees' plight.

Instead, UNRWA's definition of refugee – which counted even migrants who had lived in the area for as little as two years – further expanded in the 1950s when, in an unprecedented move, UNRWA included descendants of the original refugees. This was an expanded definition that the UNHCR never adopted.

Thus, while other refugee groups have dwindled due to resettlement or death, the Palestinian refugee population, uniquely, continues to grow – from 914,000 registered refugees in 1950 to some 4.3 million today, roughly one-third of whom live in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

— M.J.J.

The Oslo syndrome

The signing of the Declaration of Principles (Oslo accords) in September 1993 was universally endorsed as the most important breakthrough in Arab-Israeli relations in recent memory. However, just hours afterward, Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat was already referring to the accords as merely a vehicle for a "plan of phases," whereby the PLO would first wrest territorial concessions through negotiation and then use such gains to pursue the ultimate goal of eradicating Israel.

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

In the years that followed, large segments of the Israeli public and media – all longing for an era of protracted peace – clung desperately to the illusion of a new reality, even as terror attacks on Israeli civilians escalated and it became increasingly clear that Arafat and his cronies were breaching their agreements on an almost daily basis.

And with Arafat's final act of intransigence at Camp David in 2000 (followed by his unleashing of the second intifadah), the prospect of Israeli-Palestinian coexistence within the framework of an implementable peace process was at last exposed as yet another mirage among the many that had preceded it.

What analysts were left with was the vexing question of what went wrong? How could a politically sophisticated Israeli society, with a savvy press and a leadership that knew its history, have been duped, and for so long, by a Palestinian regime that was so obviously duplicitous and destructive?

To provide some insight into the mindset that could have allowed this to happen, psychiatrist and historian Kenneth Levin believes the answer may lie in psychological responses that are common among chronically besieged populations, whether minorities subjected to defamation, discrimination, and assault, or small nations under persistent attack by their neighbours. People living under such stressful conditions often choose to accept at face value the indictments of their accusers in the hope of thereby escaping their predicament.

In his book *The Oslo Syndrome: Delusions of a People Under Siege* (2005, Smith and Kraus Global), Levin uses the failed Oslo process as the paradigm for describing the collective denial among Israelis during the years the Oslo debacle was unfolding. In the first few chapters, he also reflects on a somewhat similar phenomenon in Diaspora communities, which have had to deal with the various existential threats that have confronted them, again and again, since medieval times.

The Oslo Syndrome presents a perspective that is both self-critical and enlightening. In cautioning us against succumbing to the often subtle appeal of positions that promote universalism or transient inclusiveness, even at the expense of appeasement or capitulation, it seems also to exhort us to informatively and unabashedly embrace the precepts of Jewish identity and the centrality of Israel as the very foundations for making a convincing counter-argument.

Olmert tries to set the agenda

By LESLIE SUSSER

Ehud Olmert's pledge to unilaterally establish Israel's permanent borders within four years could turn out to be the defining moment of the country's election campaign.

With the announcement, the interim prime minister pre-empted the Labor Party to the left and sharpened his Kadima Party's differences with Likud to the right.

Labor claims Olmert has stolen its ideas. Likud says he has turned the election into a referendum on his plan to cede territory without getting anything in return.

With Kadima slipping in the polls, Olmert took a huge gamble. Some right-wingers claim that by putting his cards so clearly on the table, he plays into their hands.

Beyond electioneering, Olmert's statement has major regional and international ramifications. On the Palestinian side, Hamas leader Khaled Meshal called it a "declaration of war" against the Palestinians. And Israeli pundits wonder whether Israel will be able to set permanent borders, recognized by the international community, without negotiating with the Palestinians.

In interviews with all the Israeli dailies, Olmert outlined his plan: By 2010, isolated West Bank settlements will be dismantled and settlers relocated in large blocs closer to the pre-1967 boundary, known as the Green Line. The security fence will become the new, permanent border, with Israelis on one side, Palestinians on the other. In some cases the fence will be moved further east, in others further west, to correspond with the new boundary route.

The new, permanent border will consolidate Israel as a Jewish state with an overwhelming Jewish majority.

According to Olmert, the Palestinians will be given a limited amount of time to enter talks, but if they don't, Israel will carry out the plan unilaterally. In the absence of a Palestinian partner, Israel will negotiate the border lines with the international community.

It will also hold a dialogue with the settlers aimed at reaching consensus on which settlements will be evacuated and where settlers will be relocated.

These ideas had previously been leaked by other Kadima leaders and aides, but this is the first time Olmert has openly backed them.

In going public two weeks before the election, Olmert apparently hoped to kill two birds with one stone, giving voters a clear vision they can latch onto and pre-empting a mooted Labor-Likud coalition that would form a government in Kadima's stead.

Kadima strategists believe this clarity is what voters want to hear. Compared to Labor's insistence on talks with a non-existent Palestinian partner and the Likud's doom-and-gloom predictions, Olmert's formula will attract conflict-weary Israelis, they argue.

Olmert's policy statement also makes a Likud-Labor coalition that bypasses Kadima virtually impossible. How would Labor justify choosing Likud when Olmert is committed to a withdrawal almost identical to Labor's own proposed pullback, political analyst Yossi Verter asked in *Ha'aretz*.

"Olmert's move struck down the hallucinatory visions of a Labor-right-wing coalition to block Kadima," he wrote. "What could the Likud offer [Labor] after the election? A bigger pullout than Olmert's?"

With Olmert setting the agenda, Likud and Labor are trying to turn his candor to their advantage. Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu hardened his already hawkish line in a bid to discredit Olmert as too dovish. The Likud, Netanyahu said, would not countenance unilateral withdrawals or a Palestinian state, and would not join a coalition led by someone "as left-wing as Olmert."

Labor took the opposite tack: Implementing Olmert's policies would require a strong Labor contingent in the coalition, party activists argued.

Some right-wingers, however, are convinced Olmert has made a huge error that could cost him the election. Right-wing settlers are trying to use Olmert's plan to trigger wholesale defections from Kadima. Their aim: to shift eight seats from Kadima to the right-wing parties, enough to give the right an upset victory.

That's a tall order, and the smart money is still on Olmert to win the election. His forthrightness might even increase his majority.

The question then becomes whether he will be able to get the international community to recognize borders Israel decides for itself, without consulting the Palestinians. Getting such support is clearly a major part of Olmert's strategy. Before he made his statement, he put out feelers to the Americans, with whom he hopes to co-ordinate any pullback.

Israeli sources say the Americans understand that with the terror group Hamas in power on the Palestinian side, Israel must consider unilateral moves. And Israel believes that if the United States recognizes permanent borders, the rest of the international community will follow.

Olmert hopes his plan will win him the election and then write him into the history books as the leader who finally established Israel's permanent borders – after more than 60 years of statehood – around 2010.

Leslie Susser is JTA's diplomatic correspondent in Jerusalem.

Abusing medicine for propaganda

If there's one area where the benefits of peace between Arabs and Israelis should be obvious, it's health care. Indeed, many Palestinians, Jordanians, Saudis and others come to Israeli hospitals for treatments that aren't available in their countries. Even when the terrorist attacks were at their most violent and other forms of co-operation between Israelis and Palestinians ended, the health links remained. Medical professionals understand that viruses and disease are impervious to politics.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

For this reason, the intrusion of coarse politics and ugly propaganda via *Bridges: An Israeli-Palestinian Public Health Magazine* is particularly damaging. This publication is undermining precisely the co-operation that its sponsors claim to be promoting.

Bridges is published by the World Health Organization, an international body based in Geneva that works closely with the United Nations and suffers from many of the same maladies, such as promoting anti-Israel propaganda in every possible realm by exploiting universal norms such as human rights.

Most issues of *Bridges*, now in its second year, mix soft health care pieces with anti-Israel propaganda written by Palestinians, as well as some fringe Israelis who believe that the key to peace is to accept responsibility for terror and incitement. Substantive non-political articles on health issues do not offset the blatantly political and ideological pieces that are carefully placed between the others.

The political articles follow the standard propaganda line: Palestinians are always portrayed as victims, while Israeli checkpoints, occupation, and other measures are blamed for their suffering. There is no mention of PLO corruption, or the history of Arab rejectionism that led to wars and "occupation," and there are few references to the context and cause of the checkpoints: Palestinian terror.

NGOs that exploit human rights and humanitarian claims in order to demonize Israel, such as Physicians for Human Rights-Israel and the Palestinian Human Rights Committee, are regularly given space to promote their ideology in *Bridges*. The February-March 2005 edition included an article authored by a French-based anti-Israel NGO known as Médecins du Monde. Headlined "The Separation Barrier to Health Care," it was a blatantly political piece on "the wall." The only references to medical issues were in unverified allegations about "the deterioration of the Palestinian health care system due to the ongoing construction of the wall." The relation between the separation barrier and terror was surgically removed, and readers are asked to support "healthandwall.org."

The next article was about an Israeli victim of terror, an artificial attempt to provide false political balance in a health care publication. It was followed in turn by a portrait of a Palestinian who had been crippled after having been allegedly shot by an Israeli soldier.

Medical professionals on both sides live this conflict daily, and superficial political articles are counterproductive. Indeed, a surprisingly honest evaluation published in the December 2005/January 2006 edition reported that readers view the publication as "too politically biased or not well balanced" and ineffective in promoting co-operative projects. Predictably, the evaluation noted that "Palestinian authors openly talked about the conflict and the occupation, whereas Israelis did not." It said that in the first six issues, of the articles in the magazine's "Happening in Health" section, "nine addressed the occupation. Yet no news item mentioned terrorism."

But the editors ignored this evaluation in the next issue (February-March 2006), where, between professional articles on challenges in nursing, the politics and propaganda increased. Moving further away from health, the editors devoted central pages to Hanan Ashrawi – a member of the PLO leadership and keynote speaker at the infamous 2001 World Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa – as well as to MK Tamar Gozansky of the Israeli Communist fringe. Ashwari repeated the cliches of Palestinian victimization and Israeli occupation, while Gozansky accused Israel of "the dehumanization of Palestinians." For medical professionals seeking to go beyond the conflict, these articles mark a dead end.

Since the editors seem committed to this destructive path, if this publication is to continue, its editorial board must be revamped and the political content dropped. Otherwise, funders should pull the plug to prevent greater damage in the name of peace and put their money into expanding the co-operation seen in the daily contacts between Israelis and Arabs in hospitals and clinics, and via exchanges of public health information.

The Kirshner File

Serge Klarsfeld is still driven by the past

Serge Klarsfeld, clad in an impeccably cut navy blue suit, an immaculately pressed white shirt and a silky blue polka dot tie, looks comfortable and prosperous. He wears rimless silver glasses that accentuate his twinkling pale eyes, reflect the morning light and call attention to his balding pate. A grandfatherly figure who sits demurely in a high-ceiling room filled with books and folders and who speaks softly, Klarsfeld does not convey the impression of a man possessed.

Sheldon Kirshner in Paris

Yet Klarsfeld is driven. At the age of 70, he is probably the world's most famous living Nazi hunter, credited with having brought to justice war criminals ranging from Maurice Papon to Klaus Barbie; convinced the president of France, Jacques Chirac, to acknowledge his country's complicity in the deaths of some 80,000 Jews during the Holocaust; and exerted pressure on France to establish a commission to study the confiscation of Jewish property during the Vichy era.

A Holocaust survivor who has been compared to the late Simon Wiesenthal, Klarsfeld and his equally motivated wife, Beate, a German convert to Judaism, are best known for their quest in tracking down "desk murderers"

French and German officials who signed or implemented orders to arrest and deport foreign and native-born Jews in France during the four-year German occupation.

A lawyer and historian by training, Klarsfeld is secure in the knowledge that he succeeded in smoking out and bringing to trial these individuals. "There are no more known desk murderers in France alive today," he said. In undertaking this awesome task, Klarsfeld and his wife endangered their own lives. Twenty-seven years ago, their parked car was blown up by a bomb, and since then, they have received a succession of death threats

These days, Klarsfeld – the president of the Sons and Daughters of the Jewish Deportees of France, an organization he founded in 1970 to perpetuate the memory of the Holocaust devotes much of his time to memorial projects and the writing of books. He and Beate, a vivacious woman he met by chance in a Paris subway station in 1960, are also the principals of the Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, which funds Holocaust exhibits and publishes books

Their exhibits have shattered what, until recently, was a national smugness concerning the Vichy period. In the late 1970s, one of their exhibits, turning on Vichy's Jewish policy, was the cause of considerable soul-searching and debate. More recently, their exhibit on the deportation of 11,400 Jewish children from France, mounted in various railway stations, elicited a tsunami of comment and reflection.

By his reckoning, almost 80,000 French and stateless Jews were killed from 1940 until '44. Seventy-five thousand seven hundred were deported, of whom only 2,564 returned. Klarsfeld's father, Arno, was one of the victims, having been transported to and gassed in Auschwitz in 1943. Three thousand Jews died in French internment camps, while a further 1,000 were murdered by German soldiers and French police. But, as Klarsfeld pointed out, 240,000 Jews – or three-quarters of France's Jewish population – survived, thanks in no small part to the decency of French men and women.

In 1992, he launched a campaign to rebuild the *Judenrampe*, the railway platform where all deported Jews in Auschwitz-Birkenau arrived between June 1942 and May 1944. The work was undertaken by the Foundation for the Memory of the Shoah, a French organization of which he is a director and which is headed by former cabinet minister and Holocaust survivor Simone Veil. On Jan. 27, 2005, the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the *Judenrampe* was officially inaugurated. Klarsfeld, in association with the Polish government, has also worked to rehabilitate crumbling buildings in the camp. As well, he and Beate were instrumental in the building of a commemorative monument in Israel in honour of the Jews who died in France. Their two children, Arno-David and Lida-Myriam, both lawyers, have taken up their cause.

Klarsfeld, who studied history at the Sorbonne, has written 10 books, only two of which have been published in English. The titles range from *French Children of the Holocaust* to *An Auschwitz Album*. He is currently finishing a six-volume book with the names and addresses of all adults deported from France. "I do not write for a mass audience," he explained. "I publish books for researchers, to influence them."

Klarsfeld was born in Bucharest, Romania, while his mother, Raissa, was visiting her parents. She and her husband had been living in Paris since 1928 as university students. In 1943, when Klarsfeld was eight years old, SS troops, commanded by Alois Brunner, rounded up the Jews of Nice, where he and his family resided. Prior to this, the Klarsfelds had lived in relative security under the Italian occupation. As the SS arrested his father – a veteran of the French Foreign Legion who fought in World War II – he and his sister and mother cowered in a closet. Assisted by their fellow countrymen, they subsequently went into hiding.

Nearly two decades later, Klarsfeld visited Auschwitz, where his father perished. "I keenly felt his disappearance, and wanted to pay homage to him." By then, he had met Beate Kunzel, whose father, a German soldier, was sent to France in the summer of 1940. "We met as we waited for a train," he recalled. "She was a nice young woman. Our personalities meshed. We met again and again and, now, we have been together for 45 years."

Serge Klarsfeld

Beate Klarsfeld

When they bumped into each other on that fateful day, Beate knew little about the Holocaust beyond the fact that millions of Jews had been killed. "I gave her books and articles to read so that she could better understand Germany's history." Three years after their marriage in 1963, Beate wrote a newspaper piece accusing the new German chancellor, Kurt-Georg Kiesinger, of having concealed his past as a Nazi propaganda official. Disguised as a reporter, she confronted him with shouts of "Nazi, Nazi" and slapped him on the face. The slap was front-page news around the globe. "We had to shock public opinion," said Klarsfeld, who jointly planned the incident with her.

Turning to unfinished business, the young couple, in 1971, attempted to kidnap Kurt Lischke, the wartime Gestapo chief for Jewish affairs in France. He evaded capture, but in 1979, he was finally imprisoned. Then the Klarsfelds went after Lischka's colleague and Adolf Eichmann's associate, Herbert Hagen. He, too, was tried, charged with committing crimes against humanity. "These were important cases," said Klarsfeld. "Germany finally agreed to try accused Nazi officials for crimes committed in France."

At around the same time, they focused their efforts on reopening the Barbie case. As an SS officer, Barbie, the so-called Butcher of Lyon, was responsible for the deaths of 26,000 people, including Jews. Klarsfeld hatched a plot to kidnap Barbie in Bolivia, where he had fled, but it fizzled. Not until 1983 was Barbie extradited to France. Sentenced in 1987 to life imprisonment, he died of cancer in jail in 1991.

Setting their sights on French war criminals, the Klarsfelds pursued three of them: Papon, a senior Vichy police official who was involved in the deportation of Jews, Paul Touvier, who headed Vichy's police force in Lyon and participated in the deportations, and Rene Bousquet, the secretary-general of the French police. Papon, convicted of war crimes in 1998 and given a 10-year prison term, escaped to Switzerland. Sent back to France by the Swiss, Papon was imprisoned, but in 2002, he was released on grounds of ill health. Touvier was sentenced to life imprisonment in 1994 and died in 1996. Bousquet was assassinated at his home in Paris in 1993.

One German war criminal who eluded their grasp was SS officer Brunner. He administered the Drancy transit camp near Paris from which Jews were dispatched to Auschwitz and organized the deportations of Jews from Austria and Greece. After the war, he vanished, but the Klarsfelds traced him to Syria. Klarsfeld twice travelled to Damascus in an abortive bid to convince the Syrian government to extradite Brunner to France. He believes that Brunner is now dead.

Starting in the 1980s, Klarsfeld opened informal talks with Chirac, then mayor of Paris, on the need for France to issue a formal apology for its role in the treatment of Jews. In 1995, Chirac, the newly elected president, acknowledged France's responsibility. Klarsfeld and others then convinced the government to create the Matteoli Commission, whose importance in restitution cases cannot be underestimated.

Looking back at his long career, Klarsfeld wants to be remembered for having devoted his life to the memory of Jews who died in France during the Shoah, and as Beate's husband. "Our union brought something," he said in a monumental understatement.

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The Jewish Education Report

Students display passion for learning, song and dance

By Suzanne Wintrob

Last month, 600 students from Toronto's Jewish day schools, supplementary schools and universities joined forces to share their passion for singing. This month, 25 Jewish schools from across Canada will take part in a contest that demonstrates their passion for Torah. And in April, 400 students from Jewish schools in Toronto, Hamilton and London, Ont., will whirl and twirl to the sounds of Israeli music to show off their passion for dance.

"Our students need to know that there is a Jewish community beyond their respective schools, and these events offer them a taste of our vibrant, multi-faceted, pluralistic Jewish community," says the Board of Jewish Education's (BJE) Yael Seliger, UJA Federation's vice-president for Jewish Education and Identity. "Educators, too, appreciate these informal experiences in the lives of students because, as they know, it's precisely these kinds of experiential moments that make a huge impact on their young lives."

Students perform at Zimriya.

Interschool spirit was certainly on display in February, when 18 choirs took to the stage at the Toronto Centre for the Arts as part of Zimriya 2006. They performed two shows to capacity crowds, singing as separate choirs and also as one big happy family. Hamilton's Kehila Jewish Community Day School choir, comprised of 26 students from senior kindergarten through Grade 3, made its first Zimriya appearance. Other choirs included two a cappella acts from the University of Toronto and York University, and the Renanim choir made up of public and supplementary school students. All songs were in Hebrew.

"There's nothing like having hundreds of students singing together in Hebrew," says Ora Shulman, Zimriya coordinator and director of the BJE's Teacher Centre. "One grandparent ran up to me after the program and said, 'Oh, thank you for making me feel Jewish again.'"

Allison Bernholtz, a Grade 10 student at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Richmond Hill Campus, was one of the lucky few chosen as a soloist for the mass choir.

"What really made me proud was being in a room that displayed so much Jewish unity," says Allison, 15. "It's inspiring to see so many kids involved in this Jewish event at such a young age."

Last week, students in Grade 5 and above from 25 Jewish schools across Canada competed in the annual *Chidon HaTanach* (Bible Contest). Students spent months studying together with their teachers, and the BJE provided sample questions on the website for students to practice.

"We're training students to study the Bible, the common themes, and how the books are connected," says Silvia Eilath, contest coordinator and the BJE's day school consultant. "Our teachers go well beyond the call of duty and deserve a great deal of praise for their dedication and commitment. We are instilling a love of the Bible in the students."

In addition to the regional contest, the supplementary school students participated in a local Bible contest in which teams of students competed against each other. This year's winning teams were Shaar Shalom and Beth Jacob, Hamilton – first place; Temple Kol Ami – second place; Beit Rayim team 3 – third place.

Qualified students from day and supplementary schools will compete at the National contest on May 14-16 in Toronto, with high school winners heading off to Israel the following year to compete in the Diaspora contest.

Next up is dancing. About 400 boys and girls from 17 day and supplementary schools will unite on April 2 for the annual Rikudiya, co-sponsored by the BJE and the Koffler Centre of the Arts, Bathurst Jewish Community Centre.

Once again, it's a chance for kids to come together, learn from each other, and express their Jewish pride. For details and photos of these and other interschool programs, visit www.bjetoronto.org

Supplementary schools benefit from innovative initiatives

Toronto's supplementary school programs are certainly brimming with action. About 5,500 students, from preschoolers to high schoolers, flock to 42 synagogues, community centres, university campuses and public schools to immerse themselves in Jewish learning. To help enrich the curriculum with dynamic programming, the Board of Jewish Education (BJE) is supporting a number of initiatives aimed specifically at supplementary school programming and the teachers who make it happen.

Call it a match made in Hebrew school. Perry Silverberg has wanted to be a teacher for as long as he can remember. The Toronto resident spent three summers honing his skills as a senior staff member at Nova Scotia's Camp Kadima. He then landed a job as a classroom assistant at Toronto's Temple Sinai supplementary school, working there on Sundays and spending his weekdays studying for a joint degree in Drama in Education and Religious Studies at York University.

This year, Silverberg not only earned himself a full-fledged Grade 5 class but also a mentor who is grooming him for his future teaching career.

Karin Charash spent years teaching in her native Israel before moving to Toronto and taking a position at Temple Sinai. That's where she and Silverberg met, and they've worked together – as mentor and apprentice – ever since.

"Karin has lots of wonderful ideas to keep kids engaged, which is exactly what I want to be doing as a teacher," says Silverberg, 25, who plans to attend teachers' college. "It's quite helpful when it comes down to finding new ways to get kids out of their seat and having fun while they're in the classroom."

(l-r) Beth Komito-Gottlieb, BJE Coordinator, Mentorship for Growth, Perry Silverberg, apprentice and Karin Charash, mentor

Half a dozen matches like this one are on the go at supplementary schools in the GTA, made possible by the BJE's new Mentorship for Growth program funded by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and the Covenant Foundation.

"Hands-on training is often better than professional development," says program coordinator and BJE supplementary school consultant Beth Komito-Gottlieb. "New teachers have lots of opportunities to go to workshops and in-house training, but to have somebody assigned who is more skilled and experienced to give you support and guidance is really ideal."

Charash admits she gets as much satisfaction out of the mentorship as her apprentice does, perhaps because she knows what it's like to struggle. When she moved to Canada three years ago, she says, "nobody approached me and told me what to do. There's a gap between two different cultures and countries so I understand very well what it's like to need some guidance."

At Temple Sinai, director of education, Dr. Ira Schweitzer is constantly on the lookout for other innovative ideas, as well. This year, thanks to a UJA Federation program enhancement grant, Temple Sinai students are immersed in more Hebrew music, creating artwork with a link to Israel, and exploring Jewish texts by "learning the ropes."

The grants, available to all affiliated supplementary school programs, have allowed Temple Sinai to hire a music teacher to take the students beyond the usual Israeli songs. Rather, they're focusing on the prayers themselves – or, as Dr. Schweitzer calls it, "skills for synagogue living" – to get them excited about going to services.

In addition, the grant allowed the school to purchase Torah "yadim" (pointers) made by elderly Jerusalemites, with each one decorated by a bar/bat mitzvah student. They also used the money to hire a ropes course instructor at Camp George near Parry Sound, Ontario, to combine Torah study with movement.

"With extra dollars provided through these grants, we're able to enhance our programming considerably and get our kids excited about learning," says Dr. Schweitzer.

THE JEWISH EDUCATION REPORT IS PUBLISHED BY UJA FEDERATION'S BOARD OF JEWISH EDUCATION.

The Jewish Education Report

Principals' Mission to Israel a real eye-opener

When Jan Lapedus set off to Israel last month, tucked into her suitcase was a photo album filled with pictures of her Grade 7 students. Over the year, her students have formed a meaningful long-distance relationship with students at Maalch Shacharut School in Eilat, comparing notes on Jewish history and lifestyles on both sides of the ocean. Pictures, she felt, would let them finally "meet" face to face.

Lapedus, principal of The Leo Baeck Day School's Atkinson campus, was among 10 principals from seven Toronto day schools who took part in the Board of Jewish Education's (BJE) first-ever Principals' Mission to Israel. The five-day adventure focused on the southern region of Eilat-Eilot, which is twinned with Toronto's Jewish community through the Jewish Agency's Partnership 2000 (P2K) initiative. UJA Federation of Greater Toronto is investing heavily in the partnership, which is concentrating strongly on the quality of education in Eilat-Eilot, from elementary school to university.

The group learned, among other things, how Israeli educators deal with underachievers and how they develop relationships between formal and informal education.

But the highlight was visiting the area's schools to see how Israeli teachers tackle similar issues, and to identify joint programs to incorporate within their own classrooms.

"We met a very committed group of principals representing schools from across the religious spectrum," says Netivot HaTorah Day School principal Dr. Reuven Stern. "It was wonderful to see their dedication to the Eilat population and their recognition of the wonderful contributions made to their community by Toronto Jewry." Before leaving for Israel, Lapedus and the principal of her "twinned" school in Eilat had talked of a joint project for her Grade 6 classes to explore Eilat's Timna Park through biblical research while the Israeli students would explore an agricultural site at nearby Kibbutz Yotvata. They would exchange information via teleconferencing. As well, she returned home with new ideas for ecology, music and arts programs.

Dr. Stern, who calls the trip an "eye-opener", plans to unite students through Torah learning using the Internet and web conferencing.

Rabbi Natan Kandler, the Jewish Agency for Israel's representative at the BJE, says many educators talk about enhancing Jewish education but often have difficulty finding the right approach that will grab a child's attention. That's why the first principals' mission was so valuable, he believes.

Principals' Mission to Eilat.

A touch of Israel comes to Toronto schools

When a group of young Israelis finds itself among Toronto students, watch out. Exciting things are sure to happen

Last month, four Israelis in their 20s brought a touch of Israel to the city's day and supplementary schools. They ran carnivals, dressed up in costumes, acted, sang, danced and just plain had fun. But it wasn't performing they were after. Rather, it was all in the name of getting their audience talking about their Jewish identity and their connection to the land of Israel.

"These *madrichim* (leaders) represent the best of Israel," says Rabbi Natan Kandler, the Jewish Agency's emissary at the Board of Jewish Education (BJE). "They're passionate about Israel, they're ideological and Zionistic, and they're trained educators. Their goal is to work with the widest spectrum of the community - schools, university campuses and youth groups - to give a balanced view of Israel."

Madrichim from Israel run a session with Toronto students.

Tuvia Cannon led the third annual Israeli contingent for this year's program,dubbed the Zionist Seminars. "It's very interesting to see how Canadian schools operate and how a large group of Jews outside of Israel live together and build such a vibrant community," he says.

Among the schools they visited was the Dr. Abraham Shore She'arim Hebrew Day School where they hosted a game of *Israeli Idol*. The *madrichim* donned costumes of prominent historical figures who have made significant contributions to Israeli society and the students participated in various games related to the figures.

"The program provided an opportunity for our students to broaden their knowledge of Israel and Israeli society directly from young Israelis to whom they can relate," says She'arim principal Kathy Manoim "The enthusiasm, warmth and sensitivity displayed towards our students by the leaders contributed greatly to the success of the program."

The Zionist Seminars run the gamut from elementary to high school levels.

During their two week visit, the *madrichim* ran 58 programs, reaching more than 2000 students.

Where Are they Now?

Eric Golombek

If Eric Golombek had listened to the advice of an online career planning service when he was in high school, he could have ended up working as a ferryboat operator or a funeral director. Instead, he's now branch principal of his old alma mater.

"It's kind of weird being back here, especially since some of the same people who were my teachers back then are still here," says Golombek, head of Associated Hebrew School's Posluns campus. "But on the other hand, it's exciting to come back to the place that gave me my start and made me passionate about my Judaism. Here I am coming back to try and do that to the next generation of kids. That's so cool," adds the father of four young boys

After receiving his elementary education at Associated, Golombek spent Grade 9 in London, England, together with his family. He then returned to Toronto and graduated from the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT).

It was there that he took the online career test, but after "playing with the variables" he realized he could combine his love of math with his love of kids by choosing teaching instead. He obtained a math and teaching degree from the University of Waterloo and then a Bachelor of Education from the University of Western Ontario.

Golombek then set off for the United States to be with his fiancée Adina, whom he met in Grade 3 at Associated. While she earned her PhD in chemistry, he honed his craft by teaching math, science and Jewish Studies "to every grade from kindergarten to first-year university," earning his Masters in Education on the side. He spent eight years at Pittsburgh's Solomon Schechter Day School, three of them as head of Jewish Studies. The family then headed to Israel for two years, where Golombek studied at the Melton Senior Educators Program and also earned a Masters in Jewish Education.

Finally, Toronto came calling and Golombek was offered the principal position and got started last September. He has been turning heads ever since with his fresh, energetic and enthusiastic approach to learning

For instance, Golombek organized the school's first Sukkah Sleepover, where students gathered for a night of singing, dancing and fun in the school sukkah. He has spearheaded lunchtime activities, including a school newspaper, and he's often found at student council meetings to gauge the kids' feelings on such topics as which balls are suitable to use at recess

Golombek has also initiated the Breakfast with the Principal program, in which small groups of parents meet with him over lox and bagels to "learn a bit of Talmud" and discuss their dreams for the school.

And his personal role in all this? "This is my chance to be the next link in this Associated tradition that goes back 98 years, both as a student and now as an educator," he says.

For more information about Jewish education at pre-schools, day schools or supplementary schools in Toronto, visit the UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education Web site, www.bjetoronto.org, call 416.633.7770 or e-mail bjr@ujafed.org

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Greater Toronto Area

Canadians raise funds to help restore Jerusalem

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The Jerusalem Foundation of Canada recently launched its campaign to raise funds for a $2-million project to restore Kikkar Zion, Jerusalem's central square.

"In the last five years or so, at the start of the Arab intifadah, the city has suffered a lot through terror attacks all over the city," Dan Meridor, former Israeli finance minister and now international chair of the Jerusalem Foundation, told *The CJN* just hours before he addressed about 60 guests at the launch, a private dinner at the Royal Bank Plaza in downtown Toronto.

"As a child, that is where I used to hang around, go to the shops and restaurants and the cinema," Meridor said, "and Kikkar Zion needs to be renovated. It is not in good condition. It needs renovations to become an attractive place."

Dan Meridor [Sheri Shefa photo]

Meridor said he hopes this initiative led by the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada president David Azrieli will help beautify the city and give an economic boost to the local establishments.

"There are many projects that are involved. The beautification of the city, cleaning it, helping the businesses in central town."

Kikkar Zion, or Zion Square, is located in the heart of Jerusalem, at the intersection of Ben-Yehuda Street and Jaffa Road.

"If we do it right, it might be a source of attraction to tourists, to see one of the beautiful things in Jerusalem. It will serve the tourists, it will serve the people of Jerusalem. The economy will benefit from this, the shops around, the restaurants around."

Meridor said they have approached architects and written proposals, but they still haven't made any final decisions about what will be done to restore the square.

Ian Leventhal, the Toronto-based executive director of the Jerusalem Foundation of Canada – an independent, non-partisan, community foundation that raises money to improve Jerusalem both physically and socially – said the money raised to revive the city square will also be used to offer services to troubled youth in the area.

"Not only is Kikkar Zion about bricks and mortar and restoration of the physical space, but we are also introducing a social component because of a lot of youth at risk that use the square," he said.

"The project is really two-pronged. It's about the physical improvements, but it is also about social services for young people who use the square," Leventhal added.

He compared Kikkar Zion to Toronto's Dundas Square or New York's Times Square, in that they are all tourist attractions, but also an area where troubled youth tend to congregate at night.

Meridor said that making improvements, both physically and socially, in a city as religiously diverse as Jerusalem is no easy feat.

"Jerusalem has a very diverse population. It is one-third Arab. Within the Jewish community, it is partly ultra-Orthodox and the rest are secular or modern Orthodox. To maintain Jerusalem as a western, open city doesn't come by itself. You have to work for it. It is a modern city on an ancient foundation."

Meridor said the foundation has raised more than a billion dollars internationally for Jerusalem since it was established in 1966.

"The foundation doesn't just collect money from people. It offers projects in Jerusalem that are of interest to the people. This is how we operate. The main thrust of the foundation changes based on the needs of Jerusalem," Meridor said.

BOWLING FOR DOLLARS: From left, David Engel, Carol and Stephen Handelman and Alan Wine, along with more than 100 others, participated in the 3rd annual Bowling for Dollars evening in support of the Zareinu Educational Centre of Metropolitan Toronto. Held at Bathurst Bowlerama, the event raised more than $48,000, which will help provide therapies and services to the school's children with special needs. For information on other ways of helping Zareinu, call 416-787-8278.

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Bus service will be provided on **Sunday, April 9**.

A bus identified by a sign **"PARDES SHALOM"** will depart from the front entrance of the Bathurst Jewish Centre, 4588 Bathurst St., at 10 a.m.

The bus will make a stop at the parking lot of Betel Centre, located on Steeles Ave. W., at 10:15 a.m., to pick up passengers before proceeding to the cemetery.

Hours as of April 2

Sunday-Thursday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
No entry after 4:30 p.m.

Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
No entry after 3:30 p.m.

For further information, and to register, please call the cemetery office 416-635-2883, ext. 224 - Esther, or ext. 300 - Pauline.

Slavery lives, and we must end it

By RABBI LEIGH LERNER

RABBINICAL REFLECTIONS

Shmot, the Book of Exodus, wraps itself thoroughly around the story of our ancestors leaving slavery and receiving the Torah. The experience of slavery hangs over every part of Exodus, except for three parshiot: Trumah, and Vayakhel-Pekudei. We read the latter this week.

Why don't these Torah portions mention Egypt? All three concern themselves with the decoration of the wilderness sanctuary. They are filled with every detail of gold and onyx, purple and scarlet, ark cover and screen, and so on. The careful planning, designing and accounting that the sanctuary required took up every spare moment of thought while the work was underway. There was no time to think about Egypt.

In short, when we're busy with the details of life, we have no time to think about our experience as slaves. It's probably during this week or next that it will dawn on most of us that Pesach is coming, and immediately, like the Israelites dealing with the details of Vayakhel-Pekudei, we will begin to fixate on the fine points of preparing for Passover. We think about seder guest lists, food, cleaning up chametz, dishes, and much more. The details are overwhelming, yet during all the preparation, we don't think about Egypt. We don't think about the fact we were slaves and what that awareness should awaken within us.

But right now, slaves are crossing into Israel from Egypt – not former slaves, but real ones, undocumented women who were held captive after leaving their homes in eastern Europe, and who were sold into slavery and trafficked by Bedouin across the border that Israel shares with Egypt. In Israel, they will be used as sex workers, abused until they are cast aside, then perhaps shipped home to Ukraine or elsewhere by the authorities.

Rabbi Levi Lauer founded ATZUM to end this slave trade, and he is gradually getting the Israeli government to clamp down on the border with Egypt so as to take Israel off the long list of nations in which human trafficking can happen.

We must do the same in Canada. Some 2,000 people are trafficked each year from Canada into the United States for the purposes of exploitation. We were slaves in Egypt. We know the heart and the hurt of the slave and the stranger. But even though we're only a few weeks from Passover, we get too busy with the details of daily life and the many nuances of holiday preparation to let our experience in Egypt influence us to think about an issue that affects between 700,000 to 2,000,000 enslaved human beings annually.

As Jews, we cannot close our eyes to slavery. We must become aware of its existence. We must urge our government to end slavery completely. We must learn how to bring it to an end, because it is a bitter, inhumane institution, and we must oppose it with every fibre of our Jewish being.

For this year's seder, I'm advocating that we add an extra portion of bitter herbs. After maror and after korech, the "Hillel sandwich," prepare a small piece of matzah with maror and say: "In remembrance of today's slaves, millions of people trafficked each year, now, in our own time, some in our very own country, we eat this extra portion of maror. We remember women entrapped by criminals who promised them a better life abroad. We think of children sold into slavery who knot carpets or tend crops at this moment. We recall refugee men swept into captive labour. With this extra maror, we who are free share the bitter lot of today's slaves, and we resolve to appeal to governments, leaders and communities to end human trafficking for all time."

Vayakhel-Pekudei doesn't mention Egypt because it's too busy with the small details of worship. But Jews must never forget that we were slaves in the land of Egypt, and we must act to end slavery for all time.

Rabbi Lerner is spiritual leader at Temple Emanu-El-Beth Sholom in Montreal.

Is there such a thing as the wicked child?

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

JEWISH EDUCATION
The Next Generation

Attitudes towards the "rasha," the wicked son of the Haggadah, reveal a great deal about the interpreter's view of education and his or her ability to imagine redemption for those currently lost from the path of Judaism. Is such a child to be shunned, unfit company for the "purer souls" around the table? Or can he or she be invited back into the Jewish conversation? And whose fault is it that this child became so alienated in the first place?

For Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, writing in 19th-century Germany in the context of widespread defections from tradition engendered by the Enlightenment and Emancipation, the response to the wicked son is caustic and unequivocal. Derisively equating this child with the "progressive" son of modernity, Rabbi Hirsch poses and answers a rhetorical question of his own: "What should be said to the members of this fallen generation who, in their apostasy, fancy themselves to be the 'progressives' and deride the loyal elders as 'backward?' To them nothing should be said!"

Rabbi Hirsch understands this child's discourse to be grounded in mockery and views dialogue with such a son as impossible, and even counterproductive. But in an opposite tack, Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach predictably – urges a far different approach. Speculating on why certain children are a little "off," Rabbi Carlebach asserts, "Because there wasn't anybody to believe in them. It's so easy to get off the highway when nobody believes in you… Who do you think the wicked son is? Someone who was never told how holy he is." In subsequent comments in the *Carlebach Haggadah*, Rabbi Carlebach advises us to bring out the child's "inner nature," the deeply embedded Jewish soul that yearns for connection with his heritage.

Between Hirschian caution and Carlebachian optimism lies the fact that no child can be generically assessed – each person's story is unique. This is the ultimate message of the late Rebbe of Piaseczno, Rabbi Kalonymus Kalman Shapira, in his deeply insightful pamphlet on education *A Student's Obligation*. His words, published in 1932 in Poland, ring as true today as the day they were written. Rabbi Shapira focuses on the roots of the problem and emphatically denies that all blame can be laid at the child's doorstep. "Are we really devoid of responsibility, we, the older generation, their educators?" he asks. "And if we truly want to return to God and straighten out what we have made crooked, we must acknowledge our own share of guilt. For even if they are flawed in a way that previous generations of young people were not, this does not justify our neglecting them, our failure to investigate and discover the source of their soul-sickness while they are still young."

The child psychoanalyst D.W. Winnicott was famously quoted as saying that there is "no such thing as a baby." What he meant is that from the moment of birth, a baby is involved in a reciprocal interaction with its mother, and it's this interaction that is constantly helping to form the child's identity.

It's along these lines that Rabbi Shapira's remarks can be understood. There is, as it were, "no such thing as a rasha" – a child's Jewish disenchantment has partially sprung from his or her parental and educational interactions, and can hopefully be rerouted with enough time, patience, intelligence and love.

Jewish Life

An intellectual among Cossacks

***Savage Shorthand: The Life and Death of Isaac Babel* by Jerome Charyn, Random House.**

Books
Bernard Baskin

The story of Isaac Babel's death is now quite clear. On Jan. 26, 1940, his "trial" took place in Soviet secret-police chief Lavrenty Beria's office at Butyrki prison. It lasted only 20 minutes.

The judges withdrew and didn't even bother to deliberate: the verdict was prepared long before this little danse macabre. Babel was declared an agent of the French and Austrian intelligence services, "linked to the wife of the enemy of the people Yezhov," and the court sentenced him to death. Thus ended the life and career of a highly gifted Soviet Jewish short-story writer and dramatist (1894-1941).

Jerome Charyn's superb portrait of Babel penetrates the layers of mythology surrounding this magnificent artist some of it created by Babel's murderers, much more by Babel himself.

Babel was nurtured in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Odessa, a thriving centre of Hebrew and Yiddish literature. The family was well assimilated but insisted he have a Jewish education at home. Barred from university in Odessa, Babel studied economics and commercial studies in Kiev from 1911.

There, in 1913, he published his first short story, *Old Shloime*, which tells of an old man's suicide against the background of expulsion of Jews and pressure to convert. All Babel's work bears the mark of his intense Jewish sensibility and the impressions of Russian anti-Semitism, tinged with his ironic sense of humour.

The masterpiece that brought him to fame was *Red Cavalry*, based on his experiences as a war correspondent on the Soviet-Polish front in 1920. These harrowing stories portray Kirill Lyutov, a Jewish intellectual among Cossack warriors. He is caught between his faith in the Communist future and the bloody destruction of the revolutionary war, between sensual Cossacks and his identity as a Jew with spectacles, unable to sever his nostalgic roots in the dying Jewish past.

These stories first appeared in Odessa in 1923 and their publication in Moscow literary journals in 1923-5 caused a sensation. Semyon Budenny, commander of the First Red Cavalry, issued a wrathful denunciation, but the writer Maxim Gorky later defended Babel from attacks on the ideological position of the author.

Benya Krik (1926) contains a hilarious series of Babel's short stories about Odessa Jewish gangsters before the Revolution and during the first years of Soviet rule. The antics of Benya "The King" reflect an unashamed Jewish pride and joie de vivre, as well as a delight in action that contrasts with the stammering bespectacled intellectual.

In these tales of Cossack marauders and flashy Odessa gangsters, Babel perfectly captured the raw, edgy mood of the first years of the Russian Revolution. Overnight he was a celebrity with throngs of admirers and a train of lovers.

With the rise of Stalin, Babel became a living ghost. Charyn brilliantly evokes the paranoid shadowland of the first wave of Stalin's terror, when agents of the Cheka snuffed out artists like candle flames. Charyn's chilling account of the circumstances of Babel's death – hidden and lied about for decades by Stalin's agents – finally sets the record straight.

Though it traces the arc of Babel's charmed life and mysterious death, *Savage Shorthand* bursts the confines of straight biography to become a meditation on the pleasures, torments, and meanings of Babel's art and many-sided personality.

Charyn, the esteemed author of more than 30 books, has written a clear-sighted and eloquent brief account of a brilliant writer against the background of a turbulent era in modern history.

Israeli elections, Part 2

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

The March 28 vote in Israel will mark the fifth set of elections since the Internet first became an important political tool in that country. Not surprisingly, with each election, the party sites become more sophisticated and multilingual. All sites are available in Hebrew, with many in Arabic, Russian, Amharic and English.

First, a word about all that English. Immigrants from English-speaking countries may be outnumbered by Russian olim, who represent one-sixth of the Israeli population, but many of the parties feel the "Anglos" are worth courting. Aryeh Green headed Natan Sharansky's Yisrael Ba'aliya party's effort to get the English vote in 2003. He explained to the *Jerusalem Post* that that population is worth the effort because they are more politically active than other members of society. "Just like Jews are wooed in American politics, the Anglos are the Jews of the Israeli electorate," Green said. "Anglos are educated voters who make a point of reading the parties' platforms. I'm surprised that the parties aren't wooing the Anglos more aggressively." **[http://tinyurl.com/fsc6b]**

Space doesn't permit me to list all the political parties running for Knesset. However, the Israel Government Portal **[http://tinyurl.com/ket9w]** and MavenSearch **[http://tiny url.com/orf6w]** have gathered links to most of the official party websites. Websites with an English presence including Balad, Herut, Kadima, Labor, Likud, Maki, Meretz-Yachad, Moledet and National Union.

A couple of observations. Although the religious party Shas had a web presence in the 2003 election, it went out of its way to emphasize that it was an unofficial website. It seems that Shas has bowed to the pressures of the web and now has its own official (Hebrew only) website. **[www.shasnet.org.il]** And for the first time, the Aleh Yarok (Green Leaf) Party has an English presence on the web. Its platform combines civil rights, personal freedom, ecology – and the legalization of cannabis. *The Jerusalem Report* pointed out, in 2003, that "Aleh Yarok garnered 34,000 votes, around one per cent of votes cast." **[http://tinyurl.com/r9k79]**

The Knesset also maintains a large English section that provides an interesting historical perspective to the election. In Israel's first election in 1949, there were just over half a million eligible voters. This month, more than five million Israelis are eligible to vote. In 1949, approximately 87 per cent of eligible voters actually decided to vote. That number has been declining steadily with only about 69 per cent bothering to vote in the last elections in 2003. **[http://tinyurl.com/f8zqd]**

Since the creation of the state, the names of Israel's political parties have been an alphabet soup of acronyms in which one letter can spell the difference between two different political philosophies. To help you distinguish Mapai from Mapam and to see how the various parties have merged and morphed over the years, I recommend the brief overviews at the Jewish Virtual Library. **[http://tinyurl.com/f6fmm]**

So many parties. So many promises. David Albert, a doctoral candidate at the department of government at University of Texas-Austin, has created A Guide to the Perplexed – Israeli Elections 2006, a synopsis of the parties and where they fall on the political spectrum. Albert is a member of Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, the Jewish Alliance for Justice and Peace. **[http://tinyurl.com/f7864]**

If after examining the platforms of all the existing parties, you don't find one to your liking, why not start your own? The Israel Government Portal provides the instructions for its citizens. The steps include:

- Finding 100 or more Israeli citizens to register the party;
- Electing a leader;
- Submitting some paperwork;
- Paying a registration fee; and publicizing yourselves.

Congratulations! You are now ready for the rough and tumble of Israel politics. **[http://tinyurl.com/zg8m8]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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Left to right (top to bottom row) Iliana, Michelle, Sophia, Lola, Igor, Elizabeth, Trisha, Marsha, Ella, Nryousha

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Greater Toronto Area

New shul close to the Village

Continued from page 3

The centre has acquired a half-acre of land a few streets south of its current location, near Spadina and Heath Street, where three old houses now stand.

"It's so important to be close to the Village, where people shop," Kaplan said. "Coming to shul should be an easy thing to do."

The centre is halfway to the $10 million needed to build the new shul, and members hope the upcoming dinner will raise awareness and bring in support from the broader community.

Funding for the site came from Albert Latner – the centre is named for his late wife, Temmy – as well as Max and Gianna Glassman and the Tanenbaum family.

Kaplan said the centre hopes to inaugurate its new building on Rosh Hashanah in 2008.

Members say the centre is a prime reason many young Jewish families are moving to the area. "Young couples feel a sense of ownership," Rabbi Karfunkel said.

"I feel so blessed to be in this neighbourhood," he added. "I see the centre as a spiritual generator – plug in as you see fit."

There's even symbiosis with nearby businesses: disposable coffee cups used by the shul are donated by the Starbucks downstairs, perhaps in gratitude for the synagogue's drowsy 6 a.m. Torah learners – about 30 on a typical weekday.

The shul is traditional, but many members wouldn't categorize themselves as Orthodox.

Rabbi Karfunkel said that when he walks to shul on Shabbat, "10 cars pass me saying, 'Good Shabbos, Rabbi.'"

To him, this makes a profound statement. "By saying 'Good Shabbos,' they're saying, 'I'm with you,'" he said.

"There are lots of converts, couples who are intermarried," he said. "This is a Jewish living centre where people of any background and level of [Jewish] education can experience Judaism in many forms."

Though services are lively and spiritual "It's a serious minyan, but with lots of humour; it feels like everybody's having fun," Rifky said – there's a range of other Jewish choices, including a nursery, a Hebrew school, study missions to Israel, a community picnic in the park, even a baseball team – the Forest Hillbillies. "We're as good as the name sounds," Rabbi Karfunkel joked.

Kaufman credits the rabbi and his wife for the congregation's welcoming atmosphere. "People love talking with them… they're very good at making people feel very good."

The centre hopes to keep this heimishe feeling as it increases in size.

"We're going to grow, but stay small," Kaplan said. "The community would come in greater numbers if we give them space to do so."

HESCHEL HOLIDAY FUN

Toronto Heschel School students celebrated Purim with megillah readings and festivities at both campuses. Children came to school in costume and exchanged mishloach manot provided by the school's chevrah committee.

MEGILLAH READING: Rabbis Zalman Aaron Grossbaum, left, and Moshe Spalter of Chabad Lubavitch held a lunchtime megillah reading on Purim at Toronto City Hall. Some 100 people who work in the downtown core gathered in the council chambers to hear them, and to distribute mishloach manot and matanot le'evyonim.

Work of chevrah kadishah recognized in Adar

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Once a year, on the seventh day of Adar, the work of the chevrah kadishah – the people who prepare the body of the deceased for Jewish burial – is recognized with both fasting and celebration.

"It's a very auspicious day," says Jettie Schochet of the Toronto Women's Chevra Kadisha, which primarily serves the Orthodox community here.

Considered both the birthday and yahrzeit of Moses, the seventh of Adar – usually known as "Zayin Adar," zayin, is the seventh letter of the Hebrew alphabet – includes both a fast for chevrah members worldwide and a festive dinner. Because of calendar timing, the seventh of Adar never occurs on Shabbat. In a leap year, it is observed in the second Adar.

Before leaving Egypt, a midrash says, while most Jews were lining their pockets with Egyptian gold and silver, Moses personally ensured that Joseph's remains would be carried into Israel. For this, it is said, when Moses died alone, God took it upon himself to perform his burial.

On the day of Moses' death, chevrah members fast from sunrise to sunset to ask forgiveness for inadvertent violation of the dignity of the deceased.

In addition, after every individual taharah (purification) throughout the year, chevrah kadishah members personally beg forgiveness of the deceased, addressing them by name. "Once the body's in the coffin we ask for *mechilah* [forgiveness]," Schochet says.

When she gets a call that a woman has died, Schochet arranges for four or five members to meet at one of the city's two funeral chapels. "With the men, each shul has its own men's chevrah," Schochet says, but the women's chevrah is centrally organized, with about 40 active volunteers.

Every step in the process of preparing the body is done with dignity wherever possible.

"Those beautiful Jews," Rabbi Jacob Neusner, an American professor of religion, once wrote of an encounter with chevrah kadishah, "showed me more of what it means to be a Jew, of what Torah stands for, than all the books I ever read. They tended the corpse gently and reverently, yet did not pretend it was other than a corpse."

Most members are volunteers

The body is never alone; a shomer (guardian) remains at its side, reading Psalms. As soon as possible, the chevrah kadishah members perform taharah, purification. They bathe the body and dress it in *tachrichim* (wraps), plain hand-sewn white garments: pants, shirt, cap and veil. Washing and dressing are done with the same care one might offer a newborn.

Most chevrah members, Schochet says, volunteer because a parent or grandparent did so, or join following the loss of a parent or spouse. Formerly, only women beyond childbearing joined, but younger women now also participate. "They feel it's a tremendous mitzvah… the last mitzvah one can do for the lady who passed away."

There are many rules for maintaining dignity while washing and dressing: the body is never placed face-down; nothing is passed across it. And during preparations, each part is cleansed separately, keeping the rest, particularly the face, covered as much as possible. The procedure takes about an hour, and it's done with as little talking as possible – this isn't a time for idle chatter.

Although chevrah volunteers don't expect thanks, it is possible to find out who performed a taharah for a loved one. And Schochet says chevrah members can ask to be called to perform a taharah for a friend or family member if the need arises. "I've done that myself with somebody I was very close with."

Yet the work of the chevrah kadishah goes largely unacknowledged; it's often referred to as *chessed shel emet* (true kindness) – that which can never be repaid.

"Some people can't take it," Schochet says of the emotional demands. "I'm extremely proud of them. They are a very, very special group of ladies."

Some have served for 35 years or more, she says.

The link with the month of Adar may still seem obscure. A popular saying goes, "When Adar arrives, joy increases." This would seem to make it an unusual time to acknowledge the chevrah's work.

But there's another connection between Adar and the chevrah kadishah. The word *tachrichim* refers to the white garments place on the body, and are sometimes compared to the priestly royal robes.

However, the word also appears near the end of Megillat Esther, read during Adar on Purim. Following Mordechai's victory over Haman, he goes out in a "tachrich," a royal garment of fine purple linen.

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Greater Toronto Area

High school students urge community to 'eat for Israel'

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

High school students at Ulpanat Orot have gotten on board a project initiated last year by their counterparts at a Baltimore Jewish high school to raise money for Israeli victims of terror.

America Eats for Israel (www.americaeatsforisrael.org) raised $27,800 (US) last year by enlisting 135 kosher restaurants in the United States to donate 10 per cent of their gross revenues for one day.

This year, on Monday, March 27, four Toronto area restaurants are taking part in the fundraiser: Bais Burger, Joe Bou's Cookoos, King Kosher Pizza and Marky's, said Miryam Spiegel, 17, a Grade 12 student at Ulpana who is co-chairing the project with classmates Tali Magder and Rachel Boussiban.

Funds raised will be donated to Almagor - Terror Victims Association, One Family Fund and the Koby Mandell Foundation.

As of last week, the school was looking into a way to facilitate lunch orders for its 130 students, and organizers have been calling other schools to urge them to do the same, said Spiegel, who became involved through an American friend she knew from a B'nai Akivah summer program she had attended.

"We thought it was such an amazing way to help Israel," she said. "We thought it was a good way for the community to come together in such an easy way."

Ulpana students have been active in chesed work, including community service and raising money for Israel, she noted. "It was pretty much a natural thing to get involved in something like this. We would encourage everyone to come out [to participating kosher restaurants] and help us."

Mollie Sharfman, a project co-ordinator and Grade 12 student at the religious Zionist school Yeshivat Rambam of Baltimore, where the project originated, said that last year some people had three or four meals out that day.

The school brought in waffles and omelettes for breakfast, and pizza for lunch. Later, she said, she went out for Chinese food.

"You could feel the energy. Everyone felt connected."

More than 40 local high schools are taking part in the event.

Markham Chabad set to expand

In response to increased enrolment in its preschool and youth programs, Chabad Lubavitch of Markham recently began building a new youth wing.

The nine-year-old, 12,000-square-foot building is located on Green Lane just east of Bayview Avenue in Thornhill. The new construction project is expected to be completed before the summer.

The expansion will create more space for Torah Tots Preschool and Chabad youth programs. Torah Tots has an enrolment of 140 children, as does its summer camp counterpart called Kindercamp.

School director Goldie Plotkin said that the "phone just doesn't stop ringing with new applicants for the coming school year."

There are now a dozen Chabad youth programs on site, including two new groups for post-bar and bat mitzvah children, Plotkin said. Other programs include Shabbatots (a program for preschoolers), a junior congregation and Torah for Teens.

The expansion of approximately 3,000 square feet will include new classrooms, an indoor gym and more office and storage space.

The new space is being built with a grant from York Region as well as private donations. Also, some materials and services have been donated, Plotkin said. Costs above and beyond that will be approximately $150,000, she added.

"I believe that we will outgrow this space in no time at all," said Rabbi Avraham Plotkin, the congregation's spiritual leader and executive director.

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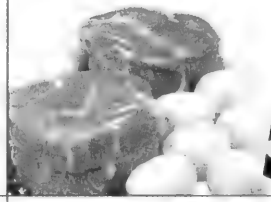

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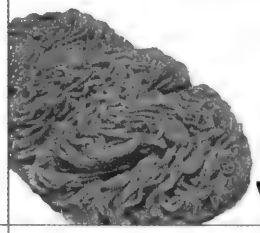

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Hillel reps explore the 'millennial generation' at *CJN* Roundtable

Each winter, *The CJN* holds a Roundtable discussion where our editorial advisory board discusses a specific and timely subject with invited members of the Jewish community who have a stake in the issue.

This year's Roundtable was held Feb. 28. The subject was how to respond to Jewish "millennials," a term that describes young people who started university after 2000 and who feel some Jewish identity but are generally disconnected from and uninvolved with "establishment" organizations.

– The editor

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

They are better educated, and they can talk on the phone, listen to music, search the Internet and watch television all at the same time.

They are the "millennial generation," and they're the future of the Jewish community in North America.

The "millennials," as they're called, took centre stage at this year's *CJN* Roundtable, held recently at the offices of the Toronto law firm Goodman and Carr, as Zac Kaye, executive director of Hillel of Greater Toronto and a member of *The CJN*'s editorial advisory board, and Hillel associate executive director Stephanie Krasman presented the findings of a Hillel International study about Jewish students in the United States.

"Millennials" are defined as people who were born between 1982 and 2002 and are so called because they likely began post-secondary education in the year 2000 or later.

"They are more affluent, better educated and more diverse that any other generation in recent memory. They are hyper-communicators, so they are always on their cellphones, the Internet, the e-mail," Krasman said.

"They are all multi-taskers. They can do a variety of technical things at once, like watch TV, talk on the phone and search the net."

An invitation to take part in the survey was sent by e-mail last April to 500,000 American university students aged 18 to 26. Some 20,000 students responded, of whom 650 identified themselves as Jewish. Only those who identified as Jews were asked to finish the questionnaire, Krasman said.

Participants were classfied into three groups. Based on questions about their Jewish behaviour, identity and affiliation, they were placed, using a points system, into either the high-, middle-, or low-identification groups.

"High" students are those who walk into Hillel offices on their own, are eager to become involved and have been involved in the Jewish community in the past, Krasman said.

The "middles" are less likely to show up at a Hillel event, unless it is a social one, and the "lows" are classified as "on the fringe."

Twenty-eight per cent of respondents were classfied as high, 32 per cent as middle and 40 per cent as low.

The results were American, but Kaye said he believes the Canadian experience is very similar.

He said Hillel is in the process of doing a Canadian study and hopes to have the results by the end of this month.

Hillel has e-mailed surveys to more than 100,000 university-age students across Canada, but he and Krasman predict most respondents will be from Toronto.

During their presentation, Kaye and Krasman detailed seven core traits of most Jewish students in the millennial generation.

As this generation has become more and more preoccupied with performing well in school, it seems Jewish activity has taken a back seat

• They believe they are special in that they have high expectations, and feel they deserve the best education and a great job.

• They are sheltered in that their parents, dubbed "helicopter parents," hover over their lives and are the main players in their decision-making.

• They are confident in that they believe they have unlimited possibilities and opportunities.

• They are team-oriented in that they like group work, are motivated by conformity and socialize in like-minded groups.

• They are conventional in that they embrace their parents' values, and they behave and dress well.

• They feel pressured to get good grades and get into good schools.

• They are high-achieving in that they expect accountability and rewards for hard work. They also have the highest SAT scores of any generation in U.S. history.

But as this generation has become more and more preoccupied with performing well in school, it seems Jewish activity has taken a back seat.

"What we are seeing here in the study, and what we think we will see here in Canada, is that today, people see Judaism as a choice," Kaye said.

"The issue surrounding Hillel is that over the last 10 years, I have seen a movement toward the acceptance of the idea of Jews by choice. [The millennials] choose to 'do Jewish' according to how they feel comfortable," he added.

About half the U.S. respondents identified themselves as ethnically, rather than religiously, Jewish, but students are still proud of being Jewish and are willing to publicly identify as Jews, Krasman said.

Stephanie Krasman and Zac Kaye present the findings of the millennial study.

Millennials show a strong interest in issues related to the Holocaust, but are only mildly interested in Israel advocacy, Krasman said. Indeed, advocacy on behalf of Israel received the lowest rating among the choices for campus activities. *Tikkun olam*, mending the world, the metaphor for social action, was a consistently high motivator for students who responded to the questionnaire.

Hillel international has chosen to focus its efforts on the "middles" and work at making Hillel more of a welcoming, inclusive environment that will encourage Jewish students to become more involved, Krasman said.

"The most significant way that Hillel can increase its appeal and broaden its reach is to make it seem more welcoming. This was the major key finding. Of the top five values students are looking for in Hillel, four are about making Hillel more welcoming," she added.

Hillel International's vision is to inspire every Jewish student to make a commitment to Jewish life, she said.

"In pursuit of this mission, Hillel is committed to creating a pluralistic, welcoming and inclusive environment, fostering a student's growth as a balance in being instinctively Jewish but universally human at the same time, enforcing the importance of tzedek (social justice), tikun olam (repairing the world), Jewish learning and spirituality," Krasman said.

She and Kaye said they hope that this mission, one Hillel calls the "big hairy audacious goal," will double the number of students who have meaningful Jewish experiences while at university – ones that are interactive, pluralistic, distinctively Jewish, and self-worth affirming.

Krasman said that once Hillel of Greater Toronto receives the data from the Canadian survey, a strategic plan that's specific to this country will begin to take shape.

More coverage on next page

Lou Ronson and Donald Carr **[Carolyn Blackman photos]**

THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE ROUNDTABLE

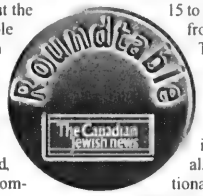
Sussanah Dainow, Owen Duckman, Jessica Feldman, Yoni Goldstein, Aaron Kasman, Stephanie Krasman, Noam Lockshin, Gary Siepser, Elissa Zweig; and *CJN* editorial advisory board members Isaac Apter, Sandy Brown, *CJN* president Donald Carr, Zac Kaye, Keith Landy, Andrea Most, Lou Ronson, Rabbi Michael Stroh and Rabbi Reuven Tradburks.

'Being Jewish is a pretty big thing'

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Hillel International's recent study about the "millennial generation" has challenged the Jewish community to think about students who are minimally involved in Judaism, said Zac Kaye, executive director of Hillel of Greater Toronto.

Speaking at the recent *Canadian Jewish News* roundtable discussion about the "millennials" – defined as people born after 1982 and who began post-secondary education in the year 2000 or later – Kaye said the Jewish community needs to think about the "middles and lows as much as the highs," referring to youth who are moderately involved, uninvolved or very involved in community life.



But the answers as to how to get people more involved are not clear cut, as York University student Noam Lockshin pointed out. Like others around the table, Lockshin suggested the study may reflect perennial differences between generations, which seem sharper when young people are in the questing, university-age stage of life, but become less sharp later in life.

Nevertheless, he cautioned that community groups must be careful not to dilute the Jewish content of their programming "in order to meet people where they are." He said the question becomes, "are we going to dilute our content, or are we going to cut out the people who probably will not be involved down the road anyway?" He urged a careful approach to answering that question.

University of Toronto student Elissa Zweig echoed Lockshin's observations about the study, but said she could not recognize herself in its observations about millennials.

Gary Siepser, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto's senior vice-president of strategic community planning and engagement, agreed the results might be a reflection of broader generational issues. But he said reaching out to unaffiliated youth is part of a broader community problem, not restricted to campuses, being responsive to people who, for whatever reason, haven't found a place in established organizations.

Stephanie Krasman, associate director of Hillel of Greater Toronto, said that in order to attract students defined as "lows" in terms of Jewish self-identification, her organization tries to foster Jewish life on campus in a variety of ways.

"We know that not all students will come to a Shabbat dinner or a learning [session], but there are [other] ways to attract students. They may be interested in social action and volunteerism, arts and culture or outdoor adventure."

Students, though, need to be involved in their own programming, said Rabbi Reuven Tradburks, spiritual leader of Kehillat Shaarei Torah.

"Sometimes we put too much blame on leadership and shirk our own responsibility."

When community organizations try to offer something for everyone, he said, "[programming sometimes gets watered down], and that's not a model to adopt. Some things don't appeal to everyone. We have to appeal to different groups [in order] to cover more."

Surveys have shown that more students attend Jewish studies classes than take part in Hillel activities, said Andrea Most, an assistant professor of English who teaches a Jewish studies class at the University of Toronto.

Out of the 50 students in her class, she said, five have Jewish day school educations and 15 to 20 are not Jewish. "The rest come from the 'lows' and the 'middles.' They do not attend Hillel [programs], but they spend a year learning about Jewish literature.

"It is a complicated challenge to make sure that all students feel included. I don't simplify material, and I try to offer students additional resources. I don't dumb down the Jewishness."

Kaye said that Jewish studies classes attract large numbers of students, both Jewish and non-Jewish. "It is a revolution and Hillel has heralded it.

"Hillel is not the only player on campus. It is not an umbrella organization, it is a model. If [another] model is Jewish studies, then that is wonderful.

"Hillel understands that there are gateway opportunities. With Jewish studies, we are [allowing] non-Jews to learn about our culture and rich heritage. We are open to the idea that there are many gateways to Jewish life. Hillel is a gateway."

Hillel can't reach Jewish students on its own, he added.

"We can't have everything invested in one person. We need a team, and that includes Jewish studies. We don't have to berate ourselves that people don't come to Hillel. Hopefully, they'll find another outreach. The tragedy would be that there were no gateways. We have to invest in partnership and sharing."

When asked by *CJN* advisory board member Lou Ronson if Hillel's experience in Canada parallels the U.S. experience, Kaye responded that as time goes on, there are fewer and fewer differences.

"From a very early age, our young people imbibe the North American university culture, such as television, books, fashion and music. They transcend the [geographic] boundaries," Kaye said.

"The ideas they pick up are obviously informed by the Canadian experience, but there are many more similarities than differences."

Rabbi Tradburks said it's hard to imagine that students from the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto are similar to students from Los Angeles public schools.

Kaye responded that while day school graduates are among the "highs" as far as knowledge of Judaism and participation in Jewish life are concerned, "one of the challenges of our community is how we see [the story] unfold after day school. The day school system does tremendously positive things, but we don't necessarily see that on campus."

In terms of what can be done to achieve more involvement in Jewish affairs among a wider group of students, U of T graduate Susannah Dainow, 25, said Jewish student groups need people with basic communication skills. "They need to listen and be warm, and ensure that student leaders do the same thing. People cannot be controlled, but they get their cues from others."

Hillel must not only *seem* welcoming, she said, in reference to a statement in the Hillel International study, it has to *be* welcoming. "If you [only] seem welcoming, people will see through that. For me, Judaism has incredible duality. If it wasn't possible for me to carve out something individually, I wouldn't care. My group experience has been lackluster."

Aaron Kasman, a former president of the Jewish Students' Union at U of T, said personal interactions should never be compromised.

"There is no excuse to be rude to anyone. If they are rude, [they shouldn't] wonder where the young people are," he said.

"First impressions count so much, whether it is face-to-face, e-mail or on the telephone. First impressions attract people or send them away. If someone comes and does not feel welcome, what are the chances they'll come back?"

This is a cry that has been heard for years, Kaye said, "but we've not learned our lessons. The message is still the same. We erect barriers and we create difficulties in access. That is nothing new."

Susannah Dainow, right, discusses the issues. At left, Jessica Feldman pays attention as do Sandy Brown and Rabbi Michael Stroh across the table.

Former York University student Yoni Goldstein nudged the discussion past the boundaries of campus life and Hillel and pointed to the seeming reluctance of the Orthodox establishment in the Toronto area to accommodate any attempt at programmatic innovation, even when it's sought by Orthodox youth. It's very difficult, he said, for Orthodox youth to feel included and involved when their efforts at innovation within the framework of Orthodoxy are turned away.

A comment was made that if this was the case for Orthodox youth, how much more so might the observation apply for unaffiliated youth trying to find a home in the organized Jewish community?

Sandy Brown, a past president of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, said Jewish leaders have a responsibility to keep the community alive. "While we are in the throes of planning for tomorrow and building institutions, [we have to worry about] who will fill these institutions."

Rabbi Michael Stroh, rabbi emeritus of Temple Har Zion, suggested that it's too easy to blame institutions for problems of Jewish continuity. Judaism and Jewish life, he said, have always needed institutions. "But where will the funding come from [to build them?] The university, as an example, is an institution and it needs funding. Values and knowledge are passed down by institutions, and if they don't exist, Judaism will wither."

In response, it was suggested that there is no question regarding the need for a community to rely on its institutions for growth and continuity, but rather about the way those institutions respond to the many diverse people beckoning at their doors, or to people who are reluctant to approach them.

Dainow said the community needs to find out why some people are "disengaged" from communal life. "We have to look at them as a group. Maybe they had a bad experience, or maybe their family was not involved. There are all kinds of reasons why people are not affiliated, and there is a huge risk of losing a lot of these people. The [people categorized as] 'lows' have to be considered. Being Jewish is a pretty big thing."

Echoing an earlier remark by Lockshin, former Canadian Jewish Congress president Keith Landy suggested there are limits beyond which institutions such as Hillel should not compromise the Jewish content of its programming. At a certain point, he suggested, community organizations must ask themselves whether they lose more than they gain by sacrificing the core values of Jewish identity. He was referring to a pork roast that was held by a Hillel organization on an American campus to try to attract more students to its activities.

As way of increasing community involvement among Jewish students, Landy suggested that spending time in an organized manner in volunteer service could be rewarding. In terms of its wide Jewish diversity, he said Toronto was "a community of communities and there are so many expressions of Judaism in the city."

Summing up, *CJN* editor Mordechai Ben-Dat, who moderated the proceedings, said the following points emerged from the discussion:

- Although the study of the millennial generation was meant to provide a blueprint for Hillel International, its conclusions apply to all areas of Jewish life.
- All Jewish institutions should try to be as welcoming as possible. Warm personal interactions that are based on acceptance and sincerity are key.
- Homogeneity is not our objective, but the term "alternative," referring to different aspects of Jewish expression, carries negative connotations and should be avoided.
- "Being Jewish is a pretty big thing," as Susannah Dainow said. While we mustn't rush to dilute the core values that constitute being Jewish for most people, we must also try to reach out to as many people as possible and try to help establish and enhance the feeling, that indeed, being Jewish is a pretty big thing.

Context negates Jericho raid conspiracy theories

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Canadian media have recently focused significant attention on our military operations in Afghanistan, a focus intensified by Prime Minister Stephen Harper's surprise visit there early last week.

Even as the March 28 Knesset elections neared, relatively little media attention was paid to Israel. All that changed when news of an Israeli military operation at a Jericho, West Bank, prison broke on March 14.

The Canadian and international media were all over the story. After British and American soldiers assigned by international agreement to guard the accused assassin of an Israeli cabinet minister left their post, Israel launched an attack on the prison. The goal was to capture Ahmed Saadat, along with five other wanted members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

BBC World (seen on CBC Newsworld) devoted the first 10 minutes of its March 14 news broadcast to the incident. Beyond reporting about the Israeli assault on the prison, the BBC dealt with other aspects of the story, including attacks on British facilities in Gaza and Ramallah by Palestinians who believed conspiracy-laden rumours – immediately denied by British Foreign Minister Jack Straw – that Britain and the United States had colluded with Israel on the prison raid.

The BBC also reported on the growing radicalization among Palestinians, who were kidnapping foreigners (albeit temporarily) and attacking European assets in the West Bank and Gaza.

On the BBC News website March 14, in an article titled "Jail raid reflects Mideast tensions," Middle East editor Jeremy Bowen described how the Palestinians until very recently saw the Europeans as being largely sympathetic to their cause.

But, Bowen wrote, "that attitude is changing. First there were the cartoons satirizing the Prophet Muhammad in a Danish newspaper, then the European Union joined a fairly frosty reaction to the results of the [PA] elections, and now this.

"Viewed from the perspective of a young Palestinian man, it must look as though the Europeans have joined the whole world that is against them."

Missing from the BBC report, however, was any real context about why the British and U.S. troops had suddenly (it seemed) abandoned their duty at the prison.

In her report for CTV's National News that evening, Janis Mackey Frayer explained that "Israel feared Saadat and five accomplices would be released." She added: "U.S. and British officials deny any collusion with Israel, insisting the monitors left because their security concerns were ignored."

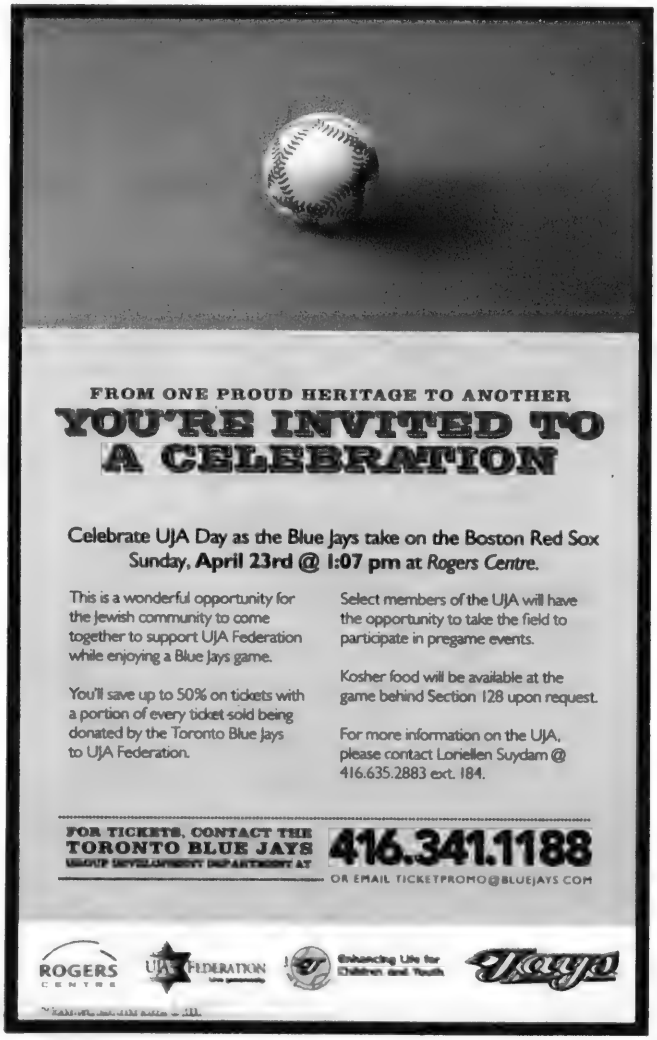
Indeed, as the *Globe and Mail*'s Mark MacKinnon wrote the following day, the British (and Americans) "sent [PA president Mahmoud] Abbas a letter on March 8 warning that the monitors could be withdrawn if security conditions didn't improve."

(The letter, signed jointly by the British and American officials – and available on the Internet – warned: "The pending handover of governmental power to a political party [Hamas] that has repeatedly called for the release of the Jericho detainees also calls into question the political sustainability of the monitoring mission." It concluded: "Regrettably, if the Palestinian Authority does not come into full compliance with the Jericho monitoring arrangements and make substantive improvements to the security of the U.S. and U.K. personnel working at the prison, or come to a new agreement with the Government of Israel, we will have to terminate our involvement with the Jericho monitoring arrangements and withdraw our monitors with immediate effect.")

Referring to remarks by Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mark Regev about the reasons for Israel's operation, MacKinnon noted not only that Hamas "which now controls the Palestinian parliament, had spoken about freeing the [PFLP] men" but also that "Abbas had indicated that he might not block their release." Then MacKinnon added: "Mr. Regev said that Israel had no choice but to take action once the U.S. and British monitors left."

Journalists who took the relevant context into account made British, U.S. and Israeli actions comprehensible, and also, inadvertently, exposed the anti-Palestinian conspiracy theory for what it is.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.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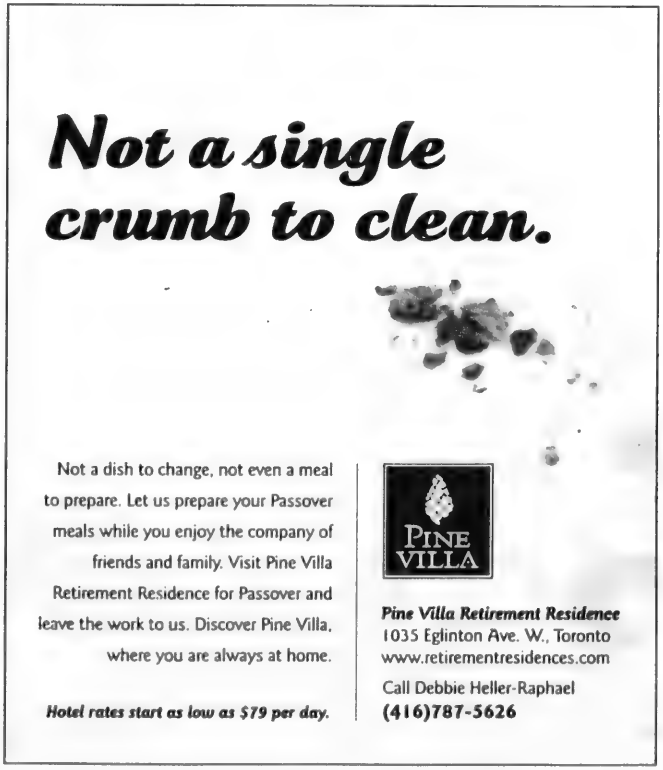
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Purim 5766

PURIM PLAYERS: Junior kindergarten students at United Synagogue Day School's Bayview campus entertained parents and grandparents March 8 with a presentation of the Purim story. Pictured, from left, are Rachel Bloom, Danielle Friedman, Matthew Kroach, Sarah Prosserman, Amanda Hytman, Samara Baum and Sammy Prosserman. Inset, Rory Marks displays his best Haman face.

CARNIVAL VOLUNTEERS: Amanda Jaskolka, left, Lauren Glick, centre, and Danna Zevy volunteered in the jumping castle at the March 12 Purim carnival of the Zichron Yisroel Congregation of Associated Hebrew Schools in Thornhill.

STAFF CLOWNS: It was hard to tell staff from students with all the creative costumes at Netivot HaTorah Day School's annual Purim carnival, organized by grade 7 and 8 students. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

Happy second birthday Emma Starkman, with love from Mom & Dad, Jen & Ted; brothers Max and Ben; bubbies, zaydes and the whole family.

Happy birthday to my Zayde Earl Moskovitz!!!!! I love you. Zackery Kai

Happy 11th birthday to our son Joshua. You light up our lives by your smile and humour. Love eternally, Mom & Dad.

Mazel tov to Dan & Jodi Morgan who were married Jan. 22 at Adath Israel Synagogue.

Mazel tov to Karen & Jonathan Rapoport who were married on Nov. 27 at Beth Tzedec Synagogue.

Reisa & Arie Feldberg, Eleanor Zeidman, Sol Zeidman and Lana Belyavskaya announce the engagement of Jessica Feldberg & Avery Zeidman. Proud grandmother is Lily Bresner.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less.
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Mail to:
The CJN, Family Moments,
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North York, ON. M3B 3K4.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, March 27, is the deadline for the April 6 issue. PLEASE NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES: Wednesday, March 29, is the deadline for the April 13 issue, Monday, April 3, is the deadline for the April 20 issue and Wednesday, April 5, is the deadline for the April 27 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Saturday, March 25

SHABBAT SERVICES

The Kol Yisroel Congregation resumes Saturday morning services in the Borochov Cultural Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 9:30 a.m. Followed by a kiddush. 416-630-9444.

Sunday March 26

LEGION BREAKFAST

The Wingate Branch Royal Canadian Legion all-members breakfast meeting takes place at 9:15 a.m. at 788 Marlee Ave. 416-782-5024.

HUMANISTIC JUDAISM

Oraynu Congregation presents "An Introduction to Humanistic Judaism: What We Believe and How We Celebrate." 10 a.m. at St. Andrew's Junior High School. RSVP to 416-385-3910 or info@oraynu.org.

PESACH PERSPECTIVES

Spend the morning with **Elana Stein**, of Yeshiva University, on "The Haggadah as a Tool for Educating our Children"; **Rabbi Jeffrey Woolf**, of Bar-Ilan University, on "A Picture Tells a Thousand Words: Art and the Haggadah"; and **Elliott Malamet**, of CHAT, on "Smacking Teeth and Pouring Out Anger: Tolerance and Intolerance in the Haggadah." 9:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. $10. 416-633-5770 or torahinmotion.org.

ARTISTIC CREATIONS

Artistic Creations, an art exhibit and sale by Jewish newcomer artists and artisans, at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. For info, call 416-630-6481, ext 28.

TEACHING PARLOUR

Darchei Noam Congregation hosts "Tea and Teaching Parlour Meeting" with **Rabbi Tina Grimberg**. 3-5 p.m. 15 Hove St. Free. 416-638-4783 or www.darcheinoam.on.ca.

MUSIC AT THE KIEVER

Beth Emeth Synagogue presents **Aaron Bensoussan** and the Dafina Orchestra at the Kiever Synagogue, 25 Bellevue Ave. 8 p.m. Advance tickets $15 or $20 at the door. 416-633-3838.

Monday, March 27

4 CUPS & 4 YEAR OLDS

Netivot HaTorah offers "4 Questions, 4 Cups, 4 Year Olds," a Pesach presentation to keep a preschooler involved at the seder with **Rabbi Elliott Diamond**. at 10 a.m. 905-771-1234, ext 223.

YITZHAK ARGAMAN

Beth David Congregation presents a free concert featuring **Yitzhak Argaman** at 7:30 p.m. Admission by ticket only. Call 416-633-5500.

BOOK AND FILM CLUB

Beth Tzedec Library's Contemporary Jewish Book and Film Club presents **Ruby Newman** discussing *A Tale of Love and Darkness* by **Amos Oz**. 1:30 p.m. $14. Dessert served. 416-781-3511 or library@beth-tzedec.org.

SPICE UP YOUR SEDER

University students, young adults, and CIE Taglit-birthright alumni are invited to taste Passover wines, new recipes from foods and spices of Israel, and learn ways to infuse Passover with personal meaning. 7 p.m. The House, 469 Eglinton Ave. W. #3. $5. 416-482-9025 or e-mail thehouse@bellnet.ca.

POLISH-ISRAELI RELATIONS

The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation presents **Konstanty Gebert** on "Unlikely Allies: Polish-Israeli Relations since 1989." 7:30 p.m. at the Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. $5. www.pjhftoronto.ca.

Continued on page 27

YORK U
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at York University

The Leonard Wolinsky Lecture on Jewish Life and Education

Sunday, April 2, 2006

The Ten Commandments in Modern Jewish Culture

2:00 p.m. ▶ Professor ***Marc Brettler***
Brandeis University

"The Biblical Text and Its North American Afterlife"

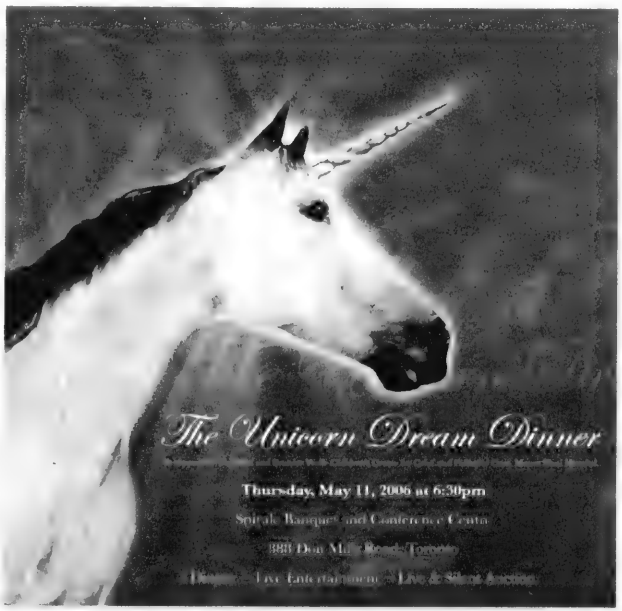
- Intermission & Reception -

3:30 p.m. ▶ Professor ***Jenna Weissman Joselit***
Princeton University

"When Moses Came Down From the Mountain: The Ten Commandments and its Hold on the Modern Imagination"

Executive Learning Centre, Schulich School of Business
Robert R. McEwen Auditorium, Steeles Campus.

The Wolinsky Lectures are sponsored by the Centre for Jewish Studies, the Faculty of Arts, and the Faculty of Education of York University in cooperation with the Toronto Board of Jewish Education.
Inquiries: 416-736-5823



For tickets call: 416-651-4419 or 416-587-0082
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What's New

Continued from page 26

CHUG HATANACH

Prof. Martin Lockshin leads the study group in a discussion of the *Book of Proverbs*, chapters 9 and 10. Beth David Congregation at 8 p.m.

Tuesday, March 28

YIDDISH CLASSES

Beth Emeth Synagogue offers Yiddish classes with **Ellie Moidel**, beginning today for nine weeks. Intermediate Yiddish, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Yiddish Literature in Yiddish, 1-3 p.m. 416-497-4695.

LUNCH AND LEARN

John Thompson speaks on "Canada As a Base For Terrorism: What We Can Do," at the Beth Tikvah Lunch and Learn, 12:30 p.m Reserve at 416-221-3433, ext 352.

OPEN HOUSE

The Morris Winchevsky Sunday School holds an open house for prospective parents featuring the discussion "Embracing Our Jewish Diversity: Raising Children of Mixed Families." 7-9 p.m. at 585 Cranbrooke Ave. 416-789-5502.

WALK ON WATER

Temple Har Zion Sisterhood welcomes **Heather Kassel** to its annual movie and pizza night at 6:30 p.m. The film *Walk on Water*, directed by **Eytan Fox**, will be viewed and discussed. $8, non-members $12. RSVP, 905 889-2252.

CELIAC ASSOCIATION

The Canadian Celiac Association, Toronto chapter, hosts a meeting at the Hospital for Sick Children. Meet **Jodi Bager** and **Jenny Lass**, authors of *Grain-Free Gourmet*, and learn how to eat gluten-free. 7:30 p.m. RSVP to 416-932-1765.

DEPRESSION

Beth Tikvah Sisterhood presents a panel discussing "Fighting the Dragon and Beyond: Facts and Realities about Depression" with **Dr. David Goldbloom**, of the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health and **Karen Liberman**, of Mood Disorders Association of Toronto. 8 p.m. Non-members $5. 416-221-3434.

TUESDAY TALMUD

Rabbi Jordan Cohen leads a Talmud class 8-9 p.m. at Temple Har Zion. $10, non-members $15. 905-889-2252.

Wednesday, March 29

OUR MEMBERS WRITE

Beth Tzedec Library presents "Our Members Write..." with Beth Tzedec authors, **Evelyn Wolfe** on her book *Stray Cats and Other Loves: Growing Up Jewish in Toronto*, and **Ira Basen**, on his book *The Book of Lists: The Original Compendium of Curious Information*. 1:30 p.m. 416-781-3514, ext. 25.

SUSIE FISHBEIN

NCSY presents a women's dinner and cooking demonstration by cookbook author **Susie Fishbein** at the Copper Creek Golf Club. Cocktails 6 p.m., dinner 7:00 p.m. For tickets call 905-761-6279, ext. 32.

SPRING SHOPPING EVENT

Toronto Hadassah-WIZO, Lev Zahav chapter, offers a fashion show, cocktails, food, demos, silent auction, door prizes and shopping at Holt Renfrew on Bloor St. to benefit schools and day care centres in Israel. 6:30-9:30 p.m. Tickets $50, 416-630-8373.

SAR-EL INFO SESSION

Find out about volunteering on an Israeli supply/maintenance base. 7:30 p.m. 788 Marlee Ave. 416-781-6089 Or visit www.serve.com/CVI.

ISRAEL: NEW REALITIES

Canadian Friends of Peace Now and ARZA Canada present retired Brig-Gen. **Shlomo Brom** on "Israel and the Palestinians: The New Realities." 8 p.m. at Temple Sinai. 905-707-5308.

SCOTCH TASTING

Join the Lodzer Centre Congregation for an evening of scotch tasting with a special presentation by the LCBO. Begins with a light buffet at 7 p.m. $100. For tickets, call 416-636-6665.

MUSICAL EVENING

Join Beth Sholom Synagogue for "A Night at the Opera/A Day in Shul," featuring the siblings **Cantor Amy Goldstein** and **Cantor Martin Goldstein**, followed by a dessert reception. 8 p.m. $18. 416-783-6103.

***MUNICH* DISCUSSED**

Rabbi Wayne Allen and **Gerald Zeidenberg** discuss the moral and ethical questions surrounding the movie *Munich*. 8 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3434.

JWI MEETING

Jewish Women International, Markham-Unionville chapter, holds its monthly meeting. Call 905-294-9706.

Other news

PASSOVER FOOD DRIVE

National Council of Jewish Women of Canada hopes to distribute 3,000 boxes of non-perishable, kosher for Passover food to 10,000 people in the GTA. Make donations of food and money at grocery stores, day schools and Council House. Volunteers needed to make deliveries on Sunday, April 9, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call 416-633-5100 or e-mail pfd@ncjwc-ts.org.

MUSICAL SHABBATON

Temple Anshe Sholom, Hamilton, hosts a musician-in-residence weekend March 24-26, featuring Noam **Katz**. Contact 905-528-0121.

HAGGADAH HIGHLIGHTS

Join Mekorot for a morning of coffee and a shiur with **Ilana Sober** and get new ideas to enhance your seder table. Thursday, March 30, 9:45-11:15 a.m. at 1 Twin Circle Crt. $10. 416-877-2050.

ZIONISM & REDEMPTION

Torah in Motion presents **Rabbi Moshe Taragin**, of Yeshivat Har Etzion, on "Understanding Secular Zionism as a Divine Tool of Redemption," Thursday, March 30, 8 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. $10. 416-633-5770.

MARTINI/CASINO NIGHT

The Beth Sholom Young Couples Committee hosts a "Martini and Casino Night" Saturday, April 1, 8:30 p.m. Reserve in advance. $15, non-members $20. 416-783-6103, ext. 229, or e-mail leigh@bethsholom.net.

SINGLES 35+ BRUNCH

Adath Israel Dynamic Singles 35+ presents "Israel in Song: A Journey," with **Linda Segal**, at their Sunday brunch on April 2. $15 prepaid by March 30, $20 at the door. 416-635-5340.

RIKUDIYAH 2006

Join more than 400 dancers, from 17 schools, for Toronto's annual Israeli dance festival for children. Sunday, April 2, 2:30 p.m., at the Tait McKenzie Building at York University.For information, call **Teme Kernerman**, 416-636-1880, ext. 364.

ROOM AT YOUR SEDER?

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS) Toronto, is looking for host families to invite recent immigrants to one of their Pesach seders. Call 416-630-6481, ext 30.

SECOND SEDERS

Association of Jewish Seniors' 35th annual second seder takes place on Thursday, April 13, 7:30 p.m., at the Bernard Betel Centre. $20. Reserve by April 5 at the centre or call **Tammy Parker**, 416-635-2860.

Shaarei Tefillah Congregation and **Rabbi Moshe Stern** host a second seder Thursday, April 13. For information, call 416-787-1631.

Temple Israel of London host a seder on Thursday, April 13. For information, call 519-858-4400.

HAGGADAH FOR THE BLIND

If you have guests at your seder who are seniors or visually impaired, you may obtain a braille or large-print haggadah free of charge from the Jewish Heritage For The Blind at 800-995-1888 or e-mail jhb.ny@verizon.net.

FOR SENIORS

Chai Shalom holds its spring dance, Sunday, March 26, at 7:30 p.m. $7, non-members $ 10. For tickets, contact **Helen Schwartz**, 416-633-4111 or **Marlene White**, 905-731-2515.

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. Call 416-630-9444.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Casino Rama, Wednesday, April 5; Sunday dance, March 26. Call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. March 23, bingo. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Lunch and Learn, Tuesday, March 28, 11:30 a.m., with **Lori Gershon**. Reserve at ext. 2275.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Thursday, March 23, Stories from the Heart 12-1 p.m., Fun with Yiddish 1-2:30 p.m. and Nafty Naftolin's Komedy Kabaret 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Learn to use e-mail, Internet, word processing or digital photography. Wednesday, March 29. Call **Michael**, ext. 128.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Robert Silverman, pianist, performing **Mozart, Chopin, Debussy**. Tuesday, March 28, 8 p.m. $20, seniors & students $15. Tickets, ext. 228 or kofflermusic@bjcc.ca.

Centre Camp Passover Camp, April 10-21. Call ext. 378.

Registration is now on for all fitness and recreation programs. Call ext. 235, visit website or register at the BJCC.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 30

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Engel, George	March 3/06	104 Frontenac Ave
Lebovic, Mark	March 4/06	3000 Bathurst St
Miller, Dr. Marvin	March 5/06	561 Spadina Ave
Cohen, Ada	March 6/06	7420 Bathurst St
Tencer, Anna	March 5/06	Private
Shamilishvili, Miriam	March 6/06	5935 Bathurst St
Silver, Max	March 6/06	429 Walmer Rd
Zelden, Irving	March 6/06	Private
Hornick, Philip	March 7/06	Private
Kozlov, Roman	March 8/06	205 Cummer Ave
Berger, Sadie	March 8/06	3174 Bathurst St
Allen, Beverley	March 8/06	46 Bellbury Cres
Belopolsky, Fira	March 8/06	Private

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Jacob Herscovic	Feb 28/06	2111 Finch Ave. West
David Simons	Mar 3/06	3174 Bathurst St
Sadye Saipe	Mar 5/06	3560 Bathurst St.
Lillian Render	Mar 4/06	7 Townsgate Drive
Rae Moshenberg	Mar 4/06	306 Finch Avenue, East
Kathleen Corson	Mar 6/06	46 McKelvey Drive
Samuel Milgram	Mar 6/06	3560 Bathurst Street
Brian Hennick	Mar 3/06	15 Wideford Place
Rachel Oeffer	Mar 7/06	226 Armour Blvd.
Lewis Cohen	Mar 6/06	257 Cocksfield Avenue
Jack Bass	Mar 4/06	89 Skymark Drive
Batya Eisen	Mar 7/06	115 Antibes Drive
Michael Gardos	Mar 10/06	5 Sulgrave Crescent
Martha Cohen	Mar 8/06	29 Regina Avenue
Rose Sholukir	Mar 8/06	3382 Oak Dr.
Rose Austern-Kowarsky	Mar 9/06	351 Christie Street
Clara Lebovits	Mar 11/06	55 Ameer Avenue
May Stern	Mar 10/06	112 Mona Drive

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On Campus

Countering Israel haters on campus

By JORDIE SAPERIA
Special the The CJN

Guest Voice

The University of Toronto has denied Hillel's request to remove the world "apartheid" from the name of the annual Israel-bashing week sponsored by the Arab Students' Collective, Israeli Apartheid Week.

Instead of complaining – like elementary students tattling to the teacher – to university officials about student groups using Israel and "apartheid" together, Jewish students ought to take their heads out of the sand.

So in the spirit of carrying on the Jewish tradition of proudly defending ourselves, I offer several pragmatic ways to counter Israeli Apartheid Week, which, as history has illustrated, will almost certainly make its way onto other Canadian university campuses.

For starters, why don't we bring out the best, brightest speakers who can eloquently articulate Israel's message? This will not only draw attention away from the destructive activities of groups such as the Arab Students' Collective, but it will also provide students, both Jewish and non-Jewish, with an opportunity to hear an alternative – and more positive – message.

Our community, thankfully, has great resources. Instead of channelling these valuable resources into fattening our already-bloated Jewish student bureaucracies, we could bring high-profile speakers to campus. That would use community funds effectively, too.

While our enemies focus on destruction, why don't we focus on celebrating all of Israel's accomplishments?

Let us hold a rally celebrating Israel, the lone, liberal democratic light in the dark and dictatorial Middle East. Why don't we initiate a massive publicity campaign promoting Israel's singularity as the sole country in the Middle East where people are granted the most basic political freedoms irrespective of race, religion, sexual orientation or gender?

Why don't we plaster this message on every wall in the university and in every campus newspaper, and make it heard on every campus radio station?

And if our enemies are really intent on placing "apartheid" on the campus agenda, let's celebrate the truth and our illustrious Jewish history of being at the vanguard of fighting for civil rights, marching hand in hand with black civil rights leaders against racism, slavery, and, yes, even apartheid.

Universities are – or, at least, are supposed to be – free marketplaces of ideas. Unfortunately, while our enemies are voicing views that are entirely antithetical to ours and are exercising their democratic rights, we sometimes forget to exercise ours.

Instead of rising to the challenge of vigorously defending our viewpoints with confidence, we routinely – and unsuccessfully – implore the authorities to protect us from being intimidated and offended. Complaining to the university is a waste of time. Worse, we are perceived as weak. We are handicapped by our own preoccupation with ensuring that our activities are given a *hashgachah* – a kosher stamp of approval – from university officials and other student groups.

It's time that we acknowledge that Israel's haters are not going to leave our campuses any time soon. Instead of cowering to the campus castigation of Israel and the Jewish people, let's hold our heads high and proudly wave the blue and white.

Finally, it is no secret that the overwhelming majority of Jewish students choose to remain unaffiliated on our university campuses. Jewish pride and Jewish identity will only be strengthened by standing up for our values, being proactive, and unapologetically celebrating the Jewish state and our Jewish heritage with good, old-fashioned Jewish courage and boldness.

Chazak chazak v'nitchazek!

Jordie Saperia is a former president of Hillel at York University.

Choosing a university: advice for parents

By JUDY LIBMAN
Special to The CJN

If you have a Grade 12 student living in your house, you've recently survived the stresses of university applications. Over the next few months, acceptance letters will be a source of pride for both of you. Often, though, this plunges teens into another round of anxious wondering: how does he/she decide which university offer to accept?

Students may not have fully investigated their options before the January application deadline. Left to their own devices, many teens resort to quick, simple ways to decide on a school. "All my friends are going to xxxxxx," "nobody from my school goes to yyyyyy," "the school with the most 'prestige' is the best" or "I want to be in downtown Montreal/Vancouver/wherever" may be given as reasons for choosing, or not choosing, a particular school.

In Canada, our publicly funded post-secondary system means there are few bad choices.

Your teen will soon receive an avalanche of mailings, invitations, e-mail newsletters and CD-ROMs from universities. Visits to campus are key. No student should ever accept an offer without having taken a real – not virtual – tour.

Your own university experiences may not provide up-to-date criteria for picking a school. Majors have changed, methods of instruction are new and competition has ramped up alarmingly in many programs. Academic support services may have been non-existent then; now they are a critical edge for many students.

So though you may be tempted to offer your well-meaning parental opinion, the moment the envelopes arrive, why not instead use this as a "teachable moment" in how to make a thoughtful, well-reasoned adult decision?

I often recommend to teens a simple yet powerful tool that assists them in critically evaluating their options. For each school or program under serious consideration, I suggest they make a three-column page with the headings "pluses," "minuses" and "need more information." Then they systematically list pros and cons of each option, and note what they don't yet know. That extra investigation is a key step, and it should be theirs – not yours – to do.

Next: the student goes back and rates each plus or minus (using an arbitrary scale out of 5 or 10) by asking: "How important is this item to me?" and "How important is this item to my parents?" This method uncovers hidden assumptions, and challenges teens to investigate and think. Your opinions will still weigh in, but in a way that encourages discussion and critical analysis.

Now let your teen lead a good evaluative discussion with you. Ask gently probing questions. Take the role of learner. Give your teen the same respect that you would a professional colleague – even one with whom you frequently disagree.

Teens like this method: it is systematic, and they appreciate having your respect, so they listen better to your guidance.

Following are some factors to consider when selecting a school:

• Does "prestige" matter? Some universities get more research funding and are therefore "prestigious" in a way that may have little impact on teaching. And though there may be a Nobel laureate on the faculty, will an undergrad ever run into him or her in a classroom?

Magazine rankings of schools are generally an attempt to quantify everything that is countable (number of books in the library, number of tenured professors, etc.). They are often not the best predictor of a student's qualitative experience.

• What's the best route to medical/law/professional school? It's not where you go – it's how you do that counts. Students should attend an undergraduate program that motivates them, interests them and actively supports their learning.

• Campus culture? Most Jewish students want to find at least some Jewish community on campus. It needn't be large; some excellent smaller universities have a close-knit and vibrant Jewish campus life. Some universities are highly politicized – will this be exciting, infuriating or irrelevant? What environment will be more motivating – competitive or collaborative? Students with special learning needs must investigate the nature of academic support services.

• Maturity? Parents: be honest. If you think your teen is still immature and somewhat irresponsible, do not let them go to a "party school." The prevalence of substance abuse is no joke. Even students who can handle peer pressure still have to contend with noisy, drunken residence mates.

• Can students take some small classes? Look for a "first year seminar" offering. Students in these courses interact more, learn to ask questions, to present an argument and to think critically.

• Do students need to commit to a major right away? About 50 per cent of all students in university end up changing or modifying their original major. Many majors (and careers!) are not familiar to students coming from high school, so an inflexible program limits the potential for discovery.

• Are professors approachable? Some campuses nurture and encourage this; others don't. The most successful students get to know at least one professor every year. These students feel more connected with the institution and with their program of study; they stand a better chance of snagging those hard-to-come-by summer research jobs; they have a ready source of advice and support. On the practical side, they will also have four letters of reference!

Judy Libman is a consultant who counsels students about university choices. This article was adapted from one in www.lifespeak.ca's online newsletter.

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Pioneering Ethiopian Jew shares his story

By LISA VARANO
Special to The CJN

Baruch Tegegne is clear about his identity.

"I know who I am," he told an audience of about 65 McGill University students last month.

"I am black and a Jew."

To cap off Black History Month celebrations, the Black Students' Network and Hillel teamed up for The Colours of Judaism, an event about the Ethiopian Jewish experience.

It was proposed by Miriam Aronowicz, a McGill student who sits on the university's senate subcommittee on race and ethnic relations.

"It's always interested me – the concept of Jewish identity and the multi-faceted nature of what it means to be Jewish," she said. "The idea came about [on senate] that students should work cross-culturally and across different racial and ethnic groups to put together events, and we thought the Ethiopian Jewish experience was the perfect way to do this."

In 1956, when Tegegne was around 10 years old, he arrived in Israel for the first time. He was among 27 Ethiopian Jewish children brought to Israel by the government to receive an education. Many in Israeli society were surprised to learn that there were Jews in Ethiopia.

Baruch Tegegne

"In the beginning, it was very difficult," said Tegegne. "Somebody will ask me, 'How did you become a Jew?' For me, it's hard to give that answer. I will ask him the same question. I don't know if he knows himself."

Today 80,000 Ethiopian Jews live in Israel and few remain in Ethiopia. Many escaped from difficult conditions in Africa. Tegegne went to neighbouring Sudan in the 1980s to help Jews flee.

"I was the first man there rescuing the first people… then the Israeli forces, they come over to rescue the rest of the people."

Ethiopia's Jews had long been separated from the rest of the world's Jewish community.

"We thought, we are the only Jews left in the whole world," he said.

During his childhood, Ethiopian Jews were strictly observant and lived apart from Christians. The lack of communication with mainstream Judaism meant that the religious practices were kept "like in Moses' time," he said.

Over the long history of the Jews in Ethiopia, Tegegne said, most of the original 500,000 converted to Christianity.

Helen Eyob, Tegegne's niece, a student at Concordia University, said that in the face of discrimination in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital, her parents were forced to keep their religion a secret. Her family moved to Canada when she was a child.

"As you get older, you have to try to negotiate your identity because you are black and you are Jewish, and you're trying to basically jump from one identity to the next, and trying to actually figure out where you fit in," said Eyob. "That's actually very difficult because you want to fit into every category 100 per cent and you realize you don't."

Unlike in Israel, the Ethiopian Jewish community in Montreal is very small. Eyob said perceptions differ accordingly.

"Outside of Israel, people don't see you as Ethiopian. They see you as black," she said. "I'm black, so that's what I certainly see myself as first because it's how I think people perceive me, but I'm very much Jewish."

The Colours of Judaism provided the opportunity for both the black and Jewish communities at McGill to learn from each other, said Donald Erskine, chief of the Black Students' Network.

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On Campus

Yiddish instructor teaches students about their roots

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Shaun Bernstein, a first-year York University student majoring in professional writing, proved that you don't have to be a Jewish studies scholar to enjoy a good Yiddish lesson.

"I have always had a passion for the language and the culture. [Learning to speak Yiddish] was always something I wanted to do," the 18-year-old said. "I like the whole old-school aspect of it."

The course is intended for beginners, and the instructor assumes that not everyone taking it is Jewish or has a Hebrew language background.

Bernstein was one of the students who had to learn the Hebrew alphabet, which, he said, put him at a bit of a disadvantage, but it didn't discourage him.

Now he can converse in Yiddish, albeit slowly, he added.

From left, Shira Zeliger, Gloria Brumer and Shaun Bernstein.

Bernstein said he realizes some may think that Yiddish is not the most practical course to take because there aren't many ways to apply the knowledge in the working world, but he had always wanted to learn the language.

"It's a fantastic course – something I would have done one way or the other. But the opportunity arose and I jumped on it."

Gloria Brumer, the Yiddish instructor to eight students, said she introduces her class to both oral and written Yiddish, and also makes a point of incorporating music into the four-hour-a-week course.

"If we talk about work, food, relationships, lots of music goes with that. Music is an important component of the course," Brumer said.

The course material also includes Yiddish poetry, prose and folklore.

"For some people, this course takes us back to our roots. It explains where we came from and even the way we think."

Brumer said Yiddish also introduces Jewish European history to students, adding that you don't have to be Jewish to be interested in the historical aspect of the course.

This is the second year the beginner Yiddish course has run, and Brumer said she has "every hope and expectation that it'll continue."

As for creating a second-level Yiddish course, Brumer said that was the intent all along. As long as there are students who want to take the course, it will be available to them, she added.

She said one of the challenges is getting students to take the course early in their academic career because the longer one has been in a program, the less flexibility one has to choose elective courses.

Of the eight students in Brumer's class, most are either graduating or close to graduating, and even if they were interested in an intermediate course, they might not have the time to take it.

Bernstein said his impression is that none of the eight students in the class plans on taking a second-level Yiddish course.

Shira Zeliger, 22, a fourth-year Jewish teacher education student, said she enrolled in the Yiddish course because she plans to continue in Jewish studies at a graduate level and wants to focus on Jewish history.

She feels it would be a major advantage for someone studying Jewish history at a graduate level to be familiar with Yiddish.

Zeliger, who went to Bialik Day School where she learned Yiddish from grades 3 to 8, said studying Yiddish was also important to her Jewish identity, as her grandparents speak the language and it is her father's first language.

"It is part of our Jewish culture. People aren't seeing the importance of studying it."

While some may think that learning Yiddish isn't useful, Bernstein said the best part about the course is being able to have a conversation in Yiddish with his grandfather.

"My grandparents are incredibly proud of me. My parents are proud of me too, but they think I'm wasting my time," Bernstein said. "But, I've gotten a kick out of it. I'll defend it to the grave."

"I would encourage students to consider taking Yiddish," Zeliger said. "People will find that although it may be a dying language, it is an important one."

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On Campus

Hillel urging students to vote in CSU elections

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Hillel Montreal president Jason Portnoy is strongly urging students at Concordia University not to be lulled into complacency by the calm that has prevailed on campus the past couple of years but to vote in the Concordia Student Union (CSU) elections March 28 to 30.

Hillel is all but officially endorsing the slate called Experience, which it sees as the natural successor to the Evolution group that has been in office for three years. Portnoy credits the moderate Evolution with being largely responsible for ending the tension at Concordia, which reached its height in 2002-2003 after the anti-Netanyahu protest.

The CSU executive and much of the council was then dominated by highly politicized left-wing factions, which critics considered anarchist and anti-Israel.

"Evolution has done an incredible job of turning around the campus from the chaos of three years ago and they have shown they are for all the students. I'd like to see that continue," said Portnoy, a fourth-year Concordia student.

Portnoy is concerned that students have become apathetic because things have been going so well that they won't bother to vote. Turnout is traditionally very low for the CSU elections – around 10 per cent. It was up somewhat for a couple of years after the Netanyahu controversy, and slid again last year.

The rise of the radicals within the CSU has been attributed to its ability to get out a core of students who are more politically minded. The CSU represents the 26,000 undergraduates at the university.

Portnoy said Hillel has been able to work well with the CSU, whose current president is Mohamed Shuriye, organizing activities designed to promote outreach and co-operation with other campus clubs, including Muslim and Arab groups.

"Hillel has become proactive instead of reactive in the past couple of years. We have made new allies on campus," Portnoy said.

Hillel's funding from the CSU, which was suspended a couple of years ago because of its distribution of information on an Israel Defence Forces program, has long been restored.

The eight-member Experience slate is headed by presidential candidate Kahleed Juma, president of the Economics Students Association.

"Four years ago, Concordia was labelled by the international media as an institution divided by conflict," Juma writes on the group's website. "Since then, Concordia has grown into a university that thrives on the diversity of its student body, embracing dialogue and understanding. Next year, Experience will take these ideas and create a new era of student governance by building a strong sense of pride in the hearts of Concordians… We want this university to be a place that you are proud to be part of and are saddened to leave.

"We are dedicated to placing your needs and aspirations above and beyond the fleeting realm of student politics."

A similar concern to Portnoy's is held by current CSU vice-president for communication, Steven Rosenshein, who is in his fourth year. He is worried that another slate called Conscious, the only other serious contender, may return the CSU to a more politicized agenda, and consequently a more fractious campus atmosphere.

The radicals may be quiet, but he thinks they are waiting in the wings to get back in power. "After all we've accomplished in the past couple of years, it would be a real shame if the CSU fell into their hands again.

"There's a stark difference from the poisoned atmosphere of three years ago. It's a kinder, gentler Concordia today. It's also frustrating that after we've made all these positive initiatives, the media is not so interested, and the public continues to think things are the same as they were."

He concedes the current state is due, at least in part, to the calmer relations between Israel and the Palestinians compared to when the intifadah was raging. Some of the leading radical students have also moved on.

Conscious is running a nine-member slate headed by Svetla Turnin. The group calls itself "Professional Students at Work" and highlights the fact that its members come from different cultures and university departments, and include local, out-of-town and international students.

"We love Concordia and we want to see a union that is not only responsive to students but is also pro-active in defending their interests to the university and beyond," its website states. The candidates have been executives on clubs such as Amnesty International Concordia, the Muslim Students Association and Students for a Free Tibet.

It's presenting a lengthy platform that includes advocacy for freezing tuition, promoting anti-poverty initiatives and making post-secondary education a "fundamental right."

Rosenshein said that, although its published platform may appear innocuous, he feels the group's actual intentions may be different.

ISRAEL APPRECIATION DAY: Hillel at York Israel affairs co-ordinator Keren Katz and Hillel at York president Adam Hummel stand below a 15-foot Israeli flag in Vari Hall at York University earlier this month during "Israel Appreciation Day."

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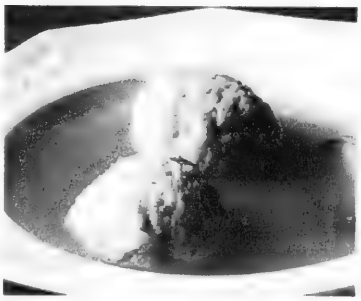

Passover Food Ideas

Passover food from around the world

Passover is the Jewish celebration that calls for the most preparation. Even as we clean our house from top to bottom and ensure that we have enough dishes and utensils to last the eight days, we think about seder menus, compare chol hamoed meals and draw up guest lists.

For some, the seder meal is an opportunity to have new friends join them or to invite those who may otherwise be alone on the holiday.

It may also be a time to try new recipes or add a different twist to an old favourite.

For many, however, Passover is a time of tradition. Their cousins, aunts and uncles gather year after year to partake in the same meal their family has prepared for generations.

This Passover season, we have spoken to a number of people who have made Canada their new home, yet steadfastly hold on to their own Passover traditions. They have shared with us some of their timeless recipes.

What does not change, however, is the retelling of the Passover story. No matter what language and no matter whether the Haggadah comes from a local grocery store or was handed down from a great-grandmother in a foreign land, we all tell the story of the Jewish people's liberation from Egypt. It is this story that unites us.

This year, we include a number of recipes that we hope will be a welcome addition to your seder table.

The ingredients in all our recipes are acceptable for Passover use, according to either Ashkenazi or Sephardi custom, and can be purchased kosher for Passover in most large Jewish communities.

From all of us at *The CJN*, enjoy your Passover meals, and we wish you a chag kasher v'samayach.

C.B.

Passover cooking, Turkish style

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

When Jane Elvin moved here from Turkey 29 years ago, she brought with her a prized possession, the Passover pan she uses to make *burmeolos*, a type of matzah ball.

"These *burmeolos*, made in the pan that has hollow grooves, are the first Pesachdik food we eat each year. We open the seder with them."

Born and raised in Istanbul, Elvin says her Turkish heritage is always with her. "My family spoke Ladino and I always have a Ladino Haggadah at the seder table. I want the spirit of my parents with me throughout the meal."

Growing up, she says, she always looked forward to Passover. "We would have about 25 or 30 guests for the seder, and throughout the week, we would visit each other and bring flowers. We tried to make the whole week festive. We never wanted it to end."

The seders were always at her house, Elvin says, because her father was the eldest brother. "My mother would begin koshering the kitchen two or three days before, and she would set the table with a special embroidered table cloth."

Their Passover food never varied. "For every holiday, we ate specific foods. We always knew what to expect, and we always looked forward to it. I know that if I would go to Turkey today, they would have the same food on the table."

Their charoset, she says, is always made of black currants, which she has soaked, dried and crushed with a mortar and pestel. "It looks like mud, but it's delicious."

A favourite dish is her meatballs, some made with potatoes and some made with spinach, and "we always end the seder with a compote made of prunes, apricots and golden raisins, and a piece of marzipan.

"We cooked everything with lots and lots of vegetables – zucchinis, eggplants, spinach, leeks or tomatoes. All these foods bring me back to my childhood.

"We had a vibrant community, which I came to appreciate more when I moved here."

ELVIN'S MOTHER'S BURMEOLOS

6 eggs
1½ cups sugar
1 cup matzah meal
1 cup walnuts
¼ cup orange juice
zest of orange

Mix all ingredients, and bake in pyrex dish at 350 for 30 minutes.

BIMUELOS DE MATSA PATATA I KEZO
Balls made of matzah, potatoes and cheese

4 pieces of matzah
water to cover matzah
2 potatoes, boiled and mashed
1 cup of grated cheese
4 eggs
salt

Leave the pieces of matzah in water until they get soft. Squeeze out the water. Add the boiled mashed potatoes, cheese, beaten eggs and salt and mix them all together. Form into balls and fry on both sides.

MINA DE KARNE MULINADA

5 eggs
250 gr (a little over ½ lb.) of minced meat
1 large onion, finely chopped
1 bunch of parsley
1 large tomato, finely cut
1 boiled potato, mashed
6 pieces of matzah

Put some salt and water in a cup, wet the pieces of matzah in it and then strain them. Meanwhile, fry the finely chopped onion until it gets dark, then add the meat and keep on frying together till meat is cooked. Finally, add the finely cut tomato, parsley, salt and pepper and cook them for about 5 minutes.

In a bowl, beat 2 eggs and mix them with 3 slices of wet matzah squeezed well. Heat some oil in an oven-proof pan and place the egg-matzah mixture on the bottom. Put the meat mixture on top and then repeat with the other 3 slices of matzah, mixing them with two more eggs. Place this second egg-matzah mixture over the meat. Mix the final egg with the mashed potatoes and add a little water. Place this mixture on top of everything else and bake it in the oven at 350 until the potatoes are browned.

MASAPAN
Almond paste

1 kg ground almonds
750 gr of sugar
juice of one lemon

Add water to sugar until it is totally covered, and bring to a boil. Before the sugar becomes a jelly, add the lemon juice and the almonds and keep stirring. When it starts to boil, remove from heat and let it cool. Cut into a variety of shapes.

Memories and customs

The CJN *shares with our readers the memories and customs of individuals we spoke to, who have come to Canada from other parts of the Jewish world.*

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Craig Claiborne's Sweet Potato Salad as seen in The New York Times Passover Cookbook, edited by Linda Amster.

Kosher by Design author coming to Toronto

By JUDY BART KANCIGOR
Special to The CJN

With the anticipation generally reserved for the appearance of a rock star, many in the Jewish community of Toronto are abuzz with excitement: Susie is coming!

"Susie" is Susie Fishbein, the effervescent author of the *Kosher by Design* cookbooks, who has turned kosher cooking on its proverbial ear. And no wonder she bubbles over. According to Gedaliah Zlotowitz, Mesorah Publications' vice-president of sales and marketing, over 160,000 copies have sold, with no end in sight.

Fishbein will make an exclusive appearance on March 29 at the Copper Creek Golf Club at a dinner whose theme is "The Essential Woman: Feeding the Body, Nourishing the Soul." Proceeds go to the National Conference of Synagogue Youth (NCSY), and 500 lucky guests will watch and kvell as their idol demonstrates the dishes on the menu.

I caught up with Fishbein recently at one of three Los Angeles appearances she made supporting local yeshivot.

Susie Fishbein

Risa Moskowitz, who chaired the event for Emek Hebrew Academy Teichman Family Torah Center, said, "When I booked her, everyone said, 'Oh my gosh, I live by her cookbooks!' There wasn't one person who said 'Who?' People who aren't kosher don't realize what's possible for us now, the variety of foods and the way to prepare them. They think kosher means dried out, salted meat. Her books have had a tremendous impact."

Beloria Fink, whose sister drove from San Diego to join her that evening, observed, "Susie can take a simple recipe and it looks extravagant and elegant, like you've really knocked yourself out. She's taken the bland, traditional Shabbat meal and turned it into elegant cuisine. She shows you how to set a beautiful table for each holiday so you can create a legacy for your own children."

The luscious table settings and presentation ideas that party planner Renee Erreich and Fishbein created for the *Kosher by Design* books – and photographer John Uher shot – fairly leap off the pages. But everything is doable.

"The food looks intimidating, but the recipes are not," Fishbein said. "These are recipes the family will want to eat over and over." And they do. So popular are these dishes that guests recognize them on each other's Shabbat tables!

Fishbein's popular Spinach Salad awaited guests as they entered the Emek dinner. "I can recognize it 100 per cent," said one guest, Amy Leibowitz. "I went to two houses recently for Shabbat, and there was Susie's Confetti Cake."

"Everybody makes the Spinach Salad and the Tri-Color Gefilte Fish," added Vardit Aharonoff, who gave a *Kosher by Design* baby shower recently. "I set up the table with candy in martini glasses. I never would have thought of that by myself."

Loren Puterman agreed. "You look good when you prepare her food. Who has time to spend hours in the kitchen on a Friday?"

Routinely dubbed the Jewish Martha Stewart, Fishbein squirms at the comparison. "I'm flattered, but it's not really accurate," she said. "Martha Stewart is all about a lifestyle. If you want beautiful flowers, you plant them and this is how you do it. We're busy. We have kids. We have jobs. We're in and out of the kitchen trying to make fabulous meals. I take shortcuts she would never take. I'm about cutting to the chase to accomplish our goals."

Linda Rubenstein, who hosted the event in her magnificent Valley Village home, was amazed that her 15-year-old son Jeremy had gone through Fishbein's latest book, *Kosher by Design Kids in the Kitchen* and flagged all the dishes he wanted to try.

"Here I was trying to get him interested in cooking," she said, "and he decided on his own to try the onion soup for breaking the fast."

Just what is this revolution in kosher cooking that Fishbein has spawned? As Rachel Ziv explained, "These are not like your grandmother's recipes. The ingredients are accessible and the recipes are presented in a light and modern way."

How does Fishbein herself explain the hoopla surrounding her books? Unpretentious despite her success, she observed, "I was at the right place at the right time. The kosher restaurants have been going up in quality, showing people what food can look and taste like. Good kosher ingredients were becoming more available, and the orthodox community was poised for something new.

"I think I hit a nerve in the community. People clearly have had a creative passion in them that was waiting to be unleashed. I've unleashed their inner cook."

The Toronto event is chaired by Aviva Eisenberger and Harriet Feintuch, and all proceeds are earmarked for NCSY's Torah High program.

For information, call NCSY at 905-761-6279.

Judy Bart Kancigor is the author of Cooking Jewish: 652 Great Recipes from the Rabinowitz Family *(Workman, July 2006) and can be found on the web at www.cookingjewish.com.*

Carol Wolk's Prize-Winning Matzoh Balls as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

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Share some out-of-the-ordinary dishes with guests

By DAPHNA RABINOVITCH
Special to The CJN

Enjoying a career in the food industry means a lot of different things. It definitely means you have a challenging and exciting career. However, it also means no one wants to invite you over for dinner, ever. And it means family and friends, people in the grocery store and in the gym (or wherever you happen to hang out), expect you to prepare menus for the holidays that are creative and different from the recipes that have been passed down from generation to generation.

I, for one, happen to love those time-honoured family favourites. I have to admit though that I do relish every year throwing in a few novel dishes, just for the sake of interest. And, of course, for the sake of my reputation!

This year, in addition to the not-to-be-replaced brisket, I'm going to make a tantalizing, spice-rubbed turkey breast as well as glazed cipolline onions, a personal favourite. An asparagus soup laced with saffron makes a lively, seasonal change from chicken soup, and a crunchy nut torte defines a chocolate tradition for this year's Passover.

ASPARAGUS SOUP WITH SAFFRON

¼ tsp. saffron threads, crumbled
5 cups chicken broth
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
3½ lb. asparagus spears, trimmed and cut into two-in. lengths
1 large baking potato, peeled and cut into cubes
1 tsp. each salt and pepper

In a small saucepan, combine saffron with ½ cup of chicken broth; bring to a boil. Cover and simmer to keep warm. Separate 1½ cups of tips from rest of asparagus; set aside.

In a large saucepan, heat oil over medium heat. Add asparagus, salt and pepper and cook, stirring, for 3 minutes or until bright green. Stir in potato and saffron liquid. Stir to coat vegetables well, about 1 minute. Pour in 4 cups of remaining chicken broth. Bring to boil; reduce heat and simmer for about 20 minutes or until vegetables are very tender.

Meanwhile, bring saucepan of salted water to boil. Add reserved asparagus tips. Cook for two minutes. Drain immediately and refresh under cold running water. Dry on paper towels; set aside.

In batches, puree soup in blender or food processor. Return soup to saucepan. Stir in remaining broth to thin if necessary. Soup can be cooled, covered and refrigerated for up to 24 hours. Reheat soup gently. Spoon into warmed bowls. Garnish with reserved blanched asparagus tips. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

SPICE RUBBED TURKEY BREAST WITH MUSTARD CHIVE SAUCE

1 tbsp. coriander seeds
1 tbsp. yellow mustard seeds
2 tsp. fennel seeds
2 tbsp. sweet Spanish paprika, preferably smoked
2 tsp. kosher salt
1½ tsp.pepper
1 boneless rolled turkey breast (about 3½ lbs.)
1 tbsp.vegetable oil

Sauce
¼ cup sherry vinegar
2 tbsp. Dijon mustard
2 tbsp. orange juice
1 tsp. granulated sugar
½ cup olive oil
¼ cup chopped fresh chives
¼ cup chopped fresh basil

Continued on page 37

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BBQ Chicken & Brisket*
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Carrot Tzimmes
Broccoli & Mushrooms or
Green Beans Almandine
Cole Slaw, Dill Pickles
Matzo
Seder Plate Ingredients
Fruit Salad Bowl
Sponge Cake or Marble Cake
Macaroons

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Paul Prudhomme's Veal Roast with Mango Sauce as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

Passover Food Ideas

Spice up your seder meal

Continued from page 36

Using mortar and pestle or in spice grinder, combine coriander, mustard and fennel seeds and grind finely. Stir in paprika, pepper and salt. Transfer mixture to shallow bowl. Coat turkey on all sides with spice rub. Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes or cover and chill for up to 24 hours.

In very large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat; brown turkey all over, about 3 to 4 minutes per side.

Place turkey on lightly greased rack in roasting pan; roast in 325-degree oven for about 1½ to 2 hours or until juices run clear and meat thermometer registers 170 degrees. Transfer to carving board, reserving any juices in bottom of roasting pan and tent with foil; let stand for 20 minutes. Slice turkey thinly; arrange on serving platter. Serve with chive sauce.

While turkey is roasting make sauce. In small bowl, whisk together vinegar, mustard, orange juice and sugar until blended. Gradually whisk in oil until thickened. Stir in chives and basil. Stir in any reserved pan juices.

Sauce can be covered and refrigerated for up to 24 hours. Bring completely to room temperature and whisk to reblend before serving. Sauce can also be gently warmed in a microwave on 50 per cent power for 1½ minutes. Makes 8 servings.

GLAZED CIPOLLINE ONIONS

2 tbsp. olive oil
1½ lb. small cipolline onions (or shallots), halved and peeled
¼ tsp. salt
1 cup chicken broth
3 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
2 tbsp. Dijon mustard
2 tbsp. honey
1 tbsp. lemon juice

In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions and salt; cook, stirring often, until onions are nicely browned on all sides, about 5 minutes. Pour in chicken broth. Bring to boil; reduce heat and simmer, partially covered, for 5 minutes or until liquid is almost completely absorbed and onions are tender crisp.

Meanwhile whisk together balsamic vinegar, lemon juice, mustard and honey; pour into skillet, stirring to coat onions. Cook, stirring often, for 5 to 10 minutes or until onions are fully coated and sauce has reduced to a glazelike consistency. Serve immediately or keep warm for up to 15 minutes. Makes 8 servings.

DOUBLE NUT CHOCOLATE TORTE

8 oz. bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
½ cup margarine or butter
2 tbsp. extra-strength coffee or espresso
¾ cup granulated sugar
½ cup potato starch
¼ cup finely chopped blanched almonds or macadamia nuts
¼ cup finely chopped pecans
4 eggs, separated

Chocolate glaze:
6 oz. bittersweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
4 oz. non-dairy liquid cream substitute
sliced almonds, toasted

In top of double boiler set over hot, not boiling water, melt chocolate, butter and coffee until melted and smooth. Whisk in half of sugar while still hot, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Stir in egg yolks, one at a time, stirring well after each addition.

Stir in almonds, pecans and potato starch.

In a large bowl, with electric beater, beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add remaining sugar, beating until stiff, glossy peaks form. Fold one-third into chocolate mixture to lighten.

In two additions, fold in remaining egg whites. Scrape mixture into lightly greased 9-in. springform pan. Bake in centre of preheated 375-degree oven for about 20 minutes or until sides feel firm but centre is still slightly soft. Cool in pan on rack. Invert pan onto serving plate.

Glaze: In saucepan, bring non-dairy whipped topping to boil; pour over chocolate, whisking until melted and smooth. Let cool slightly. Pour over chocolate cake, letting excess rip down sides. Garnish edge of cake with sliced almonds. Makes 10-12 servings.

Asparagus Matzoh Brei as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

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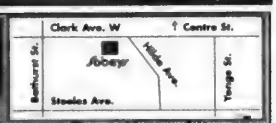

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Family carries on some Egyptian traditions

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Mimi Paoli, born and raised in Mansoura, Egypt, adopted one Ashkenazi tradition when she came to Canada in the early 1960s. She serves chicken soup with kneidlach at her seder.

"Other than that, I serve the same food as my mother served when I was growing up. I've carried on all her traditions."

Passover preparations in Egypt began weeks before the actual holiday, says Paoli, with the making of the wine.

"We would soak the raisins and grind them, and then my brother would squeeze them. That's the wine we drank all year. It was our seder wine, and then we used it for Shabbat and holidays."

Egyptians eat rice during Passover, says Paoli, and it formed a big part of their seder menu. "We do a lot of stuffing, such as stuffed zucchini, or eggplant or artichokes stuffed with meat. My sisters still make veal pockets stuffed with rice. If we don't serve stuffed something at the seder, someone always asks why."

Although she never cooked at home – she didn't know how to cook when she got married – she watched her mother preparing all of these dishes, she says, and now prepares them for her own seders.

"She would also make a beef stew with turmeric and spices, or meatballs with cumin. Her fish was cooked in tomato sauce with garlic, cumin and parsley. She knew nothing about gefilte fish, brisket or kugels.

"My mother also made a lot of labour-intensive items. She would pickle lemons and beets, and would make all kinds of jams such as coconut, strawberry or apricot. The jams are served on a teaspoon when people come to visit – they're not for breakfast. It was a lot of work, but she made enough to last a long time."

Although their seder service is similar to an Ashkenazi service, she says there is one Egyptian tradition that she still carries on. "Each person in turn puts the matzah cover over their shoulder and we ask them, 'Where are you from?'

"They reply, 'From Egypt.'

"We ask, 'Where are you going?' and they say, 'Jerusalem.'"

Paoli offers this recipe.

Mimi Paoli

STUFFED ZUCCHINI

6 zucchinis cut into halves
½ lb. ground beef
1 cup rice
salt, pepper to taste

Scoop out interior of zucchini. Sprinkle salt and pepper in zucchini shells. Mix meat and rice together and stuff zucchini loosely. Place on flat oven-proof pan and sit zucchinis in a little water, to which salt and pepper have been added. Cook about one hour at 350.

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Memories and customs

The CJN shares with our readers the memories and customs of individuals we spoke to, who have come to Canada from other parts of the Jewish world.

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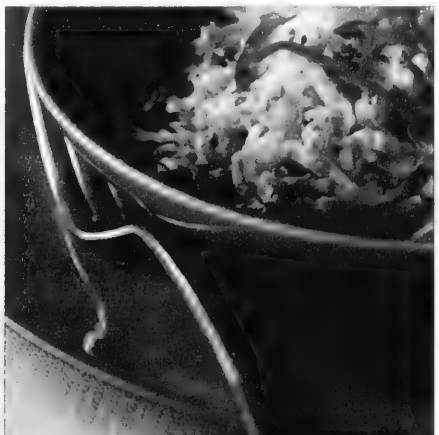

Spa Slaw with Lemon and Orange Dressing as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

Keep Passover cooking stress-free

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Preparing for Passover can be overwhelming for some – cleaning, shopping, menu planning, guests to invite, where to sleep guests – a seemingly endless list of things to do.

Choose simple recipes that don't require too many ingredients or steps. Ask your guests to bring a homemade cake or cookies, or buy some.

Let your children help. When my daughters were young, they used to make seder kits. They would wash and dry the lettuce, measure it and place the specified amounts in a plastic zip-lock bag. This saved time for me, and the girls enjoyed doing it.

Consider using disposables, especially if you are having a large group for meals. Today there are disposables that are as beautiful as real china.

Here are some recipes for a relatively light and easy-to-do seder menu:

CONFETTI VEGETABLE KUGEL

Norene Gilletz's recipe is so colourful and so delicious, you'll want to make it year-round. It can be made quickly in a food processor and it freezes and/or reheats well.

3 medium zucchini, unpeeled
3 carrots, peeled
2 sweet potatoes or 3 large potatoes (about 1 lb.)
2 medium onions
2 cloves garlic
½ cup parsley leaves
3-4 tbsp. chopped fresh basil (or 1 tsp. dried)
¼ cup potato starch
1½ tsp. salt, or to taste
½ tsp. pepper, or to taste
2 tsp. olive oil

Preheat oven to 375. Grate zucchini, carrots and sweet potatoes. Finely mince onions, garlic, parsley and basil. Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and mix well. Grease a 3-quart rectangular or oval casserole. Add vegetable mixture and spread evenly. Bake at 375 for 1 hour and 10 minutes, or until golden brown and firm.

Notes: Mixture can be baked in greased muffin pans at 375 for 25-30 minutes, until golden brown. Recipe can also be halved. Bake in a 1½-quart casserole for 45-55 minutes. Makes 12 servings.

BERRIES IN SWEET WINE

A simple and delicious end to a heavy meal. I have also used this as a first course.

2 pints fresh strawberries (cut in half if large)
2 pints fresh raspberries
2 pints fresh blueberries
sugar
sweet or semi-sweet white wine
fresh mint leaves for garnish

Wash berries and remove stems. Sprinkle the berries with sugar and refrigerate until ready to serve. Just before serving, spoon berries into a large glass bowl or individual goblets. Pour ½ cup of wine over each serving and garnish with mint leaves. Makes 6 servings.

MOROCCAN PASSOVER BEET SALAD

A delicious and different side dish.

1 lb. beets
⅓ cup vinegar or lemon juice
2 tbsp. vegetable oil
3 tbsp. minced parsley
2 cloves garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste

Leaving the beets whole and unpeeled, with one inch of stem and the root attached, scrub them thoroughly and boil them gently in water to cover until just tender (30-60 minutes, depending on size). Drain, peel and cut the beets into strips. Blend the oil and vinegar or lemon juice, add the beets, parsley and garlic and stir gently. Season with salt and pepper to taste and refrigerate until ready to serve. Serves 3-4.

STUFFED PEACHES

½ cup almonds
6-8 macaroons (enough to make ½ cup crumbs)
6 large, firm peaches or 12 canned peach halves
2 tbsp. sugar
1 tbsp. chopped candied orange peel, optional
½ cup sweet wine

Set out 10 x 6 x 1½-in baking dish.

Finely chop and set aside almonds. Grind by hand or in food processor enough macaroons to make ½ cup crumbs. Set crumbs aside.

If using fresh peaches, wash, pare and cut peaches into halves. Remove pit and a small portion of the pulp around cavity.

Combine and mix macaroon crumbs, chopped almonds, sugar and candied orange peel. Lightly fill peach halves with mixture. Put two halves together and fasten with wooden picks.

Place in baking dish and pour wine over peaches. Bake at 350 for 15 minutes and serve hot or cold. Makes 6 servings.

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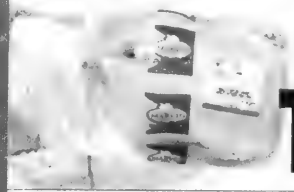

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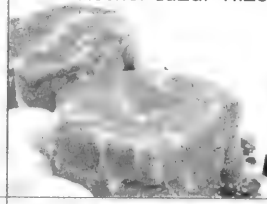

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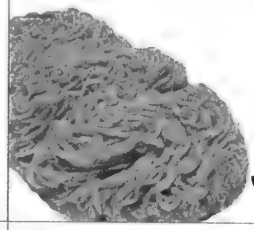

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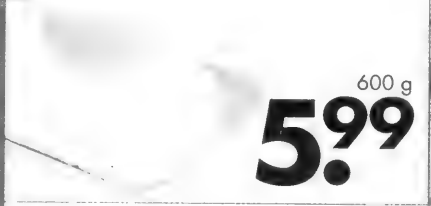

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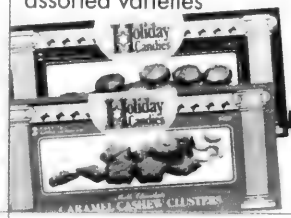

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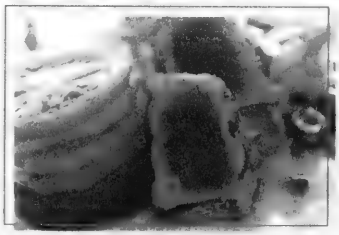

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COR 488

Colourful fruits and vegetables

To help celebrate Passover, the Kashruth Council of Canada (COR) has tested some recipes for you and your family to enjoy.

AVOCADO FRUIT BOWL

3 medium size avocados
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
2 apples, peeled and diced
2 pears, peeled and diced
2 bananas, peeled and diced
2 oranges, peeled, sectioned and cut
1/4 cup Passover liqueur
fresh flat leaf parsley sprigs

Cut each avocado in half. Remove pits. Brush with lemon juice. Combine all the fruit with remaining lemon juice and the liqueur. Fill each avocado half with the fruit mixture. Garnish with a sprig of parsley.

Note: Canned fruit salad may be used. Drain well. Serves 6 as appetizer or dessert.

ROASTED GINGER TURKEY

12 lb. turkey rinsed and dried inside and out
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tbsp. ginger
1 tbsp. paprika
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. pepper
1 tbsp. grated lemon rind
1 tbsp. olive oil

Place turkey in a large roasting pan. In a small bowl, mix ingredients together into a paste. Rub inside and out of the turkey. Preheat oven to 350.

Stuffing:
2 tbsp. oil
1 medium onion, chopped
2 ribs celery, chopped
1/2 green or red pepper, chopped
1/2 lb. mushrooms, chopped
1/2 cup Passover noodles
3 cups matzah farfel
dash of pepper
2 cans undiluted condensed chicken soup
1 egg

In a skillet, heat oil and lightly brown the onion, celery, pepper and mushrooms. Remove from heat and add remaining ingredients. Mix well. Spoon stuffing loosely into turkey cavity. Wrap stuffed turkey in foil. Place turkey, breast side down, and roast for 2 hours. Remove foil from turkey and turn to brown evenly. Roast another 2 hours, basting frequently with pan juices.

Sauce:
2 tbsp. honey
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1/4 cup Passover liqueur

Baste turkey again with sauce and roast an additional 1/2 hour or until leg joint moves easily and juice is no longer pink.

Suggestion: Spoon extra stuffing into lightly oiled muffin tins and bake until brown and crispy.

Variation: Add a can of tomato-mushroom sauce to the stuffing.

Note: The carcass makes a delicious soup by adding any vegetables. Serves 8-10.

TANGY TURNIPS IN ORANGE CUPS

An ideal trim for the roasted turkey.

2 lb. turnips, peeled and cut in strips
2 tsp. salt
2 tbsp. margarine
2 tsp. chopped flat leaf parsley
2 tsp. finely chopped onions
2 tsp. fresh lemon juice

In a small amount of boiling water, cook turnips in a covered saucepan until tender (about 20 minutes). Drain. Add remaining ingredients. Toss. Serve or spoon into orange cups. Garnish with parsley.

Orange cups:
4 large oranges, washed.

Cut oranges in half and make diagonal slits in each orange half with a sharp knife all the way around. Scoop out pulp, leaving a shell about 1/2 inch thick. (Use the pulp in a fruit salad or other dish). Cut a small piece off each bottom half so that orange will stand straight. Serves 8.

ISRAELI VEGETABLE SALAD

In Israel, this is served from breakfast to dinner.

8 tomatoes, cut in small cubes
2 English cucumbers, cut in small cubes
4 green onions, thinly sliced
3 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Combine vegetables. Mix dressing ingredients together and add to vegetables to coat. Garnish generously with chopped flat leaf parsley. Serves 6.

CARROT AND SWEET POTATO RING

For those on a no salt diet.

2 tbsp. oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 lb. cooked carrots, mashed
1 lb. cooked sweet potatoes, mashed
1 tbsp. grated orange rind
2 tbsp. honey

Continued on page 44

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Passover Food Ideas

Chopped liver as seen in The Passover Table by Susan R. Friedland, a HarperPerennial book.

Chopped liver without the extra fat

Reader Sheila Jacobson sent us this recipe for her chopped liver.

For years, she says, she struggled to find a no-fat or low-fat recipe for making chopped liver. "I didn't like broiling the liver because it seemed to dry it out before it was completely cooked through, and I didn't like frying it the way our mothers did because there was too much oil or fat involved in the frying process.

"So, some years ago, I began to simmer the liver in vegetable broth. It keeps the liver very moist, and it becomes very tender and tasty when finished cooking.

"I use beef liver because it has an intense liver taste, a high content of B vitamins and a firmer texture when chopped in a food processor."

For making crisp, fried onions, she says, it's best to use ordinary yellow onions and not onions with a high sugar content such as Vidalia because the high sugar content carmelizes and burns by the time the onions become crisp.

SHEILA JACOBSON'S BEEF CHOPPED LIVER

Use a 3-litre stainless steel saucepan; a stainless steel frying pan that is at least 3 inches deep and 9 inches in diameter or an electric, enclosed deep fryer; a food processor; a very sharp stainless steel Chef's knife, stainless steel fork, food tongs and medium spoon or ladle.

a few slices of raw beef liver, koshered
enough vegetable broth to cover the beef liver in a shallow pan
salt
onion powder, to taste
ordinary yellow onions to make crispy, fried onions (optional) – onions reduce to about a third after being fried

Pour enough vegetable broth in a stainless steel saucepan so that it is about ½-inch deep. Bring vegetable broth to a simmering boil on stove.

Place the slices of beef liver in the simmering vegetable broth and let simmer, covered, until the liver is cooked, turning slices over to ensure it is cooked on both sides. If vegetable broth seems to be running low in saucepan, add a little more broth so that it covers the liver at all times. Do not add salt at this stage as it will make liver tough.

Remove saucepan from hot stove, leaving the slices of cooked beef liver in the hot vegetable broth to keep the liver moist. If making several slices of beef liver that require the repeated use of the saucepan, remove the cooked slices of beef liver to a platter and use a ladle to pour some hot vegetable broth over the cooked slices to keep them moist while simmering new batches of liver in the saucepan.

Let cooked beef liver slices cool to room temperature, while sautéing onions.

To make the crisp, fried onions, slice onions very, very thin, so thin that the onion slices should be translucent when sliced and raw. The slices should also be very long, but not circular. For this you need to cut the onion in half, from root to stem, place the cut onion-half cut-surface down, and then slice it across the natural lines seen along the rounded surface, starting at either end (root or stem).

Use an oil that can withstand high temperatures (oil that has a high smoke point), but not olive oil, as it has a low smoke point and burns easily at high heat, which gives a bitter taste to the onions. If you have an electric, enclosed deep fryer, deep-fry the sliced onions until crisp. If you don't have a deep fryer, use the frying pan and add oil to a depth of about 1½ inches. Fry onions until very crisp and brown, using stainless steel food tongs to turn. Drain on paper or cloth to remove excess oil. Let cool to room temperature.

When the slices of cooked beef liver are cooled to room temperature, cut them into small pieces and set aside. Put a few pieces of the cooked beef liver into food processor with some of the vegetable broth from the saucepan in which the liver was cooked and some of the fried onions. Process until smooth.

If there is not enough vegetable broth left in the saucepan to add to the liver in the food processor, heat some more vegetable broth to a simmer, and use it to moisten liver as it blends into a paste. Repeat with remaining pieces of cooked beef liver, but leave some of the crisp, fried onions to place on finished chopped liver as garnish.

After processing all the liver, add salt and onion powder to taste. Mix them throughout the chopped liver so that there are no pockets of salt or onion powder. Place remaining crisp, fried onions on top of the chopped liver in serving dish, as garnish.

For a no-fat chopped liver, don't use any sautéed onions. Just blend the cooked beef liver into a pâté in a food processor, using only salt and onion powder for seasoning, and some of the vegetable broth to keep the liver moist and flavourful.

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Some new variations on old favourites

Continued from page 42

1/4 cup Passover liqueur (optional)

Preheat oven to 375. Heat oil, sauté onion for 5 minutes. Add to mashed carrots and sweet potatoes. Add remaining ingredients and beat until fluffy. Pile into well-greased ring mould and bake for 25-30 minutes. Serve hot.

STRAWBERRY MERINGUE TARTS

3 egg whites (have at room temperature for at least 1 hour)
pinch salt
1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
1 cup sugar

Beat egg whites with salt and lemon juice until they become foamy. Gradually add sugar (2 tbsp. at a time), beating at high speed until very stiff peaks form and sugar is dissolved. This takes about 10 minutes.

Preheat oven to 250. Line a cookie sheet with freezer paper, shiny side up. Draw 8 circles, 3 1/2 in. in diameter. Fill each circle with 1/4 cup of the meringue. Gently form into a shallow cup shape with the back of a spoon. Bake 1 hour, turn off oven and let dry in oven (door closed) for 1 hour. Remove from paper.

These can be made up to 3 weeks in advance and stored in a metal container in a cool dry place.

Fill meringue shells with fresh strawberries and top with glaze.

Filling:
1 pint fresh strawberries

Wash, drain and hull berries. Dry well. Place 1 whole berry in centre of meringue shell. Cut remaining berries in halves. Place around whole berry in shell. Sprinkle lightly with black pepper. Pour glaze over.

Glaze:
1 pint fresh berries
1 cup water
1 cup sugar
2 tbsp. potato starch

Crush 1 pint berries and combine with water, sugar and potato starch in saucepan. Bring to boil and cook 2 minutes or until thickened. Cool. Pour over berry-filled tarts.

Charlie Trotter's Carrot Consommé as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

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Passover Selections

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SAMPLE MENU #1

Sweet & Sour Meat Balls	Cole Slaw
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls	Honey Cake
Roast Chicken	Chocolate Cake
Lockshen Pudding	Mandlebroit
Potato Pudding	Macaroons
Carrots Tzimmes	Seder Plate
New Dills	Charoses

$259.00 for 10 people

SAMPLE MENU #2

Gefilte Fish & Horseradish	Cole Slaw
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls	Lemon Roll
Roast Chicken	Apple Cake
Roast Brisket of Beef	Macaroons
Apple Farfel Pudding	Passover Cookies
Pan Roast Potatoes	Seder Plate
Carrots Tzimmes	Charoses
New Dills	

$299.00 for 10 people

SAMPLE MENU #3 -- *Low Fat Menu* Only 20g Fat per person

Gefilte Fish & Horseradish	Cole Slaw
Cabbage Borscht	Cucumber Salad
Roast Turkey Breast (precarved) or Baked Chicken Breast	New Dills
Farfel & Mushrooms	Fresh Fruit Salad
Candied Yams	Passover Cookies
Green Beans Almondine	Seder Plate
	Charoses

$299.00 for 10 people

SAMPLE MENU #4

Gefilte Fish & Horseradish	New Dills, Cole Slaw
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls	Honey Cake
Roast Brisket of Beef	Macaroons
Chicken Fingers	Mandelbroit
Lockshen Pudding	Passover Cookies
Pan Roast Potatoes	Seder Plate
Green Beans Almondine	Charoses

$299.00 for 10 people

SAMPLE MENU #5

Gefilte Fish & Horseradish	Lockshen Pudding
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls	Mandelbroit
Roast Chicken	Seder Plate
Roast Brisket of Beef	Charoses
Green Beans Almondine	

$139.00 for 10 people

ADDITIONAL SELECTIONS

MEAT DISHES
Roast Turkeys
Chopped Liver
Cabbage Rolls
Veal Roast
Flunken in Borscht
Roast Duck
Turkey Breast
Lemon Chicken Breast
Baked Chicken Breast
BBQ Chicken Wings
Honey Garlic Wings
Chicken Fingers
Knishes - Potato or Beef
Kishke

VEGETABLE DISHES
Vegetarian Loaf
Matzo Lasagna
Stir Fry Vegetables
Grilled Vegetables
Apple Farfel Pudding
Farfel & Mushrooms
Potato Latkes
Green Beans Almondine
Broccoli & Mushrooms
Handmade Egg Noodles
Seder Plates
Charoses

SALADS
Cole Slaw
Pickled Beets
Tossed Salad
Cucumber Salad
Fresh Fruit Salad

DESSERTS
Apple Crumble Cake
Chocolate Cake
Chocolate Brownies
Honey Cake
Lemon Roll
Macaroons
Mandelbroit
Passover Cookies

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Israel starts mass sorting poultry to fight bird flu

By DAN BARON
JTA

JERUSALEM — For once, terrorists are not the infiltrators that are most worrying Israelis.

The Jewish state joined the fraternity of nations affected by avian flu last weekend, when a contagion in the Negev prompted the mass sorting of poultry and quarantine of several farm personnel.

With less than two weeks before national elections, interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert moved fast to prevent panic.

"The fact that avian flu has been discovered warrants serious attention, but I recommend we stay calm to ensure this does not spread to humans," he told his cabinet on Sunday.

Formally known as H5N1, avian flu has reached across Europe, Africa and parts of Asia since 2003, killing at least 100 people who caught it from infected fowl, and killing or forcing the slaughter of tens of millions of chickens and ducks across Asia. Scientists fear it may mutate into a strain that can pass between humans, triggering a global pandemic.

Although health officials did not immediately confirm that ailing turkeys discovered at four Negev farms had been the victims of H5N1, the government took no chances, ordering all poultry at the affected sites poisoned and buried.

Some $3.4 million (US) was earmarked to compensate farmers for their losses. Some 400,000 to 500,000 turkeys and chickens would be killed. Israeli farmers annually raise 200 million birds for food.

Four agricultural workers who showed signs of the flu were hospitalized. But tests revealed they did not have H5N1.

Agriculture Minister Ze'ev Boim said closures had been imposed on the four Negev farms to prevent the flu from moving northward. He predicted that the outbreak would be eradicated within 45 days.

Officials have also played down media reports that some infected poultry may have already reached stores, noting that the meat could be consumed as usual if properly cooked.

"There is no lack of meat, and the public need not fear meat bought in recognized stores," Boim said.

Despite the ministry's assurances, poultry and egg sales dropped in Israel last weekend, *Ha'aretz* reported. The Israeli daily quoted predictions from economists that more than 40 per cent of the businesses in the poultry, egg and meat sectors are in danger of going out of business as a result of the expected drop in sales.

In neighbouring Egypt, a 30-year-old woman died of avian flu, stoking regional jitters. Israel has been co-operating closely with Jordan and the Palestinian Authority, testing dead fowl found in the West Bank and Gaza on behalf of their owners.

Despite the testing, Palestinian heath officials buried alive hundreds of chickens on Saturday, saying they didn't want to risk waiting for the results.

With Hamas on the verge of forming a government in the Palestinian Authority, a cutoff of diplomatic ties seems inevitable. But one Israeli official voiced optimism that this would not affect efforts to keep avian flu at bay.

"I hope that the very close co-operation which we have with our neighbours will continue. Everybody has to eat," an Agriculture Ministry spokesperson said.

Apathy born from mistrust of the government

Continued from page 1

Beyond this is apathy born from a rising mistrust of the government to effect change, disgust with recent revelations of corruption and an increasingly individualistic society that feels less of a need to be involved civically.

Voter apathy is even more apparent in Israel's younger generation. A poll by One Voice, a grassroots movement that encourages dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians, found that 27 per cent of people between the ages of 18 and 32 are interested in the upcoming elections and that 44 per cent plan to vote.

Analyst Yossi Klein Halevi welcomes the establishment of Kadima, he said, and the low-key, yet "historic" election he said it seems to have prompted.

"People who complain that this is a boring election are frustrated leftists and rightists. This is our first election in which the centre is not only a vague longing on the part of many Israelis but an actual option," said Halevi, a senior fellow at Shalem Center, a think-tank in Jerusalem.

"This election has changed the political map for the first time in decades. We are no longer a society defined by a right and left schism but a political system with a strong centre."

Halevi sees the changes in Israeli politics as a sign of political maturation.

"One reason we have so many political parties is that we have still been in the mentality of the Jewish exile in which you needed to find the party that represented your highest ideals precisely," he said.

"We are seeing parties as frameworks for resolving issues through compromise," Halevi said. "This is a realization of normal politics."

Candidates and campaigners, however, continue to employ the language of left and right. Benjamin Netanyahu of Likud has taken to calling Olmert, "Smolmert," a pun on the Hebrew word for left. In one of the Likud's ad campaigns, which have been seen as the most negative among the parties, an announcer's voice intones, "Olmert and the left will bring Hamas closer."

Ad campaigns are used by parties of all sizes: every night, campaign ads are broadcast for a consecutive hour on three national television networks.

Some of the smaller groups broadcasting include a party against high banking fees, a party representing Holocaust survivors and their children, and the Green Leaf Party, which promotes legalizing marijuana and gay marriage.

In one Labor ad, party leader Amir Peretz, who is battling an image as an anti-intellectual demagogue, is seen in a mock prime ministerial office signing papers on a large desk, Israeli flags standing behind him.

Meanwhile, at the port of Tel Aviv, Yitzhak Schwartzblat watches Peres kiss a baby. This is not the first time Schwartzblat, 71, has seen Peres on the campaign trail. He remembers hearing him speak during 1955 elections at a movie hall in Jaffa.

In those days, campaigning was very different, he said.

"People then knew exactly what the message of each party was. Today it does not matter – look at Peres," he said referring to his switch from Labor to Kadima. "Yesterday he was in one party, today another."

Schwartzblat would not reveal who he was voting for.

"I don't have a lot of secrets but this one secret I keep," he said.

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A 30-year veteran of the Israel Defense Forces, General Brom was Deputy National Security Advisor under former Prime Minister Ehud Barak. From 1996 to 1998, he was Director of the Strategic Planning Division of the Israel Defense Forces' General Staff. Previously, General Brom served in different positions in Air Force Intelligence. Throughout the 1990s, he participated in peace negotiations with Syria, Jordan and the Palestinians. In 2002-2003, following his retirement, he helped draft the Geneva Initiative. Since Sept. 2005, he has been guest scholar in residence at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C.

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As interest in day schools grows, funders emerge to aid education

By CHANAN TIGAY
JTA

NEW YORK — News that a matching grant program has pulled in $26 million (US) for Jewish day schools is giving those involved with Jewish education in North America reason for optimism.

Organizers announced last week that the Match program would be funneling donor money to Jewish day schools and education projects, and would be supplementing those funds with matching grants of 50 cents on the dollar, bringing the total raised through the initiative to $26 million.

Six Canadian schools are among those expected to benefit from the program – Associated Hebrew Schools, Bais Chaya Mushka, Cheder Chabad and United Synagogue Day School, all in the Toronto area; Kehila Jewish Community Day School in Hamilton, Ont.; and, in Montreal, Herzliah High School's Snowdon campus, said Mark Charendoff, president of the Jewish Funders Network, which sponsored the program along with the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education and funding from The Avi Chai Foundation and a host of other philanthropists.

"I think there is certainly a renewed interest in day schools as a mechanism for meeting the challenges of ensuring a positive Jewish identity in the next generation," Charendoff said.

"I think the question was always, is that interest deep or wide?"

"We saw in the past that it was definitely deep," he continued. "What this initiative points to for the first time is that it's wide as well."

That, sponsors say, is highlighted by the fact that Match not only exceeded its sponsors' fundraising goals, but attracted some 300 donors who had not previously allocated funds to day schools.

Word of Match's success follows on the heels of several large gifts to Jewish education.

It also came on the eve of PEJE's March 19-21 Assembly for Jewish Day School Education – which brought more than 900 supporters, professionals and leaders from hundreds of day schools to Boston to explore the opportunities and challenges facing day schools today, including how to raise funds as enrolments grow –and ahead of the funders network international conference in Denver.

"The day-school movement is growing stronger each year, thanks to new donors who are stepping up to give unprecedented support, and lay and professional leaders who are increasing their skills in fundraising, marketing and educational excellence," said PEJE's executive director, Rabbi Joshua Elkin.

Last month, news broke that the Jim Joseph Foundation, recently incorporated as a private foundation following its namesake's untimely death, would give some $25 million annually to Jewish education.

In January, the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School in suburban Washington, D.C., received a $15 million gift. In late 2004, a group of anonymous families made a $45 million donation to three Boston-area day schools.

In 2001, the Sidney Kimmel Foundation announced a $20 million gift to the Raymond and Ruth Perelman Jewish Day School, a Solomon Schechter school in Wynnewood, Pa., that is affiliated with the Conservative movement.

"There has been building enthusiasm for the day-school enterprise that initially expressed itself through a dramatic increase in enrolment in the 1990s, which then led to greater funding needs," said Yossi Prager, Avi Chai's executive director. "The success of Match suggests that there are resources that can be tapped to meet those needs."

In addition to Avi Chai, the program is funded by Ingeborg and Ira Leon Rennert, the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, the Alan B. Slifka Foundation and Jewish Life Network/Steinhardt Foundation.

The money will go to 159 Jewish day schools in North America, along with eight day-school programs.

Most of the day schools solicited their own donors, and applications then were filed through the Match sponsors.

Nearly 300 applications were accepted for matching funds and schools in 25 states and two Canadian provinces, representing all Jewish denominations. Community schools not representing a particular stream will also get support.

Matching funds for individual gifts were capped at $50,000, and schools receiving multiple gifts were not given match funds over a total of $100,000.

It's the third in a series of matching grant programs run through the funders network beginning in 2004.

One of the initiatives, also run with Avi Chai, raised $6.8 million for Jewish education generally, rather than day schools alone; the other, run with the French Sacta-Rashi Foundation, raised $2.2 million for Israel.

The combined annual operating budgets of North American day schools is somewhere in the vicinity of $2 billion, Prager said. Most of that has to be covered by tuition, in addition to about $65 million provided annually by Jewish federations. The balance has to be raised from private funds, he said.

Schools say the Match program has been a fundraising boon.

"There was tremendous enthusiasm in knowing that people were going to have their dollar leveraged by a foundation," said Simcha Herring, director of development at the SAR Academy, a modern Orthodox day school in Riverdale, N.Y.

Program funders originally allocated $5 million to match $10 million in new gifts. But when applications totaled more than $18 million, they increased their own contributions and recruited additional philanthropists to match the $15.5 million that was eligible for matching funds.

The largest gift in conjunction with the program was $1 million, followed by another gift of $300,000, the funders network said.

"The story is these brand new donors to the scene," Charendoff said. "It's not about spending 50 cents to get a dollar. The point was identifying people who could keep giving year after year into the future. So it's 50 cents hopefully to get $10."

35th WORLD ZIONIST CONGRESS ELECTION

The Area Election Committee of the Canadian Zionist Federation hereby sets out the rules for the upcoming election for the 35th World Zionist Congress.

The vote for the 19 delegates and 19 alternates to Canada for the 35th World Zionist Congress will take place between April 1 and April 24, 2006. The vote will be a postal vote.

All eligible voters will receive a ballot, a list of candidates for each participating organization, and instructions for completing and returning the ballot by mail on or about April 11. Only ballots postmarked no later than April 24 and complying with the instructions will be included. Each eligible voter will be entitled to one vote. The results will be tabulated by an outside organization, verified by scrutineers from all member organizations, and published. Any appeal will be directed to the Area Election Committee.

Eligible voters are members in good standing on December 31, 2005 of the following organizations:

ARZA CANADA: CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF REFORM ZIONISTS
FRIENDS OF CANADIAN YOUNG JUDAEA/ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF CANADA
HATIKVAH CANADA
MERCAZ-CANADA, THE ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF THE CONSERVATIVE MOVEMENT
UNITED TORAH COALITION
ZIONISTPARTY.COM

Each of these organizations is responsible for verifying its own list of eligible voters. Any questions as to whether an individual is an eligible voter should be directed to the organization or organizations of which the individual believes he or she is a member.

Each organization has provided a list of up to 19 candidates and 19 alternates. The 19 seats allocated to Canada will be distributed to the listed organizations based on the number of votes received by each organization in accordance with the Rules for the Election of Delegates to the Zionist Congress prepared by the World Zionist Organization. Delegates will be elected based on the seats assigned to each organization, in the order in which their names appear on the list enclosed with each ballot.

Ze'evi suspects should be tried in civil court, AG says

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — The five inmates from the Jericho prison allegedly involved in the 2001 assassination of former tourism minister Rehavam Ze'evi can be tried in Israel, Attorney-General Menahem Mazuz told the cabinet Sunday.

Mazuz said he preferred that they be tried in a civil rather than a military court, since two other defendants involved in the murder were already tried in Israeli civilian courts.

Concerns that the men could not be tried here because they have already been tried in a PA court were not relevant, Mazuz said, because they were never truly tried by the PA. He did not indicate when they might be charged here.

Mazuz made it clear that Israel claimed from the time the agreement was made to move the men from former PA president Yasser Arafat's headquarters in Ramallah to the prison in Jericho in 2002 that Israel would retain legal authority over the case and that there would be no legal impediment in the future to trying the men here.

Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) head Yuval Diskin told the cabinet that the raid on the prison could make it more difficult in the future for the Palestinians to agree to hold security-related prisoners in their jails, because of the fear that Israel would at some stage come and take them away.

He said that in addition to netting the five men connected with Ze'evi's assassination and Karine A paymaster Fuad Shubaki, Israel also took into detention 33 other inmates suspected of terrorism related crimes, including one man suspected of killing an Israeli in 2001, and one of those who participated in the lynching of two Israeli reservists in Ramallah in 2000.

Another 250 detainees in the jail were released.

She does not feel betrayed by the Israeli government

Continued from page 1

Situated amid a bloc of settlements known as Gush Katif and populated by 80 families, Ganei Tal was a community whose villas and lush fields offered dramatic views of the Mediterranean Sea. If not for the barbed wire and army towers to maintain security, Ganei Tal may not have looked out of place in, say, southern California.

Tending to 4½ hectares of land with the aid of 25 employees, the Balabans prospered and enjoyed the comforts of a 380-square-metre home with modern amenities. "We had a nice house and very successful business," she said, a touch of nostalgia in her voice.

Today, in a far cry from their former luxurious dwelling, they live in a much smaller caravan in Yad Binjamin, an established village 40 minutes by car south of Ashkelon. They reside there with 79 other families from Ganei Tal.

"We're like a family," said Balaban, a determined, self-possessed woman who seems better off than many of the Israelis forced out of Gaza.

Eight months before Israel's fateful withdrawal, Balaban asked herself what would become of her 750,000 plants. "I never imagined we would give up Gaza. I thought we would stay forever. But I finally realized that the disengagement would take place. I didn't go against this decision with force. I left peacefully."

Having adopted a realistic attitude, in sharp contrast to those settlers who held out till the bitter end and currently find themselves unemployed and idle in camps and rented apartments, Balaban approached the Ministry of Agriculture with a plausible plan.

She wondered whether she could buy a piece of land close to the Mediterranean Sea, a climactic zone where her plants could flourish.

"I waited two months and nothing happened," she recalled. "So I bought three hectares worth of greenhouses and informed the ministry I needed a spot for them."

With the government's assistance, Balaban purchased a plot for herself and her daughter in Ashkelon's grim industrial area. The Jewish National Fund assisted by levelling the sand dunes characteristic of this region.

Then, in a remarkable operation that started in late July and ended before the evacuation deadline in mid-August, 500 volunteers from kibbutzim around the country converged on Ganei Tal to help her pack her precious plants.

Although she considers herself fortunate in comparison to other settlers from Gaza, Balaban is not entirely satisfied.

"Usually, a farmer lives near his farm. Not me! I had to struggle to gain access to water, and now I don't have a proper drainage system. This is not OK."

Neither does she have a land telephone line, which she desperately needs to conduct business transactions.

The government has compensated her to the tune of NIS 200,000 (about $43,000 US) for her house in Ganei Tal, but still apparently owes her NIS 78,000 (about $17,000 US) for each of the greenhouses she left behind.

Balaban, however, is grateful for a low-interest NIS 400,000 (about $86,000 US) loan she received from Israel.

Prior to moving to Gaza, she and her husband cultivated vegetables for export in the Galilee. "It was very difficult," she said. "Prices were not good."

As Balaban tells it, the government encouraged them to settle in Gaza, which, she fervently believes, is part and parcel of the Land of Israel.

They committed themselves to Gaza in the belief that Israel would never relinquish it and that the climate there would be conducive for the cultivation of flowers.

Though she was basically disappointed by Israel's pullout from Gaza, she does not, strangely enough, feel betrayed. She explained her reasoning by saying that the withdrawal was undertaken by a government democratically elected by the people.

"History will tell whether Israel made a mistake in giving up Gaza," she observed. "But in the meantime, Hamas is growing stronger and Qassams are falling near my greenhouses."

Israel displays anti-terror tech

By **HERB KEINON**
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Israel was to showcase state-of-the-art anti-terrorism technology it hopes to sell at a conference last Sunday for North American homeland security officials.

Since 9/11, the United States alone has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in homeland security.

Nissim Ben-Sheetrit, the foreign minister's deputy director-general, said the conference would bring together some 130 top-ranking homeland security officials from 37 U.S. states and from Canada. The idea, he said, was to share the expertise Israel has gained in fighting terrorism, and also to spotlight the technology that Israeli firms have developed.

The four-day conference was to include seminars by defence ministry and Israeli security officials as well as talks by Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and Internal Security Minister Gideon Ezra. There were also to be demonstrations of how Israel is prepared to deal with different terrorist-related scenarios.

One of the major areas of interest, Ben-Sheetrit said, has to do with preparation for bio-chemical attacks.

In addition to the economic dimension, Ben-Sheetrit said Israel also hopes that, through this type of conference, it will develop close ties with individuals in the state governments who are close to the governors. He said Israel is considering holding similar types of conference for other countries, and that this is just the "first shot" in these types of programs.

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Terror victims' families sue Iran

By RACHEL SILVERMAN
JTA

NEW YORK — Matt Eisenfeld would have been 35 by now; his fiancee, Sara Duker, 32.

He might have been a rabbi, she an environmental researcher. There are lots of things Matt and Sara could have been – but a suicide bombing in Jerusalem cut short their lives 10 years ago.

That incident also left the young couple's parents, Leonard and Vicki Eisenfeld and Arline Duker, grasping for answers.

The families have joined a growing number of individuals seeking legal retribution against the perpetrators of terrorist acts. For the plaintiffs, this means going into the lion's den – confronting terrorist organizations head on.

The Eisenfeld and Duker families soon learned that the mastermind behind the murder of their children was a Hamas terrorist trained and recruited by Iran.

That evidence allowed Washington-based lawyer Steve Perles, who has represented roughly 350 victims of terrorism, to build a case against the Islamic Republic of Iran.

"In the world of terrorism, it's the policy of the overarching owner that's responsible," Perles said. "This really puts Iran right at the epicentre of Hamas terrorism."

Vicki Eisenfeld agreed.

"Iran was the diabolical parent of this," she said. "You can't kill someone and not expect to have repercussions."

The families hope their court case can help create financial disincentives for terrorism.

"Iran's economy is more fragile than you think," Leonard Eisenfeld said. "If you shut off opportunities to invest in Europe, it creates economic disruption."

To some degree, their efforts have yielded success: The families have received $27 million (US) in compensatory damages, funneled from appropriated taxpayer funds in the U.S. Treasury.

But the case has encountered other bureaucratic snags, especially from officials in the U.S. State Department. Perles described the government's reticence as surprising, considering the administration's strong anti-terrorism stance.

"It is very schizophrenic and I don't begin to understand it," he said. "They consider what we're doing inconsistent with their turf."

A State Department official said it's a question of policy, not turf wars.

"The State Department has taken the position that to make payments like this is unfair and inequitable in a general manner," the official said. "We have to look at policy in a much more general way, not vis-a-vis individual constituents or individual plaintiffs.

"There are a lot of victims out there," the official continued. "But we serve the U.S. government and the U.S. taxpayer. We cannot say, 'Oh, these people are more deserving than these people.'"

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'Friendly fire' kills soldier

St.-Sgt. Ido Shapira, who was killed during a clash with Palestinian terrorists in Jenin last week, was actually killed by "friendly fire," the army said. Shapira was shot as Israeli forces flushed out five fugitives from their hideout in Jenin. The Palestinians, most of them Al-Aqsa Brigade members, surrendered after the gunfight. Outside Nablus, two Israelis were wounded in a Palestinian shooting.

Black Hebrew at Eurovision

A member of the Black Hebrew community will represent Israel at this year's Eurovision song contest. Eddie Butler's solo *Ze Hazman*, or "This is the Time," was selected in a televised competition as the Israeli submission for the summer songfest. Butler, 34, was born to black Americans who came to the Jewish state as part of the Black Hebrew community, which considers itself descended from the ancient Israelites, although the story is rejected by Bible scholars. Butler competed at Eurovision in 1999 as part of the Israeli quartet Eden.

Kids mag promotes terror

The first issue of Hamas' online magazine for kids to be published since the group won Palestinian legislative elections advocates suicide bombing and hatred of Jews, the Anti-Defamation League says. The March 1 issue of *Al-Fateh*, a biweekly, emphasizes the "martyrdom" of a suicide bomber who killed 16 people in August 2004. For details, visit www.adl.org/main_Terrorism/al_fatch_hamas.htm.

Israeli schools on world list

Hebrew University led three Israeli universities on a list of the 200 best universities in the world. Hebrew University was ranked 77th in the *Times of London Higher Education Supplement*, up from 93rd in 2004. Tel Aviv University finished 188th after not appearing on last year's list, while the Technion in Haifa was 194th, down from 158th last year. The schools were ranked in a variety of categories, including academic peer reviews, citations of academic papers written by faculty, staff-to-student ratios and a survey of global recruiters of graduates. Harvard University finished first on the list, which was dominated by U.S. universities.

Israeli MK gets jail time

A lawmaker from Israel's Likud Party received a jail sentence in a corruption scandal. Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court sentenced Naomi Blumenthal to eight months behind bars after finding her guilty of providing illicit perks to Likud supporters and then trying to cover up the infraction. She also received a 10-month suspended sentence and was fined $16,000 (US). The court said it would put off implementing the sentence until after Israel's March 28 election, in which Blumenthal is a Likud candidate. She vowed to appeal.

Labour leaders sign pact

Labour leaders in Boston and Haifa hailed an agreement promoting stronger ties between union members in the sister cities. The agreement, the first between an Israeli and a U.S. city, was signed by Rich Rogers, executive secretary-treasurer of the Greater Boston Labor Council, and Baruch Zalts, chairman of the Histadrut-Haifa Labour Council. It calls for information sharing and an exchange of delegates to advance the welfare of workers and promote the right to organize unions.

Kingdom unearthed

Relics from an ancient Jewish city were uncovered in northern Israel. The Antiquities Authority announced it found evidence of a city from the Kingdom of Israel, which was formed during the split between Israel and Judah in the ninth and 10th centuries BCE, near Nazareth. Remains were also exposed dating from the Jewish settlement from the Roman period identified with "Kana of the Galilee," which is known from the Christian bible. Among other antiquities discovered from the period are "hiding refuges," underground pits linked by short tunnels that were built and hewn prior to the Great Revolt by the Jews against the Romans in 66 CE.

– JTA and Jerusalem Post

The Canadian Jewish News

Spring Fashion & Beauty.

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Spring Fashion & Beauty

Graduating designers showcased at Ryerson fashion show

By RANDI BERGMAN
Special to The CJN

As Canada forges its way further into the global fashion market, Toronto is slowly becoming one of the world's strongest sources for blossoming talent.

The country's largest platform for launching young Canadian designers, and the biggest Canadian fashion show, is the annual Ryerson University School of Fashion's Mass Exodus.

The show, now in its 56th year, is an annual showcase of the school's graduating designers. With an impressive roster of successful alumni designers, including Arthur Mendonça, David Dixon and Paul Hardy, Ryerson's reputation as a source of fashion talent has been growing.

Showcasing more than 60 designers' works, Mass Exodus, on April 5 and 6, will be a spectacle in every way. With a $40,000 budget, the co-ordinators of the show are sure to wow the fashion industry like never before.

Mass Exodus 2006 features upcoming designer Jeremy Laing as its speaker. The definite "it-boy du jour," Laing has been showing in New York for the past two years to rave reviews. An alumni of the Ryerson University School of Fashion, Laing has been praised in *Women's Wear Daily*, the *New York Times*, *Another Magazine* and on Style.com.

This year's show, Open Concept, plays on popular trends dominating runways, architecture plans and magazines worldwide. The theme celebrates an industrial chic esthetic. The elaborate set will feature scaffolding, exposed light bulbs and an industrial-sized fan, among other things, to create the feeling of an empty warehouse or airport hangar.

Dress by Kristiann Boos

While this year's show marks the 56-year-old tradition of debuting fashion excellence, Mass Exodus 2006 also features many firsts.

Thanks to "Live Description" technology, visually impaired audience members will be able to hear a vividly detailed description of the show, whether they are at the event or watching from home via a live webcast (www.ryecast.ryerson.ca/dmp streams/massexodus2006/index.asp). Live Description technology brings the essence and excitement of a live fashion show to a visually impaired audience in North America for the first time.

Mass Exodus 2006 also marks the debut of a partnership with Lancôme. As the official sponsor of the show, Lancôme will provide the makeup for the models at the show.

A Lancôme Mass Exodus look has been created for the 150 models participating in the show. Using Lancôme's Spring 2006 Enchantress collection, the Mass Exodus styling team has dreamed up a rather enchanting look for the show.

Playing on current runway trends, the look they created is a strong yet subtle one. Focusing on a very smoky but elegant eye, the look will be created with dark and metallic hues of silver, grey and black. The eye will be accented with a bronzed and glowing face and is completed with a nude lip. This fresh and modern approach is highlighted by hair that is worn away from the face. Heavy parts and sleek hairstyles reminiscent of Italian runways will dominate the runway of Mass Exodus 2006.

With so many collections to see, one must keep an eye out for a few design greats in the making.

Graduating designer Natasha Lenart is sure to thrill the crowd with every outfit she shows. Her collection, Trial and Error, revolves around the theme of great inventors and scientists. It includes such pieces as a tangled parachute gown, inspired by the Wright brothers' invention of the plane, as well as a pocket-watch-inspired piece that features a bodice opening up into the workings of a watch, including the windings and gages, with springs popping out to symbolize something going terribly wrong.

Other designers to watch include Kristiann Boos, whose collection features divine hand-painted and dyed fabrics mimicking butterfly wings, as well as Cara Stryer, whose vintage yet tailored collection references Hitchcock films.

For more information on the show, visit www.massexodus.ca.

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Faux jewelry from the Victorian era to today

By BARBARA KINGSTONE
Special to The CJN

Carole Tanenbaum, the daughter of two art collectors, has written a book about her own passion – faux jewelry.

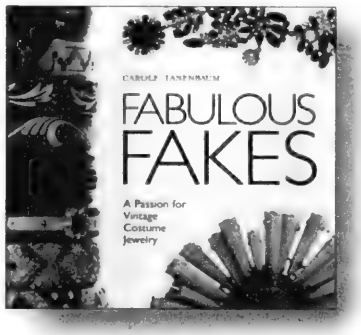
Tanenbaum's private collection of faux jewelry includes about 3,500 pieces, and she has placed some 8,000 items in various retail outlets.

As a youngster, American-born, now living in Canada, Tanenbaum began watching her art-collecting parents study their new found treasures, and this cultivated her own special eye for these baubles.

In the book *Fabulous Fakes: A Passion for Vintage Costume Jewelry* (Madison Press Books), she writes about the history of faux jewelry and she chronicles the lifestyle changes that are reflected in the jewelry we wear. The book features many stunning photographs.

In the opening chapter, Victorian Era & Art Nouveau (1837-1914), Tanenbaum discusses Queen Victoria's passion, not only for her husband Prince Albert, but also for fine adornment. Tanenbaum also devotes some space to the unusual hair jewelry created at that time. She quickly gets to the Industrial Revolution, which revolutionized many occupations, including jewelry making.

The beautifully shot photographs in this section document the Victorian fascination with nature. In one piece, coral glass beads drip from brass leaves. Jewelry representing the Egyptian Revival trend and delicate filigree sash pins, along with other pieces from this era, are a segue to the second chapter, Art Deco & Prewar (1920-1935), which opens with a photograph of a French-designed, modernist necklace. Clean, elegant and streamlined, and with abstract shapes and bold colouration, the necklace is truly the epitome of what this era was about.



The new style of women and their recently acquired freedom to vote, and the advent of the "machine age," as well as legendary fashion designers Madame Vionnet, Jean Patou, Jeannne Lanvin and Charles Worth, are covered in the section of the book devoted to the 1920s and early '30s.

That was also the era of Bauhaus, Dadasim and Cubism, and a time that fake jewelry gained popularity. Café society was in high step and women loved excess, wearing rows of bracelets, strands of beads and dangling earrings. And this jewelry was affordable!

The new plastic, Bakelite, and the discovery of King Tutankhamen's tomb, inspired jewelry designers. But it was Coco Chanel and Elsa Schiaparelli, both fashion-designing doyennes, who revolutionized costume jewelry by adorning their couture outfits with their tasteful fakes.

In sidebars throughout the book, Tanenbaum introduces well-known designers who mass produced jewelry.

The chapter Post-Depression & the War Years (1936-1949) details the renewal of interest in "dressing up" after the dark war years. It's here that we learn about such designers as Trifari, Miriam Haskell and Boucher, who mass produced fab fakes that are now important, and pricey, collectibles.

The delightful chapter titled The Fifties (1950-1959) is so opulent and colourful it made me want to rush off to one of Tanenbaum's retailers and snap up all their wares.

In the chapter The Sixties & Seventies (1960-1979), Coppola e Toppo, who created jewelry for fashion designers Valentino, Pucci and Balenciaga, and the chief jewelry designer of Vendome, Helen Marion, and her artful brooches are highlighted.

The chapter The Eighties & Nineties (1980-1999) features a stunning, unsigned expansion bracelet and items from English retailers Butler & Wilson, where whimsy meets wannabe Cartiers.

If I have one complaint it's that when Tanenbaum profiles a designer and describes their jewelry, the photographs are not on the page. But I stumbled upon them as I continued to read the book. For example, one has to search for photos of the Pennino brothers, whose designs of pink gold sterling vermeil swirls sounded intriguing, but the pictures were only found later on in the book.

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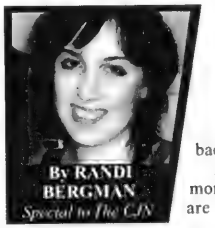
The dress returns with a vengeance



By RANDI BERGMAN
Special to The CJN

This season, the most necessary object is the dress. Dominating runways across the globe, the dress is clearly back with a vengeance.

And what news could be more pleasantly received? Gone are the days of staring at your closet with glazed-over eyes, wondering if mixing hound's tooth with plaid is really that much of a faux pas. With the rebirth of the dress, this spring promises to be the easiest, breeziest in memory when it comes to deciding what to wear.

Above all, wearing a dress is the simplest way to make a fashion statement.

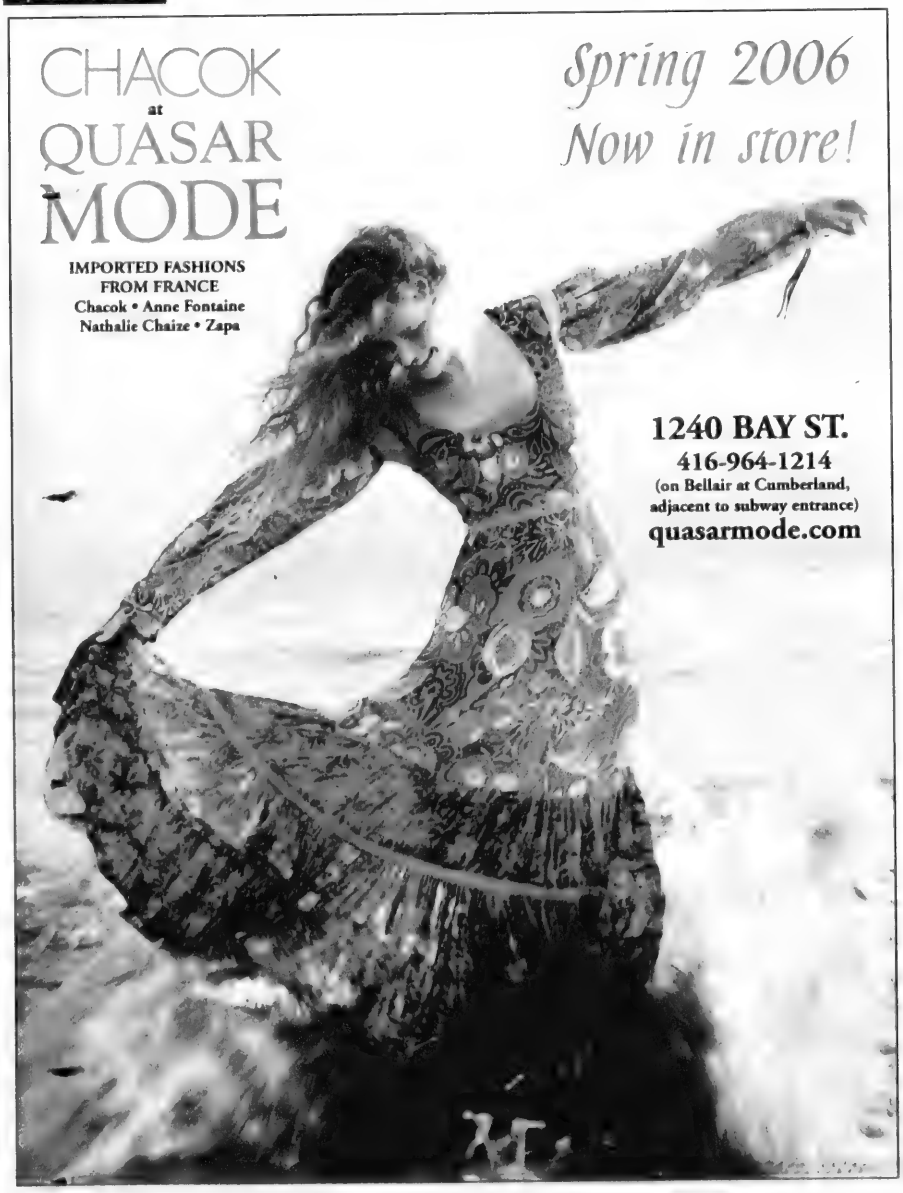
Dresses from the Miu Miu collection scream 1960s ingénue this season. They are brightly coloured, a little lacy and oh-so-short. On the runway, paired with peroxide wigs and oversized sunglasses, the dresses exemplified the recurring trend of the revamped mod. Since the mod movement is defined by the mini-dress, you'll need little else to get the mod look. Throw on some opaque tights, shiny flats and liquid liner and you're good to go.

> This spring promises to be the easiest, breeziest in memory when it comes to deciding what to wear

The modern dress also represents the recent reincarnation of classical femininity. This season, the Proenza Schouler collection features sweet-looking dresses. Brocaded silk, satin and lace are mixed to create a look that is sublime. With just a swish of such a dress, you'll turn heads faster than a speeding train. For a daytime look, pair your dress with flats and a cardigan. To take the dress into evening, slip on your favourite heels (bonus marks for round-toed Mary Janes) and grab a brightly coloured clutch.

The last lesson in thoroughly modernizing your look is as simple as this: belt, belt, belt it! The one thing you can never lose in this season's dress is your waist. Whether it's empire-high (preferably) or hipster-low, the cinched aspect of the dress is essential. To find the most fantastic belts, I recommend skipping Holt Renfrew's and heading to your local thrift shop, home to belts in colours and shapes a plenty at bargain prices. You can find snakeskin and suede belts for as low as 99 cents.

This season, forget layering T-shirt over tank over jeans. That certain *je ne sais quoi* can be found in the dress.



Beauty Shop

By Stacey Michaels

This column is dedicated to my loving mother, Carol Wise, who passed away peacefully last month after a long and courageous battle with cancer. My mother was an incredibly beautiful, talented and strong woman who overcame seemingly insurmountable challenges and set an example for us all. She will be greatly missed and it is an honour to write this article in her memory.

NEWS, NEWS, NEWS

Spring is in the air and with every season change comes a new look in makeup. Fruit has inspired the colour palette for spring this season with blends of exotic and sweet hues.

FROM HAIRSTYLIST MAURICE FIORIO: Spring is all about renewal and rejuvenation. This season, trends in colour are centred around blond and brunette in warm, rich tones. Red is out this spring, replaced by emphasis on tone-on-tone browns and blonds.

Long hair is still in. It goes well with the whole "bohemian" style of fashion. Long, textured locks are the "it" thing this spring. Because texture is so big for spring, textured, chemical services have been given a boost. To achieve that wavy, textured look, add a textured, chemical service to your next salon visit. If you don't want to go the chemical route but still want big, flowing hair, try styling aids such as mousse and texture spray as an alternative.

SKIN CARE

Chanel proudly introduces a new line of self-tanning products – Soleil Identité Perfect Colour Self Tanner, with an SPF 8. Available in golden for fair skin and bronze for darker skin tones, this moisturizing and protective cream gives a natural tan and a radiant, healthy glow.

Smashbox Cosmetics introduces Body Lights Glowing Lotion, an emollient bronze body lotion that lends a radiant natural glow to the skin and imparts a long-lasting fragrance.

Don't just moisturize – give skin a daily source of vitamin-enriched power, with **Lancôme Laboratories**' new Bienfait Multi-Vital, a complete daily moisturizer designed to fuel the skin with vitamins and protect with an essential anti-oxidant and a SPF 30 sunscreen.

To achieve soft and toned skin, try the **Carol Baker Visage** Tarocco Body Collection. The products are sure to leave your skin and hair soft and smooth.

Reveal yourself in a new skin with the Smoothing Body Scrub from **Clarins**. Enriched with bamboo powders, it provides a deep yet soft exfoliation as it detoxifies and protects the skin against hard water.

Marcelle invites you to make the most of your facial cleansing routine with the launch of its new Cleansing Cloths for gentle facial cleansing. Each pre-moistened cloth contains a gentle and moisturizing lotion designed to remove eye and face makeup.

NeoStrata unveils NeoStrata Daytime Smoothing Cream. It contains glycolic acid, which speeds up the skin's natural shedding process.

Skin cleansing has never been this refined. **Lise Watier** has introduced an outstanding and innovative line of cleansers and toners. The line features products for dry, oily, normal and combination skin and promises comforting and effective cleansing.

FOOT CARE

Vichy Laboratoires launches Podexine Podiatric Care, the solution for foot care. Treat callused feet with Podexine Callus Corrector, prevent and treat dry feet with Podexine Reconditioning Care for Dry Feet and treat cracked feet with Podexine Cracked Heel Repairer. Don't miss it – your feet will thank you.

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Chanel's new line of self-tanning products is available in golden and bronze

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ANTI-AGING

Time stands still with **NeoStrata**'s new at-home intense crease-eraser system that fights all causes of wrinkling, providing immediate results and long-term benefits in three simple steps: Cliniderm gentle cleanser, Intense crease eraser cream-gel and Anti-wrinkle night complex.

Vitalscience Corp. presents Dermaglow NuVectin Advanced Upper Lip Repair, which is specially formulated with peptides to help restore a more youthful appearance to the upper-lip area.

Freeze 24-7 introduces IceCrystals Anti-aging Prep and Polish, a powerful resurfacing cocktail that retexturizes and refinishes skin, creating a vibrant and fresh new finish.

Lancôme Laboratories introduces a revolutionary wrinkle treatment, High Resolution with Collaser-48. It is a fast-acting complex shown to stimulate skin's natural production of healthy new collagen coils in just 48 hours.

Vichy Laboratoires introduces Liftactiv Pro Eyes Anti-Wrinkle Eyelid Lifting Care, which replenishes the skin in the eye contour area, fills out deep wrinkles, lifts eyelids and fades dark circles.

Vitalscience Corp. launches Dermaglow NuVectin Advanced Cellulite Therapy, which drastically reduces cellulite and slims thighs, restoring skin's firmness and elasticity.

Estée Lauder introduces Perfectionist Power Correcting Patch for Deeper Eye Lines and Wrinkles, an innovative patch that helps deliver significant reduction in the appearance of deeper lines and wrinkles around the eyes.

Hair cream from Mypa

DEEP MUSCLE RELAXATION

ThermaCare is an air-activated heat wrap designed to deliver eight hours of continuous, low-level heat directly to the site of pain to provide powerful pain relief and deep muscle relaxation. When travelling, take a pouch with you – it is instant relief by heat therapy.

HAIR

Mypa Cosmetics Inc. proudly launches Mypa Aloe Vera Therapy, a complete range of professional hair-care and skin-care treatments manufactured in Europe. For colour-treated hair, try the Shampoo and Hair Treatment Cream. There is also a fabulous Shampoo and Treatment Cream for very dry, brittle and damaged hair. **Mypa** also offers a conditioner to maintain hair volume and shine.

Goody revives jet-set glamour of the past with the Capri Chic Collection, chic hair accessories in nautical stripes, bold rich graphics and cool solids. They capture the carefree luxury and glamour that have made the Capri accessories timeless classics.

FOUNDATION

Smashbox Cosmetics unveils Soft Lights Bronzing Powder, two bronzing palettes to create the perfect glow all year round.

Pure is a quick and simple, three-step skin-care program from **Maybelline** for young women. Begin with the Pure Concealer, a gentle anti-acne treatment stick that conceals skin imperfections while it helps clear acne and prevent future break-outs. Next, use Pure Makeup, a shine-free foundation with water, and last, use Pure Powder, which gives a finish that outsmarts shine and soothes stressed skin.

LEG SHINE

Michael Kors' Leg Shine is available in two fabulous new tints, shimmer and bronze, which highlight in all the right places. But leg shine is not just for legs anymore – this scented, glimmering solid stick also adds sleek, sexy shimmer to bare shoulders or an exposed back.

BLUSH

Estée Lauder's new Limited Edition Exotic Shimmer All Over Highlighting Powder offer variations of pearl-kissed colour. Also from **Estée Lauder**, try Tender Blush to define, contour and highlight cheeks. It is a soft, natural blush with a fresh, clear colour.

Lise Watier introduces a new shade of Ménage à Trois blush, Coraline. Three colours flirt with coral to colour cheeks with unabashed charm.

Dejarose lipgloss from MAC

EYES

Create a new look with **MAC**'s Violet Underground eye kohl pencil, and add a peachy Love-Bud Eye Shadow.

Outlined eyes are here to stay with the new **Annabelle** Liquid Eyeliners, available in four shades and two finishes. This quick-drying formula glides on effortlessly with the precise felt tip and stays true all day.

Continued on page 55

An assortment of products from Estée Lauder

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Lancôme's intriguing Hypnôse

Continued from page 54

Lancôme has created Color Design in five families of eye shadows. With Color Design, the most daring women can show their colours. From dazzling sparkles and precious metals to holographic reflections, the eye shadows are a spectacular parade of colour fantasies and avant-garde textures.

For eyes that dare to be sexy, **Estée Lauder** introduces the Graphic Color Eye Shadow Quad. It is available in Charming Pink and the new limited-edition shade Sizzling Coral. More Than Mascara, also from **Estée Lauder**, has intense colour that is absolutely gorgeous as it defines, lengthens and conditions lashes. It comes in More Black, Green, Blue and Purple.

Caryl Baker Visage is introducing the new Brow Blend Compact. The compact contains three shades of neutral brown tones so that you can customize the shade and create full and shapely eyebrows.

LIPS

Energize the lips with **MAC**'s all-new limited-edition bright red Poppy Hop or let the earthy vibe of Plant A Kiss take root where it thrives – on your lips! Also from **MAC**, be sure to try the new limited-edition Dejarose Lipglass, a light pink colour with a frost.

Rouge Wow, Fusion Creme Gloss, the brand-new coloured gloss from **Lise Watier**, is a gloss and a lipstick all in one that provides excellent coverage in one application. **Lise Watier** also introduces Rouge Toujours, Long-Wear Zero Transfer Lipstick, a new double-tip lipstick that provides colour coverage on one end and a transparent gloss on the other.

Tired of lip colour that fades shortly after application? Lips glow this spring with **Estée Lauder**'s Pure Color Crystal Lipstick, a fig-scented lipstick that now boasts new fruity, shimmering shades. Take the frustration out of wearing lip colour with **Estée Lauder**'s Double Wear Stay-In-Place Lip Duo. Lip colour won't bleed, feather or fade for up to eight hours.

Hugo Pure Purple: Whirlwind in a bottle

FRAGRANCE

Allure Sensuelle, a new fragrance from **Chanel**, is the sensuous and intimate interpretation of the original and always captivating Allure fragrance. Warm, voluptuous and mysterious, it is a soft floral oriental created by Jacque Poige, the internationally renowned "nose" of **Chanel**.

La Perla's newest fragrance, Charme, captivates, envelops and truly gratifies all the senses with a bottle that features a curvaceous design that reveals a vintage inspiration.

Roberto Cavalli introduces Serpentine, a bewitchingly exotic yet fresh scent that is constructed around the mango flower and holds the secret promise of ecstasy and seduction.

The new **DKNY** Red Delicious, his and hers fragrances are sultry, daring, tantalizing and completely irresistible. The sublime sensation of Red Delicious leaves you wanting more – another bite, another kiss.

Bvlgari is pleased to announce Eau Parfumée au The Rouge, a modern interpretation of an eau de Cologne that can be worn year-round by men and women.

Allure Sensuelle, new fragrance from Chanel

For a charming and captivating woman, **Lancôme** presents Hypnôse, a fragrance with a surprising and intriguing attitude.

Estée Lauder introduces Exotic Delicious and fresh new fragrance.

Hugo Pure Purple, from **Hugo Boss**, is exquisitely unpredictable. Inspired by the sheer, spontaneous energy that makes a woman want to dance, it is a fragrance bursting with scent notes that will keep you off your feet. It is a whirlwind in a bottle, an unbridled expression of feminine energy in all the beauty of its motion.

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The Briars offers traditional spa services and holistic treatments

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

The Briars Spa, located at The Briars Resort and Conference Centre on Lake Simcoe in Jackson's Point, Ont., is just one hour north of Toronto. Under the direction of manager Terry Cranswick, the spa offers a full range of traditional spa services in addition to a number of innovative holistic treatments.

Spa Life

Cranswick and her staff of 18, which includes six estheticians, six registered massage therapists (RMT) and two alternative therapists, have created some therapies that are exclusive to their retreat. They include Scalp Hydrotherapy, which combines the use of water shower jets, acupressure and aromatherapy conditioners.

"All our staff is trained in the body and hydro treatments, but if someone particularly wanted an RMT to do that treatment, they would have to request it then," says Cranswick. "We are very fortunate that some of our RMTs are our reflexologists and have also taken hot-stone massage. Reflexology is a massage of the internal organs by massaging little points at the feet.

"We have a full range of esthetic treatments – manicures, pedicures, facials and some waxing, the underarm, bikini and face. Our RMTs do Swedish, deep-tissue and rhythmic massages, which is really good for the elderly because it is more of a rocking motion than the deep tissue massage, which may be a little too much for them."

The Briars offers a full range of treatments. (K. Kates photo)

At The Briar Spa, there are a number of facials on offer, using Phytomer products. They include the Natural Beauty Facial, For Men Only, Skin Quenching Facial for hydrating, Extended Youth Facial to combat aging, Sensitive Defence Facial and the Purifying Facial for those wanting to detoxify. For Double the Pleasure, one therapist ministers a Natural Beauty Facial, while another works at your feet doing reflexology. Double the Pleasure is also available with the Scalp Hydrotherapy in place of the facial.

Holistic treatments at the spa include reflexology, cranial-sacral work and reiki – a Japanese technique that calls for the laying of hands by the therapist to reduce stress and encourage relaxation. Signature treatments include chakra balancing, which is a treatment and an interactive workshop that explores the blockages of your karmic pattern.

Not to be missed is Lomi 'Oluli (Hawaiian massage). The two-hour treatment is enhanced by Hawaiian musical rhythms playing loudly in the background while the therapist's flowing massage movements on the body are reminiscent of a hula dancer. This exotic treatment aligns the body, mind and spirit.

The most popular day-spa package The Briars offers is Escape on the Lake. It includes a facial, Swedish massage and pedicure. All-day packages include a recreation pass that allows access to the indoor solarium pool, whirlpool and sauna, and the outdoor pool in the summer. Overnight packages include a $100 credit to be used toward your choice of spa treat.

The spa walls are aquamarine. There are wicker furnishings in the waiting area. On the walls are watercolours collected by the Sibbald family, who have owned The Briars since 1878. The spa has a rural atmosphere, although the modern lighting fixtures give The Briars Spa a contemporary country feel. There are six treatment rooms, including a manicure/pedicure area set up to handle three clients all at the same time. This area includes the hydro room, with its six-jet shower for hydrotherapies such as body wraps and polishes.

A few steps up from the spa's small but impressive retail area are two large rooms – one is used as a treatment room for two clients at the same time, and the other room is used for treatments that require a larger space.

The picturesque year-round resort, a member of Ontario's Finest Inns, Premier Spas of Ontario and Resorts Ontario, sits on 200 acres. There are 78 rooms; a one, two-bedroom suite; eight, two-bedroom cottages; and four studio cottages. There are four tennis courts and an 18-hole golf course. Canoes, kayaks, sunfish sailboats and pedal boats are available. There is swimming at the waterfront, as well as biking, walking trails, cross-country skiing and horse-drawn sleigh rides.

Other programs offered are guided nature and historical walks and yoga. Entertainment is featured on holidays and Friday nights. On Saturday evenings, you can dance to music played by a DJ.

The Briars does not provide kosher meals but will gladly store all food that visitors bring up to the resort.

To contact The Briars, 55 Hedge Rd., RR1, Jackson's Point, L0E 1L0, call toll free 1-800-465-2376 or visit www.briars.ca.

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Man dies six days after shul fire

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — One of two men injured in a March 10 fire at a Montreal synagogue succumbed to his injuries last week.

Aharon Ben Hanna Chekory had been in a coma for six days before dying March 16. He and another worshipper at the Centre Merkaz Sepharade jumped from a window on the second floor, where services were conducted, after a fire erupted in the kitchen of the century-old structure in Côte-des-Neiges.

Thirteen other congregants escaped without injury.

Blaze caused by electrical problems in kitchen

According to fire department spokesperson Rick Leckner, Ben Hanna Chekory suffered a severe skull fracture. The other congregant broke his femur bone.

The synagogue expressed its "deep sadness" at the death of Ben Hanna Chekory, who was reportedly in his 70s, and it invited members of the Jewish community to pay its respects at March 17 funeral services.

Despite reports the synagogue had been vandalized three time in the previous month, fire officials concluded that electrical problems triggered the three-alarm blaze, which erupted at 6:45 p.m. and took 75 firefighters more than an hour to quell. However, they were able to limit extensive damage to the first floor.

"It was accidental in nature," Leckner said.

Firefighters were able to salvage five Torah scrolls from the shul, which erupted in flames less than an hour after the start of Shabbat. Besides the fatality, the blaze caused thousands of dollars in damage.

The structure has housed the congregation for almost 50 years.

Leckner said that while it was not initially apparent to firefighters that the building served as a synagogue, the fire crew consulted with the rabbi and "organized a 'rescue' of the synagogue's Torahs."

ש'שאר י'נינו

גידי קורן וחברים

עוד מעט בחירות

צפיתי בתעמולת הבחירות מישראל. הליכוד עוסק במסע הפחדה. חלומו האירוטי התגשם והחמאס זכה בבחירות- ונתניהו יכול לשלוף את הסיסמאות הישנות. וכמובן רק הוא יצליח לטפל בחמאס. הוא מקווה שלעם ישראל יש זיכרון של אפרות עם פיגור שכלי. מפלגת העבודה מוכירה שמיליון פועלים מרוויחים פחות מ 3500 שקל לחודש, והיא מבטיחה שכר מינימום של אלף דולאר לחודש.

מפלגת קדימה, המובילה בכל הסקרים, מראה את נבחיריה שמדברים על מרשתו של שרון, על הצורך להיות ממלכתי ולהשתנות, וברקע רואים תמונות של שרון. יד על הלב-קדימה הכי משכנעת, הכי מאוזנת והכי ממלכתית. העבודה שטובים ונבחרים עובו מפלגות שונות כדי להקים משהו ממלכתי, שאינו קשור למרכז הליכוד הבידיוני, ולא לעסקני ההסתדרות של מפלגת העבודה,-בהחלט עושה חשק לנסות. זו כמובן דעתי האישית, אך עושה רושם שישראלים רבים חושבים בצורה דומה. אבל שישאר בינינו.

העלמה מבריכת גן הדסה

אבי לב הוא עורך סרטים בכיר של ה-סי.בי.סי. כאיש קולנוע ותיק (מיוצרי "לול" של אורי זוהר ואריק איינשטיין), הוא מצלם מפעם לפעם סרט משלו. הפעם מדובר בסרט ביוגרפי "אבי אבי". ההנחה של אבי לב היא שכל ישראלי, אם יָשב עם ישראלי אחר, הם ימצאו לפחות מכר אחד משותף מהעבר. בסרט "אבי אבי" מוזהים אבי לב, והצייר אבי זיו אב (שניהם תושבי טורונטו) דמות מן העבר הזעל אביבי הרחוק שלהם-העלמה מבריכת גן הדסה.

הסרט עוסק בחיים הכפולים של כל ישראלי שחי הרחק מארצו (כלומר כלנו) , בנעוריהם, באכזבה מכך שישראל לא נשארה כפי שעיזבנו אותה, בהתמודדות עם תחושת הירידה.

הסרט "אבי אבי" יקרין בהקרנת בכורה עולמית ב-8 במאי במסגרת הפסטיבל היהודי של טורונטו. רישמו את התאריך הזה, מובטחת חוויה מרגשת. הסרט יקרין לאחר מכן בפסטיבל הסרטים של אילת, ובטורונטו במסגרת הבמת הישראלי.

או היתה קטע משיר הנושא של "אבי אבי":

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היא היתה הנקבה של האצלם פיט,
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Coast to Coast

Two white supremacists fined for spreading hate on the net

Online messages included jokes about the Holocaust

TORONTO — Two white supremacists violated Canada's hate laws by posting offensive material about blacks and Jews on the Internet, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled earlier this month.

In a decision released March 10, the tribunal said the now-defunct websites contained messages that exposed non-Christians and non-whites to "hatred and contempt."

The tribunal ordered the men, one of whom ran the web-hosting service that carried the sites, to stop spreading hate, imposed fines totalling $13,000 and awarded $5,000 to the complainant, Ottawa human rights lawyer Richard Warman.

It was the first time a Canadian Internet web-hosting service was found financially liable for hate messages.

One of the men, Alexan Kulbashian of Toronto, ran a web-hosting service, AffordableSpace.com, that carried the messages. The ruling also ordered the service shut down.

Kulbashian and the other man, James Richardson of London, Ont., were associated with the "Canadian Ethnic Cleansing Team" and www.tri-cityskins.com, which carried neo-Nazi and white supremacist material.

The two men were each fined $1,000, the Canadian Ethnic Cleansing Team was fined $3,000, and AffordableSpace.com was fined $3,000.

Warman was awarded $5,000 because he was the subject of personal attacks on the website.

The online messages included jokes about the Holocaust and songs about blacks, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs and other minorities.

"Black persons and people of the Jewish faith are particularly laid open to ridicule, ill feelings or hostility, creating the right conditions for hatred or contempt against them to flourish," the 48-page ruling states.

Warman, who launched the complaint in early 2002, told Canadian Press he was "ecstatic" about the decision. "It shows human rights laws work."

He has had several more cases before the tribunal.

Bernie Farber, CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, said the judgment "makes a huge and important statement."

He said the sites in question were "ugly, vile and brutal."

The tribunal has shut down Internet sites in a half-dozen cases in the past few years.

The first major Internet-related decision came in 2002, when it forced Holocaust-denier Ernst Zundel to close his website.

This week, Canadian Jewish Congress is expected to unveil a link on its website (www.cjc.ca) to which the public may report hate-related websites and other online activity.

The link was expected to coincide with the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination on March 21.

SASKATOON PURIM PARTY

The hall of Congregation Agudas Israel was converted into a Mediterranean wonderland for the Saskatoon Jewish community's Purim Shanty Panty Hafla the night of March 12. More than 100 people dressed as characters from the Bible, feasted on Israeli food, watched – and took part in – belly-dancing, and participated in a drum circle.

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Ramah The Camping Arm of Conservative Judaism

Anne Frank cast work well together

By BRYAN BORZYKOWSKI
Special to The CJN

Putting on a new version of *The Diary Of Anne Frank* is not easy. By now, Anne Frank has a place in every Jewish person's psyche. We've read the book, a lot of us have seen the play and others have been to the attic where Anne hid during the Holocaust.

Stage Centre Productions, a 30-year-old theatre company that produces plays at the Fairview Library Theatre, chose the updated Broadway version of *The Diary of Anne Frank* as the second-last show of its 2005-2006 season. Although it's slightly different than the first version by Albert Hackett (the new adaptation is more explicit about Anne going through puberty), the play maintains much of the authenticity of the original.

It's hard to get excited about the script because it's all familiar. We know when Dr. Dussel gets added to the attic and how Anne and Peter's relationship will develop, but thanks to some stellar acting, especially from Monica Paraghamian who plays Anne Frank, the production succeeds.

Paraghamian is young, vibrant and dripping with talent. Unlike some of the other actors, the first-year university student plays this difficult role with ease. Her timing is flawless, making the audience laugh at times and bringing them to tears on other occasions. Paraghamian is given a lot of dialogue – Anne gets criticized repeatedly for talking too much – but she never misses a beat.

Monica Paraghamiam as Anne Frank.

Unfortunately, some of the other acting is not as memorable. Brian Kipping, who plays Otto Frank, looked more like Marlon Brando circa 1995 than Anne's lanky father. His delivery seemed forced, and he wasn't particularly believable.

But he wasn't the only one who faltered. Bob Martyn failed to give Mr. Dussel any personality. The grumpy dentist came across as always upset, always outraged. There was nothing sensitive or likable about Dussel, even when opportunities afforded Martyn to play with Dussel's emotions.

Still, some of the best parts of the play come when all eight actors have the chance to feed off each other. Many scenes called for the actors to argue and create a sense of urgency that's unique to the Holocaust, which they did effortlessly.

In one particularly engaging scene, Mr. Van Daam (played by Alan Washbrook) is caught stealing bread. Immediately, things become tense. Mr. Van Daam runs away, crying with guilt, while Mrs. Frank (Rita Lynham) berates the Van Daams for their selfishness. It is also the first time in the story that Mrs. Frank stands up for her family, to Anne's surprise.

That highly emotional scene serves to portray the housemates' frustration with each other and their situation, and without the right mix of anger and tension, it could fall flat. But, as with many other scenes, the cast handled this complex act with respect and integrity. It was clear that the actors, many of whom are not Jewish, studied the story and carefully crafted their characters to present an accurate account of what happened.

In addition to staying true to the characters, the play paid careful attention to the attic's esthetics. The stage was sufficiently cramped, not unlike the actual attic, and all the characters wore authentic 1940s clothing. Detail was clearly important to Stage Centre Productions' artistic director. He researched what type of cake someone in Holland would eat during the 1940s, and then had someone bake it for the Franks and Van Daams to eat on New Year's.

This is an excellent performance for those who haven't read *The Diary of Anne Frank*. The production stays true to Anne's story and struggle and will send the audience home satisfied. However, if you have seen the play, watching this production is somewhat redundant. The Stage Centre doesn't add anything new to the story, and with one actor stealing the show, the performances don't outweigh the familiarity.

The play is on until March 25 at the Fairview Library Theatre, 35 Fairview Mall Drive, Toronto. 416-299-5557.

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Arts & Travel

Pianist Robert Silverman strikes a chord with audiences

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

When his fingers dance along the piano keys, Robert Silverman isn't merely focused on creating beautiful music – he's out to strike a resounding chord with the audience.

"If there's anything that characterizes my playing, it seems to be that audiences get drawn in," says the famed pianist.

"I reach into the music and if people can also communicate with the music, then I've done my job."

A job well done has been Silverman's signature throughout his illustrious career, which includes 25-plus CD recordings, a Juno nomination, sold-out concerts on four continents and winning the Paul de Hueck and Norman Walford Career Achievement Award for keyboard artistry.

A buzz is now swirling in Toronto in anticipation of his upcoming solo recital on March 28 at 8 p.m., presented by the Koffler Centre for the Arts, School of Music, where he is artist-in-residence.

"I love performing in Toronto… and I welcome the opportunity to be affiliated with the Jewish community there," says Silverman in an interview from his home in Vancouver.

The recital program features works by Chopin, Debussy and Mozart.

The 67-year-old former University of British Columbia (UBC) School of Music director began playing at the age of four

"My parents, Abe and Fanny, liked music and they noticed they had a little kid who was tuning into the radio and always stopped to listen when there was good music on," Silverman recalls.

"We also lived next door to a piano teacher, so I started to take lessons."

As fortune would have it, this music teacher, Esther Breitman, was the mother of Dorothy Morton, Silverman's piano teacher throughout his youth.

Although it was crystal-clear Silverman was precocious he played with the Montreal Symphony when he was only 14 – the musical whiz didn't aspire to be a professional until he was a university student.

Performance creating a buzz in Toronto

In fact, he initially studied engineering

"At some point or other, I just decided engineering wasn't for me," he says.

"When I graduated, I went off to study piano in Vienna and it went very well."

During most of the 1960s and early '70s, Silverman lived in the United States, studying and teaching music, as well as recording some LPs.

His first big break came in 1967, when he won a piano competition and followed that up with some recordings.

"I recorded with a company that specialized in music that hadn't already been recorded," Silverman says.

"I wouldn't want to have to eat on the money they earned, but they were good recordings and they got a lot of attention."

In time, Silverman was a top choice for recordings, as well as concerts, and in 1973, a position opened up at UBC.

So he happily returned to Canada to launch a successful teaching career that lasted three decades.

"I'm very fond of saying that I'm a better pianist because I have taught," Silverman says.

"It's not only for the obvious reason of helping talented students develop, but also, teaching has forced me to think and intellectualize about the piano and music in a way that I might not have done if I wasn't teaching."

After a rewarding and prolific teaching career, Silverman is now dedicating his time to recordings and concerts.

Chopin, Debussy and Mozart

Marquis Classics recently released his latest CD, *Starry, Starry Night*, a compilation of 24 pieces with a nighttime theme running through the songs.

"Nighttime has always intrigued creative artists," Silverman notes on his website.

"In the 19th and early 20th centuries, composers like Chopin, Liszt, Schumann, Debussy and Ravel enriched the piano repertoire with dazzling portrayals of nighttime's diverse sounds, moods, hues and scents."

To commemorate the 250th anniversary of Mozart's birth, Silverman will be playing a series of shows this year in several cities, including Vancouver, Kitchener and Winnipeg, highlighting the composer's sonatas.

And count on seeing more of him in Toronto in the near future.

"I'm starting a series next year in Toronto called Music From Inside Out, in which I'll be doing a series of recitals based on a certain theme… where I'll be both playing and talking about the music," he says.

For more information about the upcoming concert, call 416-636-1880, ext. 228, or e-mail kofflermusic@bjcc.ca.

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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

ART OR INVASION OF PRIVACY?

A U.S. Supreme Court judge has dismissed a lawsuit by an elderly chassidic man, ruling that copies of a photograph of him obtained surreptitiously on a public street are art, not commerce, and may continue to be sold for large sums because they are protected by the First Amendment.

Erno Nussenzweig, a retired diamond dealer from New Jersey, inadvertently stepped into a photographic setup near New York's Times Square, allowing award-winning photographer **Philip-Lorca diCorcia** to capture a head shot of him. The photo shows him facing almost directly into the camera, sporting a scraggly white beard, black hat and black coat.

DiCorcia included a three-by-four-foot print of Nussenzweig in "Heads," an exhibition of photographs of 17 subjects taken without their knowledge that was shown at New York's Chelsea Gallery in 2001. He has sold 10 individual prints for about US $20,000 to $30,000 (US) each.

Nussenzweig's son reportedly discovered the photograph in a catalogue of diCorcia's work in a bookstore last year. The Hungarian-born Holocaust survivor alleged in his lawsuit that his privacy was invaded and that his image was used unlawfully for commercial purposes.

Although New York's right-to-privacy law prohibits usage for commerce, the law does not apply if the likeness is considered art. Nussenzweig's lawyer is planning to appeal.

* * *

Hochschild Wins Gelber Prize: Adam Hochschild has won the Lionel Gelber Prize for *Bury the Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire's Slaves* (Houghton Mifflin), a book that examines the dark and disturbing world of the international slave trade in the late 1700s and 1800s.

A California university instructor in journalism, Hochschild is due to accept the $15,000 award and give a public lecture at the University of Toronto's Munk Centre on April 4.

Referring to the last decades of the 1700s, Hochschild writes: "If, early that year, you had stood on a London street corner and insisted that slavery was morally wrong and should be stopped, nine out of 10 listeners would have laughed you off as a crackpot."

He is the first repeat winner of the prize, which the Toronto-based Lionel Gelber Foundation awards to the year's best foreign policy book in partnership with the Munk Centre and Washington-based *Foreign Policy* magazine. He also won in 1999 for *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa*.

* * *

Polish-Israeli Relations: The Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation presents **Konstanty Gebert**, a journalist, dissident and human-rights activist who is regarded as the leading voice of Polish Jewry. Gebert is the author of eight books and editor of *Midrasz*, a journal on Polish-Jewish relations. He is currently a visiting professor in the United States and has not visited Toronto for a decade.
He is speaking on "Unlikely Allies: Polish-Israeli Relations Since 1989." University of Toronto Wolfond Centre, 36 Harbord St. (corner Harbord and Huron). Admission $5. Monday, March 27, 7:30 p.m.

* * *

Names in the News: York University and its fine arts faculty celebrate the opening this week of The Accolade Project, a new teaching, exhibition and performance complex, with a weeklong arts festival that includes a Toast to York Film on March 24.

The film toast features award-winning productions by York students and alumni. It is hosted by film professor, writer and broadcaster **Seth Feldman** and York alumnus **Larry Weinstein**, a director-producer with Rhombus Media. The line-up includes Weinstein's six-minute cult classic *Toothpaste* and his 50-minute *Burnt Toast*. The fest runs until March 26.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Because God Loves Stories is a storytelling memorial concert, co-sponsored by the Storytellers School of Toronto, in tribute to the late **Alec Gelcer**, founding father and cornerstone of the Toronto storytelling community. Featured storyteller is **Michael Wex**, writer, lecturer, performer and "Yiddish national treasure." PWYC; suggested donation $10. Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave. at Bloor. Monday, April 3, 8 p.m.

• The Betel Centre's Life Long Learning Institute hosts a luncheon with **Prof. Ruby Newman**, discussing **David Bezmozgis'** prize-winning *Natasha and Other Stories*. Members $12, non-members $15. Please purchase tickets at ticket desk until April 3. Wednesday, April 5, 12 noon.

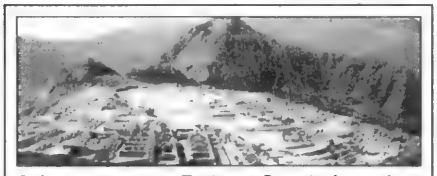
• The National Jazz Awards invites the public to vote for their favourite nominees in 26 jazz-related categories at the website www.nationaljazzawards.com before March 31 at midnight. A gala awards evening is scheduled for Toronto's Old Mill Inn on April 10. 416-207-2004.

• Beth Tzedec Congregation presents **Evelyn Wolfe**, author of the recent autobiography *Stray Cats & Other Loves: Growing up Jewish in Toronto*, and **Ira Basen**, co-author of *The Book of Lists: The Original Compendium of Curious Information*. 1700 Bathurst St. (Enter from parking lot). Free admission. Wednesday, March 29, 1:30 p.m.

• The historic Kiever Synagogue in downtown Toronto is the venue for a concert this weekend as **Aaron Bensoussan** and the **Dafina Orchestra** perform a tapestry of Middle Eastern rhythms, jazz, flamenco and world music.

Bensoussan has performed all over the world and has appeared at New York's Carnegie Hall and the Jerusalem Theater. His orchestra is an ensemble of top musicians from Toronto: **Chris Gartner**, **Levon Ichkhanian**, **Aaron Lightstone**, **Chris McKhool**, **Ernie Tollar** and **Jeff Wilson**. Their repertoire is laced with original compositions and Judeo-Moroccan folk classics.

The concert is at the Kiever, 25 Bellevue Ave., at Bathurst and Dundas, on Sunday, March 26, 8 p.m. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are $15 in advance or $20 at the door. 416-633-3838.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Arts & Travel

Performance combines classical, jazz, klezmer music and dance

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

For most mainstream music fans – especially younger ones – classical music is not their sound of choice.

But acclaimed pianist Andrew Burashko wants to change that.

As the artistic director of the Art of Time Ensemble, a chamber music society, Burashko is endeavouring to present this rich form of music in a contemporary and exciting manner.

"There is so much convention and formality associated with classical music – from the way people dress to the way they behave," says the Toronto resident.

"But this music expresses all kinds of things that other music doesn't. It's incredibly intense and passionate… and if people are able to open themselves up to it, it will make an impact on them that other kinds of music just can't do."

Burashko's approach is to intermingle classical music with other genres and art forms.

To that end, the Art of Time Ensemble will be performing a dynamic program at 8 p.m. on March 24 and 25 at Harbourfront Centre Theatre. The performance incorporates classical music, jazz, klezmer and choreographed dances, as well as film and literature.

"Every program we have done has been a new experiment in sort of mixing genres," he says.

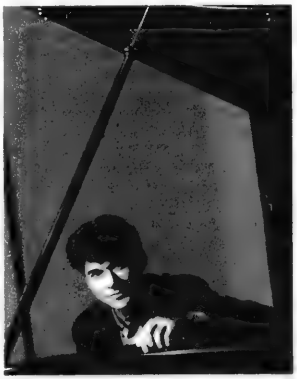
"It's all about making classical music more accessible to more people and getting them to let their guard down."

The event at Harbourfront, titled Shostakovich: A Centenary Celebration, showcases the works of Dimitri Shostakovich, the famed Russian composer, marking 100 years since his birth.

"Shostakovich had a lot of very close Jewish friends and he embraced Jewish music," notes Burashko.

"His music is incredibly powerful and moving."

As part of the performance, live and recorded excerpts of letters Shostakovich penned will be read aloud.



Andrew Burashko

"Unless the audience already listens to Shostakovich or classical music, it's very foreign to them," Burashko says.

"Having text [read] creates a context… in terms of the music itself – where it came from, the time and place."

Born in Moscow to a family of musicians, Burashko came to Canada as a child.

The piano was a major part of his life from an early age.

By age 17, he made his debut with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

But after completing high school, Burashko began questioning his desire to pursue a musical career and took a year off from the piano.

"It was all tied up with rebellion," he relates.

"[Playing the piano didn't] seem fun anymore when you're made to do it."

The absence away from the instrument actually made his heart grow fonder for it and when he returned to the piano, he did so on his own terms, quite contentedly.

Since then, Burashko has cemented a reputation as one of the great soloists and chamber contributors.

He has played throughout North America and Europe, has recorded on three different labels and is regularly heard on CBC Radio.

His true labour of love, though, is the Art of Time Ensemble.

When it started up in 1998, the project was relatively small in scope.

But now, Burashko is shifting it into high gear.

"This year has been a huge experiment," he says.

"We've had two events that were both well attended and I'm hoping for more growth and momentum."

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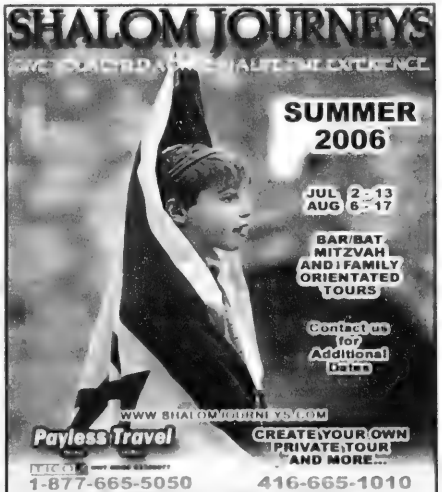

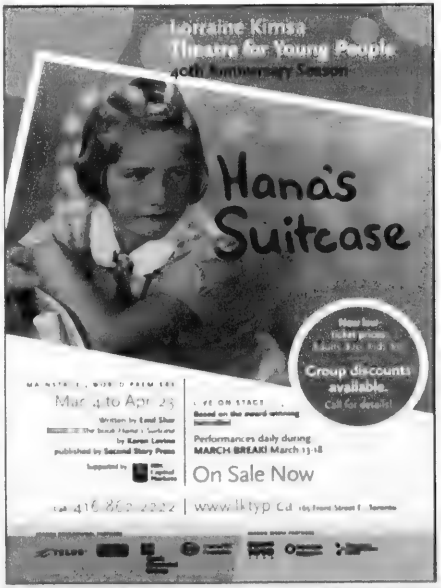

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Holocaust memoirs from Ukraine and Poland

There Is an Apple in My Freezer: A True Story **by Zanetta Nestel, JPN Books..**

At the Mercy of Strangers: Survival in Nazi-Occupied Poland **by Gitel Hopfeld, Mosaic Press.**

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

On Oct. 12, 1941, a day of bloody infamy, the Nazis massacred about 12,000 Jews in the Jewish cemetery in the Ukrainian town of Stanislawow, also known as Ivanofrankivsk. But as evening drew nigh, the weary killers halted the carnage, providing an unintended reprieve to another 6,000 Jews, including Zanetta Nestel, the author of *There Is an Apple in My Freezer: A True Story* and her infant daughter.

Reminiscent of the biblical Hagar or a modern Jewish madonna and child, Nestel and her baby subsequently survived many harrowing incidents before reaching the blessed freedom of Canada about 1948. This memoir, published more than half a century later, recounts the perpetual danger, numbing hunger, gruelling hardships, impossible hopes and bitter disappointments of those years in which many ordinary people variously became saints or monsters.

"What was it that miraculously enabled me to survive?" Nestel, who became a successful artist in Canada, muses. "Obviously, it was a combination of resourcefulness, perseverance, the good fortune of being with good people at the right time and, most importantly of all, the strength that came from refusing to give up my child."

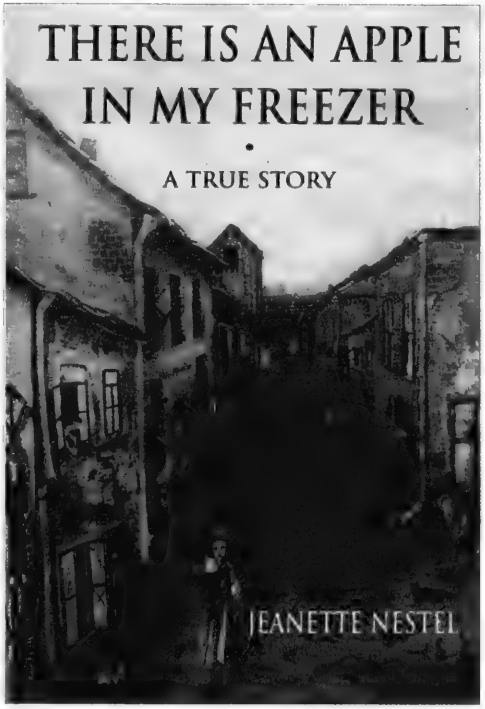
Nestel was married at 18. Her husband left for the Russian army and word soon reached her that he had been killed. Establishing a ghetto, the Germans required all single mothers to marry or get a job; in desperation, she begged her cousin, a doctor, for assistance. He put a stethoscope, thermometer and other instruments into a medical bag and gave it to her along with a notarized note that she was an independent registered nurse.

This was the first of her various impersonations, the most useful of which required her to learn to pray as a Catholic. Escaping from the ghetto, she often found herself at the mercy of blackmailers, rogues, suspicious neighbours and others only too willing to finger her to the authorities. Just securing food and shelter for herself and others often meant routine exposure to extreme risks.

Born Zanetta Plesser, Nestel witnessed cruel atrocities; passed miraculously through checkpoints with false papers; bluffed her way out of numerous certain-death situations; stole bread and blankets to survive; and bravely endangered herself to save lives. Every page of her memoir conveys the notion of a world gone crazy, of humanity at an abysmal low. In the midst of one close escape she "vowed that if I got out of this alive I would leave this snake-pit country as soon as I could," and the reader cries out a hearty "amen!"

Her tale is filled with irony. In one episode, she and several others were confronted by armed Jewish partisans in the woods, one of whom pointed a gun at her. "I was in a terrible predicament," she writes. "I wanted to tell them that I was Jewish, but I didn't dare in the presence of Felicia and Mr. Poplinki, who surely would report me later." Conversely, once the war is over, some Jews accused her of being a German or a collaborator because of her rusty Yiddish.

In Nestel's eyes, Soviet forces and Polish clerks processed the survivors of the Majdanek concentration camp in a highly bureaucratic and uncaring fashion. Ragged partisans and even more ragged former prisoners were lumped together to wait in line for aid. Among the more pitiful episodes that she records is one involving a human "heap of rags and bones" who comes forward for help:



"The clerk laughed a superior sneer that I had heard before, usually coming from individuals in positions of power.

"'And what does a Jew want?' he asked.

"'A place to live,' came the answer.

"'Where have you been up to now?'

" 'In the wheat.'

"'Ah, in the wheat, eh? Who is stopping you from staying there now?'

"'The wheat has been cut down,' the man replied."

This tragic figure was met with derision and impatience on all fronts. Upon being told, "Go, go, where you belong," he meekly shuffled away with a "crazy smile" on his face.

Nestel records her chance meeting with the husband she thought was dead (he had chosen not to answer her letters) and her encounter with the Russian soldier, Julius Nestel, who would eventually become her husband. She and Julius were planning to go to Palestine but chose to stay behind rather than submit to a requirement that her daughter travel separately with a group of war orphans. Israel's loss was Canada's gain.

Nestel and her grown daughter later revisited the various scenes of their odyssey, including an orchard where she had picked sour apples to eat; more apples were waiting for her, thus explaining the book's title.

• • •

Another recent Holocaust memoir published locally is *At the Mercy of Strangers; Survival in Nazi-Occupied Poland* by Gitel Hopfeld. The author recalls how she and her two children survived the Shoah through the acts of bravery by priests, farmers, a railway station master and other merciful strangers. The book was originally written in Polish; the translator and editor is Simcha Simchovitch, the distinguished Toronto writer-poet, who is Hopfeld's nephew.

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Mourning traditions 'a template,' rabbi says

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

Grief is like a Slinky, said Rabbi Yossi Sapirman, demonstrating what he meant using an actual Slinky in front of a packed auditorium recently at Kolel, the Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning.

When a loss is first experienced, the Slinky of grief is coiled tight, and the pain is constant, he said.

Over time, it stretches more and more, getting so stretched that you may hardly notice it after a while. But occasionally – on dates such as anniversaries, birthdays, holidays – it snaps back tight again. Then, the stretching begins anew. It never goes away.

Rabbi Sapirman, spiritual leader of Beth Torah Congregation, spoke Feb. 26 at a talk titled "The Mourning After," this year's annual free Marsha Goldstein Quiles memorial *shiur* (class). Goldstein Quiles was the late sister of Kolel rabbinic director Rabbi Elyse Goldstein, and in her introduction, Rabbi Goldstein spoke of her sister's strong belief in "talking about Judaism in a non-coercive way."

Rabbi Sapirman, who credited Rabbi Goldstein with the Slinky metaphor, began with a comprehensive overview of Jewish mourning traditions, and went on to describe contemporary variations on them from his own experience as a congregational rabbi.

"It's not the rabbi's job to be rigid to traditions," he said. "There are degrees of observance. There's room for individual expression."

He gave a number of examples.

When a healthy young man was murdered in his prime, his family couldn't bring themselves to let go. Instead of using the traditional shovels, with Rabbi Sapirman's blessing, the family buried the man by hand – literally placing dirt in his grave by the handful. That time-consuming process, Rabbi Sapirman said, served to make the loss more real and help them achieve closure.

Another family lost a young baby within 30 days of the child's birth, before full mourning customs are observed. The challenge, he said, was to "find a way the parents could express their intense grief" while not performing all the rituals they would for an adult. Because *kriah*, the ceremonial tearing of a garment or ribbon, isn't done for a newborn, the parents chose to write their eulogy, then tear the paper it was written on and place it in the grave.

Other innovations may also bring comfort, such as music or singing at a funeral.

However, Rabbi Sapirman said, some contemporary practices may actually hinder the difficult "work of mourning."

He said he's "not a fan" of the three-day shivah and suggests instead that families sit for seven days, but perhaps observe three days of "public" shivah and keep the last four days private.

"[Mourning] traditions are a template," he said, noting the wisdom behind small traditional gestures such as serving eggs, a symbol of life, to mourners.

"We use simple things to get through difficult times."

There is also power in the traditional Hebrew phrase, "May you be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem," as well as the public recognition of mourners in synagogue.

Some popular traditions are simply misguided, Rabbi Sapirman said, such as throwing out the shoes of a deceased loved one, which is nowhere in the original halachah and can lead to thousands of dollars in waste, "instead of giving [the shoes] to someone who needs them."

Rabbi Sapirman said every spiritual leader has pastoral moments they don't look forward to, such as his recent responsibility to eulogize 25-year-old murder victim Alicia Ross.

"A rabbi is called upon to have words, and there are no words," he said.

He offered advice for planning a meaningful eulogy. Mourners needn't be bound by formalities: be creative, mention anything respectful that comes to mind. He said he always asks families "what else are you thinking of?" to trigger memories they might not think to include. "Say what you want to hear on that day: 'She was a mensch. He was a true, true tzaddik.'"

He also raised the difficult question of what to say to mourners. "It's not our job to distract the mourner," such as by telling jokes at a shivah. Sometimes, it's enough to just sit quietly and wait for them to begin speaking.

Rabbi Sapirman noted that mourning must always come to an end. While a mourner remains separate in some ways for a full year, once that period is over, "opting out is no longer possible… you are not allowed to mourn."

Group advocates for special needs young adults

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

A group of Jewish parents who have teenage or young adult children with special needs has formed a new advocacy group that is trying to create a working and living environment for them in the Greater Toronto Area.

Called DANI – short for Developing and Nurturing Independence Parent Advocacy Group – the group aims to help young adults aged 21 and over, regardless of their religious affiliation, financial status or ability.

Its goals in the next two to four years, are, among other things, to create kosher homes for people, where they would receive the level of support they need; a factory-type, sheltered workshop where kosher food products can be made or seasonal work done; a kosher coffee house with a bakery attached; an arts and crafts gift shop; integrated work placement opportunities for individuals who can benefit from this; and guided work placement for individuals who need more help.

Kathy Laszlo, the mother of a 19-year-old son, Danny, who has special needs, spearheaded the group's formation.

It's a big project, "but everything has to start with a dream," she says. "It's necessary, because once our kids reach age 21, there is nothing out there for them. They're entitled to nothing but a disability pension."

Many of these young adults want to live on their own in the community, she says, but existing agencies serve families in crisis first, because the waiting list for homes is so long.

"We don't want to wait for a crisis. We don't want our kids in emergency placement. We want to make sure they get proper placement and remain part of the Jewish community."

The group has invited various agencies to come and speak to group members, she says, "and we're told repeatedly that the only solution is to try and do something ourselves. It is the only way to go."

Laszlo would like to see community members get involved in the project. "I envision young retirees shadowing individuals as they go about their work, and other volunteers shadowing our kids as they take part in social programs."

Laszlo started the advocacy group, but she says "its membership is strong and growing by the minute. We're all working hard because we're in the same shoes."

She plans to begin fundraising within the Jewish community for the group's projects. "A community is not measured by how many shuls it has, but rather, how it cares for its vulnerable members."

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Are UNRWA staffers neutral or partisan?

By MICHAEL T. JORDAN
JTA

There may be no greater test of the United Nations' vaunted neutrality than to be a Palestinian staffer of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency in Gaza or the West Bank.

UNRWA has 12,000-plus employees in those areas – where it's the second-largest employer after the Palestinian Authority – and similar numbers in camps in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. In all, more than 99 per cent of its staff members are Palestinian.

No other UN agency boasts such an overwhelming ratio of local to foreign field staff. And nine of 10 UNRWA employees are themselves refugees, the agency says.

UNRWA employees and their families in the Palestinian territories go through everything that society at large endures, which during the intifadah meant the self-described "daily humiliations" of restricted movement, material deprivation and Israeli anti-terrorist raids.

Nevertheless, UNRWA employees must sign a code of conduct that compels them to avoid actions that "may adversely affect on their status, or on the integrity, independence and impartiality which are required by that status."

Realistically, though, some observers ask: would it be surprising if UNRWA employees were to loathe Israel and embrace the Palestinian cause – and have it influence their work?

Some of UNRWA's harsher critics speak as if the agency were actively complicit in terrorism, but others say the situation isn't black and white. With lawlessness, intimidation and violence now widespread – UNRWA itself has relocated some international staff from Gaza to Jerusalem – Palestinian staff members may simply find it prudent to avert their eyes from the militancy around them.

UNRWA officials note that the UN General Assembly never gave the agency policing or intelligence-gathering responsibilities in its camps. Moreover, UNRWA officials say, it could be dangerous to ask too many questions about what's going on around them.

Yet staff certainly can make a difference, says Astrid Van Genderen Stort, a spokesperson for the UN High Commission for Refugees, which takes care of the world's 19 million non-Palestinian refugees.

Kofi Annan paying his respects at Yasser Arafat's grave. [JTA photo]

In some cases, Van Genderen Stort says, UNHCR teams with local military, police or foreign peacekeepers to look out for armed elements stirring up trouble. In other cases, camp residents have established something of a "night watch."

"It's not that we have intelligence on the ground or that they're spying on their neighbours, but they know who's in their community and they keep an eye out," says Van Genderen Stort, who recently worked in Liberia's refugee camps. "We of course want to help only those who are refugees and in need of help. We don't want to be an agency that helps rebels who go out at night and fight."

When it comes to UNRWA, at least some staffers seem to share their clients' more extreme views.

The UNRWA teachers' union, for example, reportedly is dominated by members affiliated with Hamas, listed as a terror organization in much of the West. Observers have cited numerous instances where suicide bombers and other terrorists were glorified in UNRWA schools, whether through graffiti on school walls or posters in the classrooms.

In one incident, Hamas convened a July 2001 conference in an UNRWA junior high school in Gaza's Jabalya refugee camp.

"The road to Palestine passes through the blood of the fallen, and these fallen have written history with parts of their flesh and their bodies," one UNRWA teacher, Saheil Alhinadi, said in praise of "martyrdom," a euphemism for suicide terrorism.

The former UNRWA chief, Peter Hansen, got into hot water in October 2004 when he told CBC Television, "I'm sure there are Hamas members on the UNRWA payroll, and I don't see that as a crime. Hamas as a political organization does not mean that every member is a militant, and we do not do political vetting and exclude people from one persuasion as against another."

Hansen later explained to JTA that he meant Hamas sympathizers, not members.

"Don't judge people by what you think they may or may not believe. Judge them by what they do, in their actions and in their behaviour," he told JTA. "And there we get back to the very strict behaviour code we have in the agency for what staff members are to do and not to do in their behaviour."

Israel, however, says the question isn't just staff members' political allegiances but, sometimes, their actions.

In recent years, Israel has arrested dozens of UNRWA staffers – 31 from mid-2004 to mid-2005 alone, according to UNRWA – for alleged involvement in terrorism and other activities. Most are released within days or weeks, without charges – but not all.

Nahed Attalah, an UNRWA official arrested by Israeli forces in 2002, reportedly confessed to using his UN travel permit and his UNRWA car to transport terrorists to attack sites, and to entering Syria and Lebanon to arrange weapons purchases for terrorist groups.

In August 2002, Israel arrested UNRWA ambulance driver Nidal Abd Al Fatah Abdallah Nazal, whom officials later said confessed to being a Hamas member and using his ambulance to transport arms and messages to Hamas activists.

In 2003, Israel convicted three staffers: a Hamas member got 32 months for having a machine gun and delivering chemicals to a bomb-maker; an Islamic Jihad member received 2½ years for possessing materials for possible use in explosives; and a third person was sentenced to 7½ years for shooting a gun and firebombing an Israeli bus.

In May 2004, Israeli television showed gunmen piling into an UNRWA ambulance.

UNRWA officials say it's unfair to tarnish an organization of thousands for the actions of a few. They also claim the Israeli judicial system is biased, with UNRWA denied access to both detainees and the evidence against them – so they're skeptical about staff arrests and convictions.

Even a former Israeli diplomat chastises his government's policy of claiming to have a smoking gun that proves UNRWA's terrorist links, then withholding the evidence on grounds of "national security." That fuels speculation that Israel doesn't have the goods, the diplomat said.

"When the UN asks for proof and Israel says it's classified, to me, that's like not having any evidence at all," the official, who requested anonymity, told JTA.

The most notorious instance occurred in early October 2004, when Israel announced it had footage of a Qassam rocket being loaded into an UNRWA ambulance. UNRWA asserted that the object in question was a rolled-up stretcher.

After further scrutiny, Israel conceded it had blundered – it was indeed a stretcher. But the incident reflected how, after years of tension with UNRWA, Israel was inclined to believe the worst about the agency.

Even UNRWA leaders, however, admit their camps are heavily militarized.

"Of course I don't condone it, but it's a fact of life," Hansen said of the presence of heavily armed militants at an agency function, according to Associated Press. "Look around the camp. We can't stop it. We don't have guns."

As Hansen later confided to the Danish paper *Politiken*, "Who in this camp dares to speak up against an armed man?"

Though UN resolutions require armed elements to steer clear of refugee camps, Karen Koning AbuZayd conceded, in an August 2002 *Jerusalem Report* story, that expelling gunmen from the camps would be "difficult in this region."

In Gaza and the West Bank, everything is "upside down. The refugees are the armed elements," said AbuZayd, who at the time of the interview was Hansen's deputy and who has now succeeded him.

Then there are instances of Palestinian violence that target UNRWA itself.

Last August, three UNRWA staffers – two Europeans and a Palestinian – were kidnapped in the Khan Younis camp in Gaza by what UNRWA described as a "militant group." UNRWA protested, and the staffers were released later in the day, unharmed.

On New Year's Day 2006, Palestinians firebombed the UN club in Gaza City, which flies the UNRWA flag and is said to be the only establishment in town that serves alcohol, drawing the ire of Islamic fundamentalists. The club's guard was tied up and beaten.

UNRWA staffers who venture into the fray may risk repercussions.

In April 2004, Israel's assassination of Hamas leaders Sheik Ahmed Yassin and Abdel-Aziz Rantissi sparked an outpouring of emotion among Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

According to the *Daily Star* of Beirut, the UNRWA chief in Lebanon, Richard Cook, ordered his staff to go into agency schools and tear down posters glorifying "martyrdom." Refugee leaders declared Cook persona non grata and reportedly barred him briefly from the camps.

"We have to take the safety of our staff into account," AbuZayd explained to the *Report* in her 2002 interview. "If we were to ask our staff to do certain things, we realize that would get them into big trouble."

At the very least, the United States expects UNRWA to speak up. Washington is UNRWA's largest donor, providing about 30 per cent of the agency's roughly $400 million (US) budget in both 2004 and 2005.

Section 301(c) of the 1961 U.S. Foreign Assistance Act compels UNRWA to "take all possible measures to assure that no part of the United States contribution shall be used to furnish assistance to any refugee who is receiving military training as a member of the so-called Palestine Liberation Army or any other guerrilla type organization or who has engaged in any act of terrorism."

That pressure to vet seems to make the UNRWA hierarchy squirm.

In a November 2003 report, the U.S. General Accounting Office noted that UNRWA balked at the obligation to report what staff members see and hear, "owing to concerns for its staff's safety" and the "inability to verify beneficiary responses."

UNRWA's lawyers countered with a proposal that staffers not "knowingly" provide assistance to those involved with terrorist activities – a standard that critics say sets the bar too high, allowing for plausible deniability.

But UNRWA's request that the U.S. Congress clarify the meaning of "all possible measures" is a cop-out, said Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, a Florida republican who chairs the House of Representatives' committee on international relations' Middle East and South Asia subcommittee.

"The representatives of this UN agency will argue that they cannot account for their employees' activities given the large number of Palestinians on their payrolls," Ros-Lehtinen told JTA. "If they are not exerting oversight over what is taking place in the institutions run by their agency, then the U.S. must exert strict oversight over its contributions to this agency."

UNRWA camps also have seen a slew of "workplace accidents," a euphemism for bombs that explode prematurely as terrorists prepare them.

"We talked to UNRWA about it, that if it happens, that's *prima facie* evidence the person was a terrorist," a State Department official told JTA. "But UNRWA's lawyer says, 'Well, not really. It's not a terrorist act simply to make a bomb.'

"We say that's really getting into the weeds legally," the official continued. "We don't know what other purposes they would be constructing a bomb for, and they fall into our definition for what ought to be excluded.

"UNRWA agreed in the end, and one reason they did, frankly, is we're the biggest donors and they don't want to get into a spat with us."

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Israeli juniors earn IIHF silver medal

By LIONEL GAFFEN
Jerusalem Post

Israel's under-18 junior hockey team is moving up a division following a silver-medal performance at the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) under-18 Division III world championships in Miercurea Ciuc, Romania.

Israel finished the five-team round-robin tournament with a 3-1-1 record. The host Romanians captured the gold with an unblemished 5-0 record. South Africa was third with a 2-1-2 record.

Israel bounced back to tie New Zealand 4-4 in its final game of the tournament after a 13-2 pummelling at the hands of the Romanians.

Both Israel and Romania will advance to Division II at next year's world championships.

"What a game!" said Alan Maislin, chair of the Israel Ice Hockey Federation, in Romania, just moments after the tie with New Zealand. "It was very, very exciting. The team displayed a great deal of mental toughness, particularly in the third period, when all the pressure was on them.

"After that loss to Romania – to a much better team... consisting of 17- and 18-year-olds – our team did very well considering the circumstances. Six of our players are 14 years old."

On Sunday, the last day of the tournament, Shon Norman scored Israel's first goal but the blue-and-white trailed 2-1 at the end of the opening period. Daniel Ehrlich, the tournament MVP, evened the score with a short-handed effort during the second. Oren Zamir tallied on a power play in the third and Ehrlich then staked Israel to a 4-3 lead.

New Zealand tied the game in the closing minutes with the third of its goals scored with a man advantage.

Eden Nemenoff, between the pipes for Israel, made 28 saves.

"Our goal for this tournament was to be promoted to Division II, and we accomplished our main goal. Six of our players are graduating this year, so it's a great send-off for them," Maislin said.

Israel reeled off three straight wins to start the tournament.

Led by Erlich, who finished as tournament scoring leader with 26 points (12 goals, 14 assists), the Israelis registered easy victories over Turkey (14-3) and Bulgaria (14-1), and a closer 8-5 win over South Africa. Erlich is a centre with the Toronto Marlies' bantam team.

In what shaped up as the gold-medal game, Israel faced the undefeated host team in game four, but was no match for the Romanians, who had been sent down from Division II the year before.

The tournament was initially scheduled to be played at Team Israel's home rink at Canada Center in Metulla, but the IIHF moved the event to Romania, citing security concerns. Metulla is on Israel's northern border with Lebanon and shooting incidents near the frontier town late last year prompted parents of players on other teams to pressure the IIHF to switch venues.

Israel's head coach, Jean Perron, a Stanley Cup-winning coach with the 1986 Montreal Canadiens, was optimistic going into the tournament.

"We're shooting for the gold," he said. "The team is in much better shape than last year, with more depth, and we have three full lines to count on and five defencemen, compared with last year when we could only really count on two lines and two of the defencemen. Eden Nemenoff will be in goal, and he's playing much better than last year; he's stronger and quicker, and it'll be a big challenge for him."

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Jewish day school students play hooky to play hockey

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

More than 230 Jewish day school students took a day off school this month to compete in the 11th annual Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Hockey Tournament.

Fourteen teams from five Toronto Jewish days schools, all part of the Jewish Day School Hockey League (JDSHL), ended their season with the tourney, held March 10 at Chesswood Arena in North York.

"The kids love it," said Russell Pritchard, co-convener of the tournament and coach of United Synagogue Day School's Bayview campus Junior A team.

"For the most part, they don't love getting up at five in the morning to play... but they get rewarded by getting the day off school just to play hockey all day.

"The dynamic of having kids competing against kids they know – it's such an opportunity to see their buddies from another school," he added.

Participating schools included USDS, the Toronto Heschel School, Leo Baeck Day School, Associated Hebrew Schools and Bialik Hebrew Day School.

The teams, with players in grades 3 through 8, are divided into three divisions: Junior A, Junior B and Senior.

Centre Jake Pritchard of USDS Bayview

During the regular season, the juniors, in grades 3 to 5, play seven games and are ranked based on their record. The top four teams are placed in Junior A and the bottom four in Junior B.

The seniors, grades 6 to 8, play only five games in the regular season. There is a championship match for each division.

This year, Associated Kamin shut out USDS Bayview 7-0 in the Junior A final, Leo Baeck North defeated USDS Bathurst by a score of 5-2 in the Junior B final, and the USDS Bathurst Senior team beat Associated by the same score to take the championship.

Jake Pritchard, a 10-year-old centre on the USDS Bayview Junior A team, said he loves being part of the JDSHL.

"It's fun to play against kids that are also juniors," he said just before he took to the ice to face the Associated Posluns team in the semi-final. "I like to play with people from my school that I know and it's fun to try your hardest and score some goals."

Pritchard's teammate Corbin Greenwald, 11, has been playing in the JDSHL for three years.

"I like playing with my friends and hanging out in the dressing room and having fun," he said.

Time to look in the mirror

Sandie Benitah
20 Something

Isn't it sad that in 2006, in the most multicultural city in the world, to read about the despicable amount of ignorance that's documented in the Toronto police's annual report on hate crimes.

What's worse is that the Jewish and black communities continue to be at the top of the list of the most hated, with 33 hate crimes committed against each group in 2005.

But before I cast blame on the people who decided to scar our community last year, I'm going to take a closer look at myself.

How many times should I have been reported for a hate crime? Maybe I shouldn't have laughed so hard at a comedian's racist jokes the last time I went to a comedy club. Maybe I shouldn't have yelled "No wonder!" to the member of a visible minority who cut me off on the road the other day. Maybe I shouldn't make comments about my own religion, no matter how jokingly, just because I know I can get away with it while a stranger can't.

No one reported me to the police, but here is my confession. I'm just as guilty as anyone else for laughing, for thinking and for saying anything that puts down someone else just because of his or her background, religion or race.

It's not enough for us to write articles condemning cowardly hate crimes, or for us to give sound bites to the media on how saddened we are about recent statistics. We need to look inside and re-evaluate what we define as acceptable behaviour, because once we do, we'll realize the line of distinction between us and them is very thin.

The problem is that it's tough to draw a line dividing what is acceptable and what isn't. Should comedians be charged with hate crimes for telling racially charged jokes? And what about the media and free speech? Without it, we wouldn't have a true democracy, but with it, we're also somewhat responsible for sending the message that it's OK to act in a hurtful way to others.

For example, people will argue about the differences between spray-painting swastikas on walls and giving a speech in a lecture hall questioning the existence of the Holocaust. One is a senseless act of vandalism that promotes hatred but shows no backbone. The other is an "intellectual" debate held in a public forum supported by the backbone of democracy – free speech. But to any Jewish person, either occurrence feels like a slap in the face.

It's tough for journalists to debate the merits of free speech, but how can we tolerate and accept any kind of hatred, even if it's in an academic context?

Limiting ourselves in what we read or what we say is not the answer. Rather, the answer should be about how we think and how we articulate our ideas. Our articulateness and thoughtfulness are what freedom of speech is all about.

Freedom of speech is also about critical thinking, and when it's masked by blatant ignorance and stupidity, it's hard to see how much harm we're doing to ourselves and the communities we live in.

To commit a hate crime is to commit a great injustice toward a person and toward a community. When we laugh at offensive jokes or say offensive things in the heat of the moment, we might not be held criminally liable, but we are always liable to ourselves. We become the bullies of the schoolyard who instead of helping our peers, laugh when they are down.

We may not be the ones responsible for hate crimes, but we are always responsible for the unsolicited hatred that comes out of our mouths.

EGGPLANT LASAGNA FOR PASSOVER

1 Jar Passover tomato sauce
1 eggplant, cut into small chunks
8 garlic cloves
2 onions
5 mushrooms
8 oz. grated mozzarella cheese
1/2 c grated parmesan cheese
1/4 tsp. each oregano, powdered garlic, hot pepper flakes, rosemary (dried)
5 pieces plain matzah

Saute eggplant in oil until it reduces to a mushy consistency. Set aside in bowl. Chop onions, mushrooms and garlic; sauté in pan; sprinkle a little of the spices over mixture; mix in eggplant. Spray a small rectangular baking dish with cooking oil. Pour some sauce into the dish and lay down matzah to fit. Spread with sauteed veggies; sprinkle on more spices, some parmesan cheese and more sauce. Continue until you use up your ingredients, ending with cheese on top. Bake at 350°F for about 35-40 min.

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Dear Ella,

Last month I lost my mother to cancer. It was a very difficult time, and still is.

My father died more than six years ago, so my mother was my only parent for a while. When she died, one of the first things I thought was that I am an orphan now. I know that sounds silly after all, I'm 47 years old. Who ever heard of a 47-year-old woman referring to themselves as an orphan, a term I've always associated with children.

About Life

Nevertheless, I can't help feeling very alone, especially with Passover just around the corner. I have a husband and three children, but I still feel alone, abandoned and even a little scared.

Do you think I've lost it altogether? I haven't spoken to anyone about feeling this way, I'm too embarrassed.

Mid-Life Orphan

Dear Mid-Life Orphan

We all accept the fact that our parents will eventually die. It's part of life, and logically we know the script, but the reality of a parent's death comes with far more emotion attached to it than we anticipate.

You need to understand that your feelings are normal. You have not, as you put it, "lost it." I think if you did open up to people about how you are feeling, you would be very surprised to hear that others have felt that way too, myself included.

For a while, you will think things like, "I have to go call mom," or, "Wait till I tell mom this story." Those are sad moments, but because they had been part of your routine your entire life, they're to be expected.

Passover and major holidays will be difficult, especially in the first year. However, you can bring your memories to the seder with you by possibly preparing your mother's favourite dishes, discussing what Bubbie or Zaide would have said or done now. Don't repress your feelings. Embrace them, and let others help you live through them.

You are lucky to have a husband and three children to help get you through these rough times. Eventually, your grief will change to memories that you will hold deep in your heart forever.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, *email: ella@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional*

Take peace seriously

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

Over the last 60 years, a disproportionate number of hostile United Nations resolutions have been aimed at Israel. Blood-curdling terrorist attacks and acts of violence have been perpetrated against Jews in Israel, France and dozens of other countries. Clearly, there is cause for us to be on high alert for anti-Semitism and anti-Israel activities. To think otherwise would be naive.

On the other hand, it is equally important to be aware of the considerable number of organizations sprouting up to bring together Jews and Arabs to achieve peaceful coexistence. To close one's eyes to this phenomenon would be tragic.

To learn more about such movements, simply Google "Jews, Arabs and Peace." You'll discover dozens of groups. Among them are the Interfaith Encounter Association, dedicated to promoting peace in the Middle East through interfaith dialogue and cross-cultural study; the Interreligious Coordinationg Council in Israel, an umbrella organization of more than 70 Jewish, Muslim and Christian institutions actively working toward inter-religious and inter-cultural understanding in Israel and the region; the Givat Haviva Educational Institute; and the Israel-Palestinian Bereaved Families for Peace founded by Israeli businessman Yitzhak Frankenthal, whose son was killed by Palestinians. Members are Palestinians and Israelis who have lost loved ones in the conflict and who work together to end the strife between Israelis and Palestinians through mutual understanding.

Another venture with a similar mission statement is Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam. It was founded in 1978 by one Arab and four Jews and is a unique community located on a rock-strewn crest midway between Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. The community was created to determine if Jews and Palestinian Arabs could learn to understand and respect each other's faith and culture while preserving their own.

Neve Shalom is now home to 20 Jewish and 20 Arab families. They work together in the village's guest house, offices and schools. The children attend classes taught alternately by an Arab instructor one week and a Jewish instructor the next. Students plan activities for Islamic and Jewish holidays, and learn about the region's complex history from Israeli and Palestinian viewpoints.

There are many hateful Hamans in our world whose names should be drowned out through the spinning of the gragger. However, there are also countless courageous Jews, Arabs and Muslim focusing on the biblical imperative: speak you every man truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates.

I think it is time we seriously recognize ways and means of peacefully arming ourselves in the battle against hatred and stereotypes. Former Israeli prime minister Golda Meir did so when she established Mashav in 1958, an arm of the Israeli Foreign Ministry, whose aim was/is to share the know-how and technologies that provided the basis for Israel's own rapid development with the developing world (which includes many countries with large Muslim populations and anti-Israel policies). Meir knew it would be years before peace was secured politically, and therefore made sure to pursue it at a grassroots level.

Like Golda, I believe we must find those Arabs/Muslims who would leap at the chance to stop wars and destruction, and instead live a life of peace side by side with their Israeli/Jewish counterparts. I therefore encourage philanthropists, world leaders and Jewish and Arab community members to build upon this possibility by creating a long-term and comprehensive plan to achieve peace and coexistence in the Middle East.

We should prepare well in the defence of our people. This strategy must, however, embrace every means possible to realize peace, including the support and participation of existing movements that have already mobilized hopeful forces with the conviction that we are all creations of God and therefore share in his tranquility. Take peace seriously!

Avrum@veahavia.org SUDAN?

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This Week

National

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Howie Mandel makes a deal on new game show. *Page 68*

Books & Authors

New edition of *Night* not the same as Elie Wiesel's Yiddish manuscript. *Page 72*

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www.cjnews.com
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010484
Publication Mail Registration #09894

'Israel's saddest elections'

No party promised peace

By YOSSI KLEIN HALEVI

The most boring elections ever, proclaim the political commentators. And it's hard to argue with them. After all, few party banners compete at intersections, few political bumper stickers appear on cars, and the ratings are down for the campaign ads that used to provide nightly entertainment in our raucous election season.

The reason for the lack of passion, though, isn't voter apathy, as commentators insist, but despair. These are Israel's saddest elections, the first with barely a mention of peace. In the past, even right-wing candidates had to hold out the promise that a hard line would bring a more trustworthy peace than the left's concessions, that "peace for generations," as one right-wing slogan went, would be more durable than peace now. Few really believed in 1996 that Benjamin Netanyahu would manage "a secure peace," or that "only Sharon will bring peace," as the 2001 Likud slogan put it. But failure to pay lip service to peace meant damning yourself as an unelectable fanatic.

Analysis

Now, though, with the rise of Hamas, not even the candidates of the left are promising peace. Both the hard-left Meretz and the centre-left Labor party are focusing instead on domestic issues. Labor leader Amir Peretz has suggested strengthening Palestian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, but mostly Peretz has emphasized social issues and the "fight against terror." There's a limit, after all, even to Peretz's amateurish politics: most voters realize that if Abbas was irrelevant before the rise of the Hamas, he is hardly more relevant now.

This election isn't only the burial ground of the peace process but of Greater Israel. Only one right-wing party, the National Union-National Religious Party (in fact a coalition of two parties), continues to unequivocally support the settlement movement. The Likud's opposition to unilateral withdrawal from the West Bank isn't over withdrawal but unilateralism. Indeed, during the Gaza withdrawal, Likud leader Netanyahu noted that he, too, wants to see Israel out of Gaza. The only question is whether Israel should reward terrorism and offer the Palestinians

Continued on page 65

Note to Readers

This issue of *The CJN* went to press the day before the Israeli elections. Extensive coverage of the results will appear next week.

ISRAELIS VOTE: Israeli Vice-General Consul Moshe Kanfi casts his ballot in a polling station in the Israeli consular offices in Istanbul, Turkey. Israelis serving their country abroad went to polling stations last Wednesday ahead of this week's general elections. *[RNS/Reuters photo]*

Ya'alon: Gaza pullout a strategic mistake

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

In his olive green pullover and casual pants, with his wire rim spectacles and jowly features, Moshe (Bogie) Ya'alon hardly has the appearance of a warrior, let alone a former chief of staff of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF).

Yet, when he talks about the withdrawal from Gaza or the dangers posed by a nuclear-armed Iran, the former lieutenant-general and IDF chief of staff (2002-05) shows his steel.

The August 2005 withdrawal from Gaza was a bad strategic mistake, Ya'alon stated in an interview with *The CJN*. Not only did it violate years of Israeli doctrine – trading land for peace – it also strengthened Hamas (they could rightly claim terrorism paid), and it led to the terrorist organization's political victory in the January Gaza elections.

Moshe Ya'alon

Ya'alon, a controversial figure in Israeli public life who clashed with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon over the Gaza withdrawal, was in Toronto last week to address a program sponsored by Aid to Disabled Veterans of Israel, Beit Halochem Canada at the Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue.

Beit Halochem Canada is a humanitarian fundraising agency established in 1984 that provides assistance to disabled veterans of Israel. Over the years, Canadians have contributed millions to provide medical and rehabilitation equipment for Beit Halochem centres in Israel, and every year, the Toronto and Montreal Jewish communities each host a two-week visit for groups of Israeli disabled war veterans.

An estimated 1,000 people

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Vayikra
Candlelighting: 6:25
Havdallah: 7:30

Greater Toronto Area

Iran's air force no threat to Israel, IAF officer says — please see page 63

The News in Brief

CANADA

Teaching Tolerance

WINNIPEG — A new school program in Winnipeg is bringing together Jewish and aboriginal high-school students. Grade 11 students at Gray Academy of Jewish Education and Southeast College meet to discuss religious and cultural traditions, the CBC reported. A teacher at the aboriginal school started the program last year after two of her students made anti-Semitic comments.

Golan Duty Ends

TORONTO — Canada ended its 32-year participation in the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) on the Golan Heights March 24, and the Canada-Israel Committee thanked successive governments for backing the mission. "While the CIC would like Canada to continue its participation in UNDOF, we appreciate the fact [the Canadian] Forces are required in Afghanistan, where Canada is seeking to bring peace and stability," the CIC said.

CJC Fights Web Hate

TORONTO — To mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Canadian Jewish Congress launched an initiative last week to fight Web hate. "Stop Internet Hate" features a link on CJC's website, cjc.ca, for reporting hate sites. "We will assess the information, and if we believe it violates either Canada's Criminal Code or the Canadian Human Rights Act, it will be reported," said Len Rudner, CJC's director of community relations.

WORLD

Jewish Tourists Killed

SANTIAGO — Twelve U.S. tourists on a B'nai B'rith trip were killed in a bus accident in northern Chile last week. They were returning to their Celebrity Cruises ship after visiting Lauca National Park on March 22 when their bus swerved off a highway and plunged 300 feet down a mountainside. The 14-night South American cruise left from Fort Lauderdale, Fla. Two surviving Americans were in stable condition last week.

Canadian Jews Help

NEW ORLEANS — Some 28 students and staff from Hillels in Toronto, Montreal and Kingston were in New Orleans for spring break to help build homes for a week with Habitat for Humanity. They were hosted by Hillel Foundation of New Orleans. While there, they toured areas devastated last August by Hurricane Katrina. They also met local Hillel students and took part in the city's first post-Katrina Mardi Gras. It was the second group of Canadian students to help out after Katrina: Hillel of Greater Toronto sent 19 students to Gulfport, Miss., on the winter break.

Proposal for Dialogue

SEVILLE — Yona Metzger, Israel's chief Ashkenazi rabbi, called for a "United Nations of religious groups" as the second World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace opened last week in Seville, Spain, BBC reported. Also at the three-day meeting, Rabbi Israel Singer of the World Jewish Congress rejected the idea that Jewish-Muslim tensions lie at the root of the Mideast conflict. He added in a speech that "religious crusaders" such as Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, "must be exposed for what they are: Impostors." Some 150 rabbis and imams took part in the conference.

Test Flawed: Study

WASHINGTON — A genetic test for breast-cancer mutations linked to Ashkenazi Jews misses the mutations 12 per cent of the time, a new study says. The test searches for the BRCA-1 and BRCA-2 mutations, which are carried by two per cent of Ashkenazi Jews and are linked to breast and ovarian cancers, according to the Human Genome Project in Washington. The test in current use has a patent that stops other tests from being developed. The researchers said it prevents the use of other tests that could catch more mutations.

Torahs Buried

NEW ORLEANS — Some 200 people attended a ceremony near New Orleans last week to bury seven Torahs destroyed in floods from Hurricane Katrina. The scrolls were from Beth Israel, a 102-year-old shul, the *New Orleans Times-Picayune* reported.

Archive Goes Online

LONDON — The London *Jewish Chronicle* has digitized its catalogue of articles dating back to 1841. The articles are accessible for a fee at www.thejc.com. The archive "will provide a unique resource for exploring world Jewish history," the paper said.

Groups Urge Greater Access to Kids' Book

TORONTO — Ontario school boards that have restricted access to *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*, a controversial children's book by anti-war author Deborah Ellis, are being urged by members of Toronto's literary community to reconsider their positions.

Deborah Ellis

PEN Canada, the Writer's Guild of Canada and Groundwood Books, the book's publisher, as well as authors, librarians and parents, held a news conference in Toronto last week and asked the boards to allow children in grades 4 to 6 read the book as part of the Ontario Library Association's Silver Birch recreational reading program.

The Toronto and York Region public school boards have restricted the book to children in older grades, and they said they won't change that policy. Boards in Niagara, Ottawa and Essex have also limited access to it, although last week, two London-area boards said it will remain on library shelves.

The York board pulled *Three Wishes* from the Silver Birch program after a teacher raised concerns about its age appropriateness. Canadian Jewish Congress later wrote to all Ontario boards asking that it be restricted to children in older grades, because CJC says it demonizes the Israeli army and suggests suicide bombing is a legitimate recourse for Palestinian youths. Spokesperson Len Rudner said CJC was not advocating censorship, but was asking the boards to consider whether the book is appropriate for its target audience.

Three Wishes consists of interviews with children who discuss their lives and name three things they'd wish for. Ellis provides a historical introduction before each child's story.

The Canadian Jewish news

Vol. XXXVI, No. 14 (1,741)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation 42,245 copies
Total paid circulation 41,398 copies.

CCNA verified circulation
Feb. 9, 2006

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada $35.95, 1 yr. incl. GST
$63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST
U.S.A. $100 U.S. funds, 1 yr
All other countries $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr.

Postmaster: Please return 29Bs and changes of address to Toronto office.

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

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Anti-Semitic incidents down slightly in 2005

Significant problems found on campuses and Internet

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

The number of anti-Semitic incidents in Canada declined marginally in 2005, but campuses remain uncomfortable places for Jewish students and left- and right-wing extremists continue to employ the Internet to spread anti-Semitic images and rhetoric, B'nai Brith Canada reported last week in its annual *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents*.

The audit noted that the level of anti-Semitism remains at historically high levels after three years of growth between 2002 and 2004.

Altogether, 829 incidents were reported in 2005, down from 857 cases the year before.

The 857 events in 2004 were the highest number recorded since the human rights organization began publishing its audit 22 years ago. In the past 10 years, the number of incidents reached a low of 212 in 1997, but the number shot up in the next year to 459 and continued an upward trend in 2003 with 584, and even more in 2004, as stated above.

"As the data illustrates, the baseline for anti-Semitic incidents seems to have permanently shifted from the levels commonly seen in the 1990s, with an overall trend towards rising numbers," the audit states. "The persistence of this phenomenon indicates that overt anti-Semitism has become a permanent feature in Canadian society. This suggests that less obvious manifestations of prejudice are indeed interwoven into the multicultural mosaic of this country."

Looking at the data on a regional basis, the audit found that 544 incidents (65.6 per cent) took place in Ontario, where 196,000 Jews reside. That marked a 2.6 per cent growth in cases over 2004. Incidents of vandalism dropped, but harassment shot up nearly 30 per cent.

Of the incidents reported in Ontario, 418 took place in the Greater Toronto Area. "This is the highest number ever recorded for any city in the history of the audit," the report states.

B'nai Brith estimates that only about 10 per cent of all incidents are reported.

The audit suggested the increasing use of the Internet to promote hate is a growing cause for concern – along with the reluctance of criminal justice agencies to charge purveyors of Internet hate.

"The huge explosion of hate on the Internet influenced the nature of many of the incidents for 2005, with both the far right and the far left borrowing from each other's images and rhetoric," the audit states. "This propaganda is influencing how Jews are viewed in society, as seen in incidents in every sector of Canadian life.

"The criminal justice system appears to have abdicated responsibility for Internet hate to the human rights sector. It has also shown a more inconsistent and lenient response to hate activity, giving the impression that anti-Jewish messaging will be tolerated."

The audit noted that 161 reports of Web-based hate activity were registered in 2005, compared to 47 the year before.

The audit also reported that Jewish students feel intimidated and unwelcome in Canadian universities.

"Jewish students – often visible Jews – were targeted in 48 reported anti-Semitic incidents on campus, similar to levels in 2003 and 2004," the report states. "Inflammatory anti-Israel campaigns continue to be mounted with events that demonize the Jewish state, delegitimize its existence and often endorse violence and terrorism against its citizens. In addition to these incidents, classrooms have become less than welcoming to Jewish students who do not publicly follow the prevailing anti-Israel tone… This type of antagonistic atmosphere has often led to anti-Jewish outbursts."

Continued on page 25

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Voter considerations

From the editor's desk

The eccentricities of our production schedule occasionally bring about major gaps in our news coverage. This week is one such occasion.

The Israeli general elections were held on Tuesday. *The CJN* went to press on Monday. Thus readers will receive their copies of the paper one or two days after the elections. Yet, there will be no news of the election results in the newspaper.

We will try to compensate for the election lacuna in this issue with heightened coverage in the next issue.

* * *

In Israel, especially, election predictions are a bit of a mug's game. Respondents are notoriously unreliable and fickle in responding to telephone polls. But more important, in so small a country, political outcomes are quickly influenced by and closely tied to the behaviour of the Palestinians.

As of this writing, 48 hours before the election, the centrist party Kadima was leading its major left-of-centre and right-of-centre rivals, Labor and Likud, respectively. At least a third of the voters, however, said they were undecided.

The most significant pre-election news was the alleged extent of election indifference by 21- to 28-year-olds, some 60 per cent of whom purportedly claimed they would not vote at all.

Only the final tallies will tell how, or if, pre-election predictions matched post-election results.

But however many Israelis actually did vote, they did so knowing the following pieces of information that were published on the weekend.

According to a poll conducted by the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the Palestinian Center for Policy and Survey Research in Ramallah, nearly 60 per cent of Palestinians oppose recognition of the State of Israel by Hamas at this time. In contrast, some 37 per cent would support Hamas recognizing Israel.

The poll was conducted earlier this month among 1270 Palestinians and 603 Israelis and has a margin of error of three per cent and four per cent respectively.

Those 60 per cent of Palestinians need not worry. Hamas will not let them down by conceding that the Jews, too, have a right to a state of their own in the Middle East. Indeed, Hamas is not yet ready to renounce terrorism.

In fact, it has proudly announced its intention to institutionalize it.

According to a Reuters report last week, Hamas' candidate for interior minister, Saeed Seyam, said that "talks with the [Palestinian] factions in the future will focus on the mechanisms, the shape and the timing" of attacks [on Israel]. Seyam, who will be in charge of the main security services, made certain that the Israel and the West understood that he will not arrest any terrorists. "The day will never come," Seyam proclaimed, "when any Palestinian would be arrested because of his political affiliation or because of resisting the occupation."

There should be no illusions in the West about Hamas or any soft-pedaling of its program. Hamas is intent and immovably focused on one objective: to replace the Jewish state with their uniquely Islamic one. It is a religious mission. It is not a dispute over territory; rather, it is a dispute over theology.

There should be no demands or expectations upon Israel that it sit down with Hamas to negotiate a "settlement" of the conflict. No individual, nor any state, should be compelled to compromise away its own life and its own existence. Israel will be equally immovably focused in defence of the lives of its citizens and its own sovereign existence.

The West should speak with one voice, unbudging from the three a-priori commitments that it has demanded from Hamas:

- recognition of Israel;
- renunciation of violence; and
- acceptance of existing Palestinian Authority-signed agreements with Israel.

Thus we should extend not even the tiniest shred of credibility in a so-called "conciliatory message to Israeli voters" by Palestinian prime minister-designate Ismail Haniyeh as reported on the weekend by the *Jerusalem Post*.

"We don't want a whirlpool of blood in this region," Haniyeh told reporters in Gaza City. "We want the rights and dignity of our people. We also want to put an end to this complicated conflict that has been going on for decades."

Could it be that the Hamas leader has suddenly rejected violence and embraced statecraft? Not likely.

The real voice of Hamas is the familiar one of foreign minister-designate Mahmoud Zahar. Even as his prime minister spoke to reporters in Gaza, Zahar was setting the record straight: Hamas would not "give up one inch of Palestine," he said.

Invoking the name and memory of former Hamas leader and founder Ahmed Yassin, who was executed by the Israelis, Zahar said, "Even if the U.S. gave us all its money in return for recognizing Israel and giving up one inch of Palestine, we would never do so, even if this costs us our lives. Our right to pursue the resistance will remain as long as the occupation continues over our lands and holy sites."

Palestinians voted two months ago.

Israelis voted this week.

Now the two sides are drawn. Where will they lead?

MBD

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AT THE POLLS

An Israeli soldier casts his vote at a military outpost on the northern border with Lebanon. Israeli Defence Forces soldiers who are scheduled to be on duty on election day this week cast their votes early. The IDF votes are counted along with the general electorate votes on election day.

[Israel Sun photo]

'Islamic states are a threat to the western world'

Continued from page 1

heard Ya'alon speak in Toronto. About 50 demonstrators marched quietly outside the synagogue to protest his appearance. Al Awda, a Palestinian organization, called on supporters to protest against Ya'alon, calling him a war criminal.

News reports in Israel last week suggested that a small number of pro-Palestinian groups and at least one unnamed Jewish group had asked Canadian authorities to bar Ya'alon from entering Canada, or to detain and charge him with war crimes once he arrived, but the charges never materialized.

Ya'alon dismissed the allegations against him as "propaganda."

He said Israel's unilateral withdrawal will not put an end to demands on the Jewish state or provide the disengagement promised by Sharon. In fact, calls for safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank are already being made, as well as demands that Israel export Palestinian produce.

"We're supposed to let Palestinian strawberries go to Ben-Gurion [airport], and they launch Qassams [missiles]. Unbelievable," he said.

"This is not disengagement," he continued. Ya'alon predicted that following Israel's March 28 election, "we will hear from the international community for more concessions in the West Bank."

By requiring nothing of the Palestinians, Israel relinquished its demand that the Palestinians comply with the Oslo requirement to demobilize militia organizations. Israel also gave up control over Gaza's borders, which it was entitled to maintain under Oslo. And the open border with Egypt is being used to import dangerous military hardware, he said.

Most important, Ya'alon said, "we strengthened the Palestinian narrative. They say the problem is the occupation and the settlements are illegitimate. We should say we have a right to live anywhere in the land of Israel, but for peace, we would give it up."

Ya'alon's disapproval of the Gaza withdrawal is widely believed to have led to his premature departure as chief of staff. Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz told Israeli reporters he and Ya'alon did not see eye to eye on strategic issues, and Ya'alon's successor, Dan Halutz, pointedly stated that "we must not drag the IDF into the public debate that accompanies the disengagement plan."

Ya'alon's three-year term as chief of staff was not renewed, contrary to the general practice in Israel. He is now a research fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

"I did not speak out publicly [about] my opinions," Ya'alon told *The CJN*, adding that information about his views on disengagement were leaked.

He was scathing about Sharon's decision to order the Gaza withdrawal, saying, "As far as I know, it wasn't a strategic decision. It was a political decision.

"It was based in part on fear that someone else would come out with a new political initiative in the summer of 2003."

He noted that independent Israeli-Palestinian peace initiatives were being discussed then, while the European Union and the United States were suspected of preparing initiatives that were not in Israel's interests.

In addition, he said, Sharon faced accusations of corruption and was concerned by the drop in his popularity.

Sharon devised the Gaza withdrawal without consulting with the IDF. "It came out in talks with his strategic advisors" whose focus was on the "media, spin and public relations," Ya'alon contended.

"No doubt I spoke out my views. I had to do it, to express my professional analysis. I believe I became an obstacle to this issue to his close circle."

Asked why the pullout remains popular with the Israeli public, Ya'alon compared the atmosphere in Israel to pre-World War II Europe – "people prefer short-run hope."

Elite opinion makers in Israel, consisting of "rich people and the media," pushed for the withdrawal. "There was no real public discourse to deal with the repercussions" of a pullout, he said, adding opinion-makers "go on deceiving the public."

Turning to Iran, Ya'alon stressed that the Islamic states are "not just a threat to Israel, [but] a threat to the western world. It's a generator of terrorism in the region."

Iran finances and supports Palestinian terrorist organizations like Islamic Jihad and Fatah, it is "behind the insurgency in Iraq" and it supports Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Ya'alon said historic precedent suggests the main danger from a nuclear-armed Iran would be its support for proxies who might be given a "dirty" (radioactive) weapon to employ against a western target.

Nevertheless, Iran might use a nuke itself. It has acquired medium range missiles and is seeking to expand the range of its missiles, perhaps to as much as 10,000 kilometres.

"It's an unconventional regime, not like the Soviet Union," he said. Part of its ideology is the desire to hasten the arrival of a hidden imam. To encourage that, it needs to defeat the West and destroy Israel, he said.

Israel, the United States and NATO all possess military options against the Iranian nuclear program, but he warned, "Israel should not be in the spearhead."

Iran must first be politically and economically isolated, with a military option employed as a last resort. "In one way or another, the Iranian nuclear threat must be stopped. Otherwise, it will affect the global strategic balance," he said.

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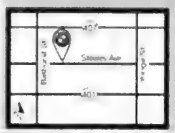

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Iraqi congregation celebrates 30 years in Toronto

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

This past Sunday, Mar. 26, the Iraqi Jewish Association of Ontario held a black-tie gala with more than 300 people at the Sephardic Kehila Centre to celebrate the 30th anniversary of its congregation and honour a dozen founding members.

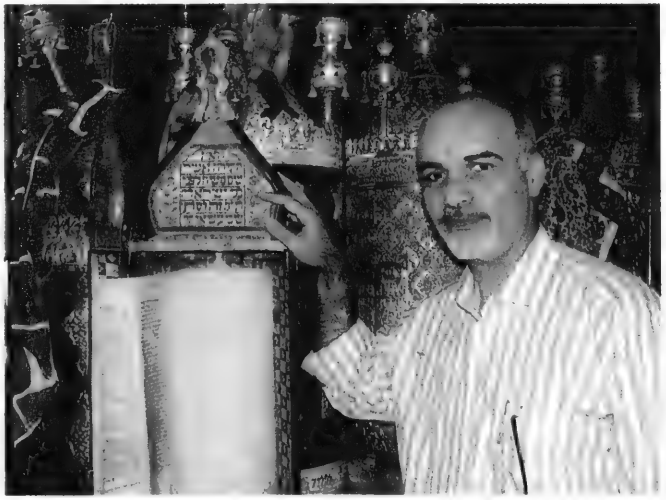
For the past two years, the association has been holding services in a chapel at the Sephardic Kehila Centre in Thornhill. Until 1999, when they moved to the synagogue, they met for High Holy Day services and holiday celebrations but not Shabbat services.

In the past few years the congregation – which according to organizers is the only one in North America using original Baghdadi tunes exclusively – has grown from about 25 people at a typical Shabbat service to between 60 and 80 worshippers every week. Sometimes there are as many as 100 or 120, according to president Reuven Aharon, a 48-year-old Sabra born to an Iraqi family, who has been in Canada for 21 years.

He found the congregation only five years ago, and instantly felt "this was my home," he said in a joint interview several months ago. "It was the tunes that they sang, and the whole atmosphere."

The traditional prayer services are followed by a kiddush with Iraqi food.

Eliahou Sasson, a retired pharmacist, served for many years as the congregation's treasurer and one of the lay leaders – the go-to person for "inspiration" and answers to members' questions, said Aharon.



Reuven Aharon, president of the Iraqi Jewish Association of Ontario [Frances Kraft photo]

Like many Iraqi Jews, Sasson left the country following a 1951 pogrom. "The Jews left to escape persecution," he said. He spent the next 18 years in Israel before immigrating to Canada.

But his memories of Baghdad are not all bad. "I went to public schools and I had friends who were Muslims... I'm sorry for what's happening there. The people themselves are not bad. We worked with them. They were good people, nice people."

Until 1933, Jews had "an excellent life" in Iraq, said Naim Dallal, an octogenarian retired dentist who studied in Syria and Lebanon because of quotas at Iraqi universities. "There [had been] no persecution. We were in the government, in colleges. It started to change when Hitler came to power.

"After the establishment of Israel we couldn't go to school, we couldn't work." There were hangings of Jews and confiscation of property, he recalled.

"It was unbearable," said his wife, Renée, who came to Canada with him in 1953.

Government persecution of the few Jews who remained in Iraq – as well as similar issues in other Arab countries – prompted the fledgling group to take a political lobbying role in the early 1970s.

On a more upbeat note, Toronto's Iraqi Jews – and a few non-Iraqis who just enjoy the group and the services – celebrate Jewish holidays together and have yearly themed galas featuring dinner and dancing.

For 26 years, during the winter months, Renée – Aharon's predecessor as president organized monthly lectures on topics ranging from health to politics. She also wrote the group's newletter, "a lovely, warm letter to our members," she said.

Sasson credits her for the organization's growth. It is not uncommon to see three generations at High Holy Day services, "which just makes our hearts sing," Renée said.

Continued on page 22

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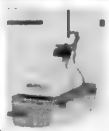

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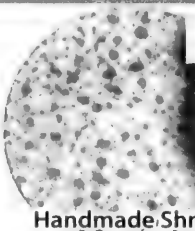

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Publisher and Proprietor
The Canadian Jewish News, a corporation without share capital
Head Office
1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4

They stood tall, on guard for peace

The Yom Kippur War was a bloody, at times fevered, fight for family, country and survival. When Syrian tanks made their initial advance downward from the Golan Heights towards the heartland of Israel, very few Israeli forces blocked their way. Those few soldiers however, fought heroically, and with great sacrifice, until reinforcements arrived to stem, and ultimately reverse, the terrible tide of the first days of the war.

Today, nearly 33 years after the war ended, some of the charred and cindered remains of the horrible tank battles are still strewn across the Golan, the volcanic crust of igneous rock that rises high above the Hula Valley and that many Israelis call "the eyes of the state."

Fighting ended on Oct. 22, 1973, but it was not until some months later, in 1974, that the contending forces actually disengaged. The United Nations established a peacekeeping force, the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF), to ensure that the hostile armies remained separated and to act as a buffer between Syria and Israel. Canadian troops were there from the beginning. Along with contingents from Austria, Poland and Peru, they formed the UNDOF and have remained on the Golan ever since. Until last week.

On March 24, Canada ended its participation in UNDOF. Most of the 189-soldier contingent is coming home this week. Some 20 officers will stay on a bit longer, and two officers will remain into the summer. Over the years, some 12,000 Canadians have been part of UNDOF. They have served with distinction and integrity, having earned the trust and appreciation of both sides.

And Canadians, too, lost their lives on the Golan. On Aug. 9, 1974, at the very outset of the mission, nine Canadians were aboard a routine troop transport flight from Ismailia to Damascus that was shot down by a Syrian surface-to-air missile. All were killed.

But peacekeeping today is different than it was three decades ago. Instead of standing between opposing, uniformed armies, our soldiers are needed to stand between a vulnerable civilian population and the brutal terrorist forces seeking to impose totalitarian rule by all and any means. Thus, much of the expertise and skill Canadians have acquired through UNDOF and other such peacekeeping missions will now be put to use in Afghanistan.

We echo the words of gratitude and appreciation that were expressed last week by the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) for the decisions of successive Canadian governments that authorized the continued Canadian presence on the Golan. And, as the CIC did, we too, "salute the men and women of the Canadian Forces who have served Canada honourably on this peacekeeping mission in the Middle East."

Canada's role in UNDOF has been a manifestly magnificent demonstration of Canadian values at their best, of standing resolutely on guard, tall and defiant, on behalf of peace and a better world for all peoples.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• Thirteen Jewish groups with representation at the United Nations agreed to co-ordinate their efforts to combat anti-Semitism at the world body. It was charged that "Zionist" was being used as code for "Jew" in some UN proceedings, and that "anti-Zionism" was masking anti-Semitism and being used as a way to attack the United States and the West.

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Olmert's wishful thinking

The prediction by acting Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert that Israel will have permanent borders four years from now reminds me of a pronouncement made by his mentor, then defence minister Ariel Sharon, during the Lebanon war in 1982 ("Olmert pledges final borders by 2010," *CJN*, March 16.).

At that time, Sharon triumphantly declared that Israel will "very shortly" conclude a peace treaty with Lebanon, then led by a Christian president, Bashir Gemayel. A few days after he made that statement, Gemayel was assassinated and, unfortunately, 24 years later Israel is still officially at war with Lebanon. Wishful thinking is no substitute for reality, especially in the Middle East.

T.R. Simon
Toronto

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Reply to 'Concerned Jewish Canadians'

How enlightening that a group of Canadian Jews takes exception to Israel pursuing "a primary military strategy" ("Group opposes Israeli government policies," letters, *CJN*, March 9). This group states that their lives have been "adversely affected by the policies of various governments of Israel." Not only do I feel sorry for their hardships, but I pity them. They are proud to be another of many Jewish groups to stand up today and challenge the government of Israel for not following the "vision" of Oslo and a myriad of other self-serving issues, while I am still waiting for just one Arab group, inside the Arab countries or in Canada or elsewhere, to stand up and challenge the humanity of killing and blowing up Jews worldwide. Not just today, but before 1967, or for that matter even before 1948. Do they really believe that if today there were any other solution except military it would not have been tried? Do they not believe that Jews will do anything they can to prevent violence. Are they so self-loathing that they protest because their Canadian lives have been "adversely affected" by people seeing them as Jews?

Howard Wolfe
Toronto

• • •

Students 'disengaged' from communal life

The Roundtable articles put little emphasis on one very important point: Susannah Dainow's comment that the community needs to find out why students are "disengaged" from communal life ("'Being Jewish is a pretty big thing,' *CJN*, March 23).

This is, in my opinion, the most critical step in understanding how to re-engage such students in the Jewish community. Yet, surprisingly, no one has bothered to ask disengaged students why they feel so detached from Judaism and what types of programs would make them more involved.

By posing such an obvious question, Hillel and the Jewish community at large would get a glimpse into who these mysterious "disengaged" students are and would then be able to serve the large majority of "disengaged" students in a truly informed manner.

Julia Joseph
Toronto

Rabbis opposed to Bill 61

The Toronto Board of Rabbis views with dismay a private member's bill, Bill 61, that was recently proposed in Ontario's legislature. The bill states that "upon the death of a person, tissue from the person's body may be removed… without the consent of the person from whom the tissue is removed." It is only a formal objection that would prohibit the removal of tissue and organs.

The Toronto Board of Rabbis is concerned with these conditions and the purposes to which the tissue would be put because neither is clear. In the Jewish religion, human organs and tissues may be removed and transplanted, but the person would have to be clearly dead and not be a living farm to harvest organs. Judaism is in favour of tissue transplant, but not under all conditions and not for all purposes. One would have to be much more specific about the meaning of "medical education" or "research." We must remember that the Body-worlds exhibit of plasticized human cadavers at the Ontario Science Centre was called "education," but that this exhibit was opposed by rabbis of all Jewish branches and the Toronto Board of Rabbis as being far more for entertainment and commercial purposes than for science.

The sanctity of human life is our greatest concern. Taking away from the individual the right to determine a positive consent to tissue removal opens the door to many abuses. In addition, a person should not be presented with the choice of affirming or denying consent with nothing in between. For these reasons, the Toronto Board of Rabbis is opposed to Bill 61.

Rabbi Michael Stroh, Executive Director
Rabbi Danny Gotlieb, President
Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich, Vice-president
Toronto Board of Rabbis

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How we give mirrors who we are

Big donors must give more tzedakah

By MICHAEL STEINHARDT
Jerusalem Post

I have a dream in which Jewish early childhood educators in the United States, who presently receive an average salary of $9.66 per hour, can raise their own children without having to take out loans or marry rich. I have a dream in which birthright israel does not have to keep tens of thousands of potential participants on waiting lists for lack of funds. I have a dream in which non-Orthodox day schools truly rival the best private schools and the Jewish socioeconomic elite clamour to enter them.

Michael Steinhardt

While these dreams are, alas, remote and quixotic, American Jews have achieved levels of wealth unprecedented in our history. The problem is that we no longer give much to Jewish causes.

We are donors to universities, museums, orchestras and hospitals, but when it comes to Jewish philanthropy, we fall short. Today, perhaps 20 per cent or less of Jewish giving goes to Jewish causes.

In the middle of the 20th century, it was about 50 per cent. Only half of the Jews surveyed in 1990 claimed to have given to a Jewish cause. Of the $5.3 billion in megagifts given by America's wealthiest Jews between 1995 and 2000, a mere six per cent went to Jewish institutions.

Among those who do give, the levels of giving are weak. Only 11 per cent of Jews donate more than $1,000 to Jewish causes.

Can you name a serious non-Orthodox American Jewish philanthropist below the age of 50?

There may be one or two, but it would be looking for a needle in a haystack. Even those who give Jewishly give smaller amounts to Jewish charity than to secular causes. Too many ignore programs of Jewish education and culture, focusing instead on antiquated preoccupations such as the fight against anti-Semitism. In North America, the greatest threat to the Jewish people is not the external force of anti-Semitism, but the internal forces of apathy, inertia and ignorance of our own heritage.

People's giving is a mirror image of who they are. Over time, we have become meaningfully more American and less Jewish. That is reflected in our philanthropy. We have lost not only our connection to Jewish roots, but also our understanding of why Jewish identity and involvement matter. It's an unfortunate cycle: attenuation of identity leads to reduced philanthropic giving, which, in turn, hobbles our efforts to create programs to enrich identity.

How, then, does one revive Jewishness in an increasingly secular American world? It's not easy. Too many of our needs are no longer fulfilled Jewishly. Today's synagogues and other institutions no longer appeal to the Jewish spirit the way they used to. Tzedakah is an outcome, an end-product of what we care about, what we want to enhance, what we believe in, and what we want to see grow. If we were to apply these hopes to our present community, I'm not sure we would like what we see.

The community has not operated by a set of norms and standards of what constitutes appropriate tzedakah. People who have amassed enormous wealth are told by "professionals" that they're the most altruistic individuals since Robin Hood, regardless of what they give. There are few role models in the community who represent our tradition of giving 10 per cent of income or assets.

Historically, the rabbis of past periods anticipated neither the wealth nor the longevity of many contemporary Jews. If they had, they surely would have insisted on even higher levels of giving.

Recognizing that we are far removed from the bare-bones survival of the immigrant generation, it may be time to reconfigure what is the right level of tzedakah and what we should expect from our givers. One of our philanthropic goals may be to develop an ethic of higher levels of giving in relation to net worth.

For a person with assets of $100 million – and there are many such people today – annual philanthropy of $500,000 or $1 million is not serious. Yet, the community fawns as if these individuals have given amounts that are truly selfless.

At present, there is little accountability between wealth and philanthropy. This must end. A person earning $45,000 who gives $5,000 in tzedakah should be acknowledged as heroic even though he may not get his name on a building.

We need to become part of a movement to change the perception of giving, to spread the notion that real meaning in life comes from selfless acts of philanthropy, and to inculcate a sense of responsibility for the fate of klal Yisrael among those who have achieved high levels of wealth.

The challenge is daunting. In a community where people want their names up in lights, where we have a cadre of professionals known as "directors of development" whose ambition is to separate rich Jews from their money, how can we create a sense of justice, of fairness between rich and poor, and recognize true philanthropy? How can we accomplish this in a free and open society?

On the one hand, we value our privacy. How many of us enjoyed the public displays when there was card calling at events? For many of us, there is something unseemly about it. I'm not immune to the conflict. In my various philanthropic efforts, I have valued the Maimonidean principle of modesty and indeed anonymity. Yet I, too, have had my name put on some projects and buildings. I frankly feel deeply conflicted.

I think it is a higher calling not to use one's name, but I haven't always been able to reach that higher level.

One of the goals of the emerging Fund for Our Jewish Future is to usher in a culture of vastly increased levels of Jewish giving. The fund plans to raise tens of millions immediately for priority action in Jewish education.

Hopefully, this will be followed by a series of focused funds to revive Jewish commitment levels. Another goal of the fund is to approach individual communities and offer local philanthropists the opportunity to receive significant outside funds for projects that they are prepared to give meaningful down payments toward.

It is clear that what we need is imagination to view our Jewish future in a way that will capture the spirit of those Jews who are mostly on the sidelines today.

We don't have many of the needed answers. But through hard work, creativity and, again, imagination, we can begin to reach the presently unreachable. With success, the result will be a renaissance of Jewish life in which our flourishing communal structures inspire greater Jewish involvement and commitment which in turn inspire even greater levels of tzedakah.

Students celebrate their arrival at Ben Gurion airport on the birthright israel program that Steinhardt co-founded along with fellow philanthropist Charles Bronfman. [Isranet file photo]

Michael Steinhardt is the co-founder of birthright israel. This article also appears in the winter 2006 issue of Contact, *the journal of Jewish Life Network/Steinhardt Foundation.*

Opinions

From Purim to Pesach

Between Purim and Pesach, life gets very hectic. I love both holidays, but the level of work and preparation associated with them compounds my sense of pressure. Why are the days so full, the time so short, and the workload so extreme? Why are the holidays so close together and so demanding? In the fall, we are overwhelmed with a month of holidays. Given an agricultural lifestyle, that may have been well and good. The harvest was in, and people could relax with ritual and celebration. But I do not farm!

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

Nonetheless, I love the holidays – Passover the most. It's a time for family and children. And between the two, we can find many points of similarity. Certainly they both fit our national storyline: they tried to destroy us, we survived, let's eat!

But they're also special in their expressed focus on children. From costumes and plays to questions and presents, both try to attract and engage our kids. Consequently, there is a substantial emphasis on family. I love the sense of squeezing all of us around the table for the seder, of beds overflowing, of coffees and talks and laughter. Family spending serious Jewish time together.

And both holidays direct us to the community, signalling a sense of communal freedom and responsibility. From Esther's request that the people fast for three days, to the command to send food gifts, to the communal songs of Miriam and Moses at the sea, to the obligation to share the Passover meal with others, to the impossible claim to experience the redemption ourselves, we create and celebrate community. These ritualized moments declare: We are the Jewish people, we are here to stay, and we are vigorous.

Those are all powerful lessons. But there are more, and I fear we often lose sight of them in the face of other messages. While cleaning my stove, I don't stop to think what all this means to me as an individual Jew, with spiritual needs and realities. I am fully aware of my role as a mother and grandmother, as a cook and preparer. What I don't spend time on is my place in these stories as a Jew, especially on Passover.

At our women's megillah reading on Purim, I do get to teach a class that focuses on the spiritual. But on Passover, it's harder to devote time to the basic, overriding themes of the holiday – themes of redemption, survival, responsibility, and my role as a Jew, a part of a nation of survivors who bring to this world notions of justice, righteousness and hope. I see myself embedded in a sea of rituals whose purpose is not just social relationships but also personal devotion and deliverance.

Budget cuts threaten our special ulpan

In the days after the 1967 war, when anything seemed possible – even peace – our family of two adults, a three-year old and a one-year old embarked on a six-month sabbatical to Jerusalem. Our goal was to study spoken Hebrew while touring Jerusalem and Israel.

We scored a central, and very sparsely furnished, one-bedroom apartment on Rehov Lincoln. The baby came down with red spots all over her body and screamed a lot, while the three-year old found that the most entertaining games were to be played in the dirt outside our front door (it was supposed to be a garden, but believe me, it was just dirt).

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

All was eventually well when we put the grimy three-year old in a *gan* and found an adoring family to look after the spotty baby. Now, what to do about Hebrew?

The best place for us was the Beit Ha'Am, a municipal ulpan where six mornings a week we struggled to get our tongues around Hebrew. The experience will be remembered forever. So imagine our distress when we read last month in the *Jerusalem Report* that the Beit Ha'Am ulpan would soon be no more, a victim of Jerusalem's budget cuts.

Beit Ha'Am's ulpan is unique. It caters to Jews, Arabs, and (at least in our experience) Christians from abroad who come to Israel to learn Hebrew. In 1971, it was still fairly new, and our classroom was a miniature United Nations, albeit more harmonious.

In addition to us, the Canadians, the class included three Italian priests studying at the Pontifical Institute (their Hebrew was very biblical and heavily influenced by Italian, and they came to class every day in Bermuda shorts); some new olim from Czechoslovakia, Russia and France; a young student from Lincoln, Neb.; and a multilingual Christian Arab woman from Bethlehem who worked for the Tourism Ministry and was the best student among us. There were others, but these stand out in my memory.

We conversed at the *hafsakah* (break) in a mixture of Hebrew, French and English, since those were the languages we shared. Gathered from so many different religions and regions of the world, we got the opportunity to talk together about ourselves and create in that classroom the "common bond of harmony" that the siddur talks about but is so difficult to achieve.

For a short five months, at least we made a start. Nowhere else in Israel have we since met such a variety of people.

Our teacher, Edna, was a creature of infinite patience. For years afterward, she regaled classes with one of my husband's assignments, which described an archeological site we had visited. My husband dutifully consulted his Ben Yehuda dictionary for the Hebrew word for "archeologist." Unfortunately, no one had informed us that Ben Yehuda's word had morphed into the modern Hebrew slang word for "stripper." The class looked confused as Edna dissolved in laughter and explained that this young professor had spent a day with – well, you can imagine.

Then we did the lesson on shopping. This time, Edna kept her cool, but those in the class who knew some Yiddish went into convulsions when one lad informed us that he had purchased "two beitzim."

And then there was that deathless question, "*Mi acharon ba-tor?*" ("Who is the last one in line?") As any visitor to Israel knows, if you have to ask, the answer is, "You are!"

But Beit Ha'Am not only taught us some Hebrew, it introduced us to so many different people and points of view, and, in turn, let everyone get to know "the other." We became friends with the Palestinian Anna-Marie, who took us to her home in Beit Jala and introduced us to the intricacies of Christian-Muslim relationships in Bethlehem (which were not good and worsening). Not only did we go, but our teacher Edna came with us. It was the first time she had ever visited a Palestinian Arab home.

In the *Jerusalem Report*, Beit Ha'Am's director Yaakov Yaakov noted that few, if any, other places in Israel offer such contact. For us, for all our classmates, and for Edna as well, Beit Ha'Am was, to use his words, "nothing short of an eye-opening experience for everyone involved."

I hope it survives the budget cuts.

Multiculturalism and the Charter

Walking down a major street in any large Canadian city, one can readily observe the diversity that defines Canada's present makeup.

Demographically, Canada has undergone changes as a result of government policies that encourage increased immigration. And unlike the United States, which promotes the concept of a population "melting pot," Canada encourages all citizens to preserve their heritages as part of our cultural mosaic.

Since 1982 we have had a constitutional guarantee of multiculturalism.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

In particular, Section 27 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms requires that when interpreting and applying other rights and freedoms in the Charter, our courts are required to do so in a way that "preserves and enhances the multicultural heritage of Canadians."

Section 27 does not in and of itself grant any rights, but rather is an adjectival section. It serves to assist the courts in the interpretation of rights contained elsewhere in the Charter of Rights. Even though this use of the multicultural guarantee is of somewhat limited value, it does serve to reaffirm multiculturalism as a Canadian value whenever the section is used. How then has it been used?

During the first decade of Charter experience, from 1982 to 1991, Section 27 was used quite frequently, particularly in cases testing the assertion of freedom of religion, freedom of expression, egalitarian or equality rights and other miscellaneous parts of the Charter.

During the second decade of Charter experience, although the use of Section 27 declined, it was still employed in a number of ways.

Section 27 was invoked in some cases promoting egalitarianism. It was also used in relation to the legal rights sections of the Charter with respect to those persons in contact with the criminal justice system. One example of this is the right of an accused person to understand the language in which a trial is being conducted.

As well, many lawyers have added Section 27 to their Charter arguments in a last-ditch effort to win a case; however, in virtually all of these latter cases, the courts did not even consider the multicultural argument.

Today, there appears to be a continuation in the decline of the use and effectiveness of Section 27 as a useful constitutional tool in reaffirming an important Canadian value.

In the mid-'80s, there was a case in which accused individuals charged with assault wanted to wear their kirpans in court. The kirpan is a ceremonial sword that orthodox Sikhs are required to wear. In that case, the courts decided against the wearing of the kirpans in court, but the case did not reach the Supreme Court of Canada level.

However, just a few weeks ago, an important case was decided by the Supreme Court of Canada. The Multani or so-called kirpan case focused on freedom of religion and dealt with whether a local school board could prohibit a Sikh student from bringing a kirpan into a school. The Supreme Court supported the position that to deny a Sikh student permission to bring a kirpan into school constituted a deprivation of that student's freedom of religion.

Clearly, this case stands out as a strong statement in favour of minority religious freedom. This is important to all religions, especially where the numbers are few and the fight for religious freedom is an ongoing concern. Canadian Jews are well aware of this.

What is the significance of this case, apart from the obvious victory for freedom of religion? Does the case serve to buttress the legal recognition of multiculturalism in Canada?

Although the case was decided on the basis of freedom of religion, many hailed it as a victory for multiculturalism. In criticizing the decision, one columnist in the *Globe and Mail* described the case as "multiculturalism gone wild."

Significantly, there was reference in that decision to the notion of multiculturalism; however, Section 27, our constitutional guarantee of multicultural diversity, was not even used by the court.

What does this tell us? It tells us that diversity endures as an important Canadian value but also that the usefulness of Section 27 as a constitutional guarantee of multiculturalism remains in doubt. In short, preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism will not be significantly enhanced by the use of Section 27, but rather will depend almost entirely on the use of other sections of the Charter.

The Kirshner File

Kibbutzniks plagued by Qassam rockets

"For us, it's a way of life today," said Avi Kadosh, the secretary of Nir Am, a kibbutz of 400 inhabitants perilously close to the Gaza Strip. "We're so used to it. When we go to sleep at night, we know something will happen."

Sheldon Kirshner in Israel

Kadosh, 55, was talking about Qassams, the technically primitive but psychologically dreaded short-range rockets that have victimized adjacent southern Israeli settlements since 2002, the second year of the current Palestinian uprising.

Fired by militant Palestinian groups apparently beyond the control of President Mahmoud Abbas' Palestinian Authority, the Qassams have neither killed nor injured anyone here, but have caused property damage and have had a serious economic impact.

The story is more or less the same at Karmiyya, a neighbouring kibbutz that, like Nir Am, suffered from Palestinian *fedayeen* incursions in the 1950s, but enjoyed a long period of peace and quiet and prosperity from the 1967 Six Day War until the second intifadah.

Avi Kadosh

"This area was once really peaceful," said Zmira Levy-Cohen, a 43-year-old member of Karmiyya who has lived here since the age of 18. "But suddenly, we feel insecure. Suddenly, we're near the battlefield and in real danger. The Qassams have become a problem. We were complacent until now."

Approximately two months ago, she related, a 10-month-old toddler – the son of Jewish settlers evacuated from Gaza before Israel's unilateral withdrawal last summer and resettled in Karmiyya – was injured by a stray Qassam. As a result of the attack, about half of the 50 families from Gaza here packed their bags and departed en masse, eager to put the Qassams behind them.

For Israelis who live in this sun-blasted, hardscrabble region of the northern Negev Desert, the geography is fearsome and could not be more disadvantageous.

From the cultivated fields of Nir Am, founded in 1943 by immigrants from eastern and central Europe, the low skyline of Gaza is plainly visible. Beit Hanoun, where many of the Qassams have been launched by Islamic Jihad of late, is only two kilometres away. From Karmiyya, founded in 1950 by French and Tunisian Jews and later bolstered by immigrants from Argentina and Chile, Gaza City's white and beige buildings are easily seen.

Since its pullout from Gaza, Israel has responded to the salvo of Qassams by targeting Palestinian militants and by firing at Qassam launching sites. At Nir Am, on a ridge covered by camouflaged netting, the muzzle of a tank pointed in the direction of Beit Hanoun, a regular target of Israeli raids prior to the disengagement.

But no matter how often Israel shells Gaza, always taking care not to hurt innocent Palestinian civilians, the Qassams keep on coming.

As Kadosh, a Moroccan Jew from Casablanca who has resided here since 1971, tells it, Nir Am was hammered by 160 to 170 Qassams in 2004 and 2005. Since this past January, seven have landed on its manicured grounds. All in all, seven buildings have been struck, including the infirmary and a structure near the cutlery factory. One building was entirely destroyed.

"No one, so far, has been injured," he said. "It's a miracle."

The reign of terror to which the Palestinian Qassams have subjected Nir Am has had severe consequences.

Older residents have been rattled. Children have had nightmares and wetted their beds. Two families left, but one family reconsidered and returned after two months.

Nir Am's bed and breakfast business, as well as its motel, are virtually empty these days. "We have lost millions and millions of shekels," noted Kadosh.

But Nir Am's agricultural sector, consisting of wheat, potato and melon fields and citrus orchards, all irrigated by recycled water provided by the Jewish National Fund, have been unaffected by the rain of Qassams.

The government has reinforced the roofs of the children's houses, upgraded existing shelters and brought in new concrete shelters. And while Kadosh is grateful for the help, he believes that the government is duty-bound to reinforce every last building on the kibbutz.

Ironically, the majority of the kibbutzniks supported Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's disengagement plan on the premise that Israel's occupation of Gaza was untenable and foreclosed the possibility of reaching a pragmatic accommodation with the Palestinians.

Kadosh is not optimistic about the future. He expects more Qassams to hit Nir Am, the supply centre for regional kibbutzim during the 1948 War of Independence.

Yet he is far from certain whether Israel's reoccupation of Gaza would resolve the issue. "It would complicate our relations with the Palestinians," he said.

At Karmiyya, population 300, the Qassam problem has become acute only since last August, when Israel began moving the settlers out of Gaza.

"Almost every day, there are landings," said Levy-Cohen, speaking in an office adorned with six framed photographs of kibbutzniks killed in Israel's wars since the 1956 campaign. "Usually between 6 and 7 a.m. and around 7 p.m. It's like clockwork. You can set your watch to them."

[Sheldon Kirshner photos]

Concrete bomb shelters in Karmiyya sent in by the government

In a reference to the radar system that gives residents advance warning of a launch, she said, "We have, at best, 20 seconds to escape to a shelter."

Most Qassams fall harmlessly in the fields, and some are not discovered until days later. Recently, a Qassam shattered a tombstone in the cemetery.

The effect of the Qassams has been visceral.

"Children are afraid. They wake up at night. You think twice about going out in the evening. We have no defences against the Qassams. Suddenly, you hear a big boom, a bang and glass shattering. It's only a matter of luck there haven't been more injuries."

She added, "We also hear the sound of our artillery firing back."

Not a single kibbutznik has left Karmiyya whose economic well-being is dependent on cattle and citrus – but Levy-Cohen acknowledged that living under this kind of constant pressure exacts a toll.

Several members with younger children may well leave the kibbutz if Israel cannot crush the Qassam launchings, she conceded.

Zmira Levy-Cohen

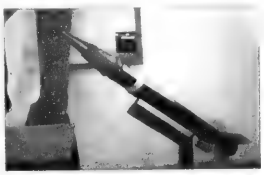
Meanwhile, property values have plunged, and at least a dozen children who attended Karmiyya's day-care centre have been withdrawn by their anxious parents, further hurting the kibbutz's economy.

In an attempt to protect the kibbutz, the government has sent in about 40 concrete cubicle shelters. But to Levy-Cohen, this is merely a half measure. More such shelters are needed, and children's homes have yet to be properly reinforced.

Asked about the future, she said glumly, "We don't know what will happen. We hoped the situation would improve after the disengagement. We thought the Palestinians wanted to live in peace and reconstruct their lives."

The vast majority of the kibbutzniks, she said, embrace a two-state solution. "We want to have peaceful, neighbourly relations with the Palestinians. I remember going to Gaza to buy furniture. I felt safe, but now, the situation has changed."

Before the current intifadah, Karmiyya employed a steady stream of Palestinian labourers from Gaza to work in the citrus groves and on building projects. But today, the kibbutz employs only one Palestinian worker.



A Qassam rocket on display at Nir Am

"We had good relationships with them," she said, her voice tinged with sadness.

Her hopes for peaceful coexistence with the Palestinians have been shattered by Hamas' victory in January's parliamentary election.

As she put it, "Hamas doesn't want us here. Maybe they will give us a *hudna*, a ceasefire. But they won't recognize our right to be here."

Philosophically, Levy-Cohen opposes the idea of using military means to resolve the Qassam problem currently plaguing Karmiyya. "Force is not the solution," she mused. Yet reality bites. "Maybe we'll have to use force," she said seconds later.

She added a sober qualifier: "In the long run, force only brings more force."

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UJA FEDERATION

Israel called emerging node in the global economy

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

While the global economy has historically been hierarchical, with certain countries or cities dominating various eras, modern trade is more like a network and Israel is a rising star among global trade "nodes," says Hebrew University professor emeritus Arie Shachar.

The change is not just one of scale, Shachar told listeners on March 16 at the annual Andrea and Charles Bronfman Lecture in Israeli Studies, presented at the University of Toronto.

Geographical distance is no longer the obstacle to trade it once was, he said, and globalization has eliminated borders, creating what he called a "seamless economy."

With a 40-plus-year career in urban geography and economics that has included consultancies to national governments and the United Nations, as well as the Israel Prize for academic research, Shachar has recently studied how cities in Israel are affected by centres of high-tech research and development.

When Intel built its controversial $1.6-billion (US) "Fab 18" plant in Kiryat Gat in the northern Negev six years ago, there was heated debate over planned government contributions of approximately $600 million.

Shachar said his latest study reveals that this investment was justified.

"Intel had a tremendous impact– not so much on the town itself," but in the "expanding labour market throughout the entire north of the Negev," he said.

Though Fab 18 was Intel's most modern plant at the time, it has since become obsolete. The company is now planning "Fab 28," a new plant that could cost up to $4.5 billion.

"All major international high-tech corporations keep large research and development centres in Israel," including IBM, Microsoft, Siemens and Motorola, Shachar said, adding that their presence highlights Israel's growing role as a technological and economic node.

Israel is poised to take advantage of this for many reasons, Shachar said. For example, some 55,000 scientists and technicians came as immigrants from the former Soviet Union, and Israel also trains many itself. While Canada has 55 scientists or technicians for every 10,000 workers, in Israel, there are 140.

"Brainpower and experience are in abundance in Israeli society," Shachar said.

Israeli business also benefits from the influx of young technicians coming out of the army each year. As well, Israeli expatriates climb the corporate ladder in their new countries to the point where they can play a role in bringing technology centres to Israel.

At more than one per cent of GDP, Israel also has an extremely high rate of venture capital funding. The equivalent number for Canada is .3 per cent of GDP, and in France, it's only .1 per cent.

"Almost overnight," Shachar said, Israel has gone from being known for agriculture to developing "the most sophisticated electronic gear… [and] defining the frontier in software development."

Citrus, once the symbol of advanced Israeli agriculture, is now a declining export, and software represents 40 per cent of total exports, he said.

Shachar's studies have compared indicators of Israel's global ranking on many scales: its level of entrepreneurship, for example, is third in the world, the same ranking as Canada.

Perhaps the best-known indicator is the Foreign Policy Magazine Globalization Index, which ranks countries using four criteria: political engagement, technological connectivity, personal contact and economic integration.

Israel receives low marks for political engagement, due to its relative isolation at the United Nations and in other global organizations.

But the other three measures, particularly technological connectivity, rocketed Israel from 22nd place overall in 2004 to 17th in 2005, ranking it in the global top 20 for the first time.

Israel's high level of integration into the global economy can be measured in other ways, Shachar said.

Israel has the third-highest number of U.S. patents of any non-U.S. country. On the NASDAQ stock exchange, Israeli firms are the most-traded non-American companies after Canada's, and there are more Israeli high-tech companies on NASDAQ than all western European companies combined, he said.

Though the current boom began in the mid-1990s, Israel's technology sector was briefly hit by the worldwide tech slump of 2000 to 2003 and is just beginning to recover to pre-2000 levels of investment and growth.

Shachar also focuses on how all these rapid changes affect Israelis. He noted that the vast infusions of investment capital haven't trickled down to average Israelis and have led to greater polarization between rich and poor.

This isn't unique to Israel, he said, and is a common argument against globalization. But globalization is "irreversible," he added. "It's going to stay with us."

Rather than damming the flow of foreign investment, he said, it's up to Israel's new government to redistribute resources and convince ordinary Israelis – and the global community – that the face of globalization can be "humane and considerate."

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CHAT students address situation in Africa

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

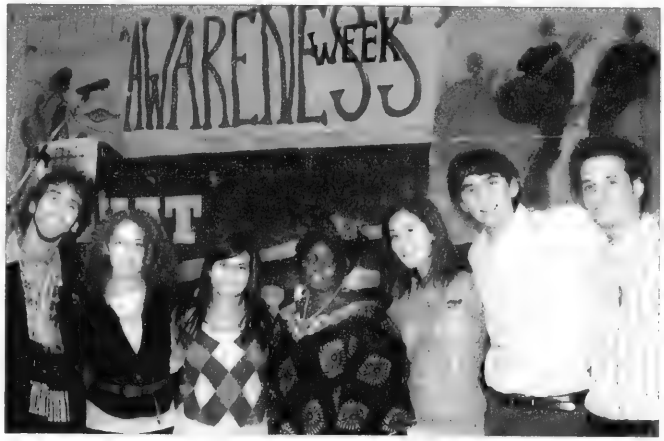
Acol Dor, a Sudanese-born physician whose warmth and ready smile belie the horrors she witnessed as a child, described her experiences for a rapt audience last week at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Tanenbaum campus in Downsview.

Dor, the co-director of Canadians Against Slavery and Torture in Sudan (CASTS), joined Danny Richmond, assistant national program director of Canadian Young Judaea and director of the organization's Va'ad Tikun Olam, and Jonathan Laski, director of media for STAND Canada (Students Taking Action Now: Darfur) to speak at a school-wide assembly organized by a committee of students as part of the school's annual "awareness week."

This year's event focused on the situation in Africa in four main areas of concern: AIDS, poverty, child soldiers and genocide. The assembly was part of a week-long program including a coffeehouse fundraiser for War Child Canada, (an organization that helps children affected by war), lunchtime presentations, and an NGO (non-governmental organization) fair.

"I don't want somebody to go through what I went through," said Dor. Her happiness as a seven-year-old child was shattered when she witnessed soldiers rape her sister and torture and maim her father before killing him.

Beckie Cherniak – a member of the organizing committee along with fellow students Heather Douglas, Michael Herman and Lauren Silver – wrote an impassioned e-mail to *The CJN* prior to the assembly, indicating the strong feelings behind the undertaking.



From left, Danny Richmond of Va'ad Tikun Olam, CHAT students Heather Douglas and Lauren Silver, Acol Dor of CASTS, students Beckie Cherniak and Michael Herman, and Jonathan Laski of STAND Canada are working to make a difference in Africa.
[Frances Kraft photo]

"How can we as Jews say 'never again' in a few weeks on Yom Hashoah when there is a genocide taking place right now in Sudan, festering into Chad?" she asked.

"How can we stand by when 14 million children will be left orphaned throughout Africa when 2.6 million people die from AIDS just this year in Africa?"

Richmond, who worked at a children's centre in Ghana last summer, kicked off the assembly with some background on Africa. Among the statistics he cited, he said that more than 100,000 child soldiers in Africa were being forced to fight. Every night, he said, 40,000 children in Northern Uganda leave their homes and travel for kilometres on foot to avoid being abducted. "We must do something to help them."

He urged students to educate themselves and others. "Before understanding the solutions, you must understand the problems," he said. "Read books, watch the news, go hear speakers, watch films that focus on important issues, [then] put your knowledge into action… [through] fundraising and advocacy. Use your minds, your unstoppable passion and your creativity."

Laski said the world has done "almost nothing" to help people in Darfur, in western Sudan, where 400,000 have been killed by violence, malnutrition and disease, and 2.5 million have been driven from their homes by people burning their villages.

The "unfortunate truth," he said, is that "we create a culture of excuses including distance and busy lives.

"Make the [politicians'] phones ring," exhorted Laski, who was part of a delegation to Ottawa last year to lobby then prime minister Paul Martin about the Darfur issue.

The audience has a "special responsibility" as Canadians, students and Jewish people to address the issues, he said. A recent graduate of the University of Western Ontario, Laski said "people really do listen to students." His organization offers resources so that students can become involved in lobbying government and media, as well as organizing fundraisers.

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Greater Toronto Area

Brothers share teaching philosophy, sense of humour

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Jordan Sable, a teacher with a low-key classroom style and a signature baseball hat, is sometimes known as "the other Mr. Sable" at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Tanenbaum campus.

"They are our teachers..."

His younger brother Josh, who teaches dramatic arts and is director of student activities at the Downsview school, began teaching there in 1998, a year before he did.

The brothers, 38 and 33, share a sense of humour, a similar teaching philosophy and a family interest in education that often manifests in dinner table discussions at their parents' Shabbat table.

A lesson from the teachers: *"It all starts with trust. You have to establish that [the classroom] is a safe place. The way you do that is by treating everyone decently," says Jordan Sable.*

Josh adds, "Work doesn't have to always be very serious. Learning is fun, and it's contagious."

Their mother, Gayle, is a former teacher, and their father, Martin, left a career in law after 25 years to become a teacher. Jordan's wife Kate teaches at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School, and Josh's wife Simona – his high school sweetheart when he was a CHAT student – is a speech pathologist for the Toronto District School Board. Their brother Jamie, 35, a psychiatrist, lives in Vancouver with his family.

Although both Josh and Jordan are CHAT alumni – as are about a dozen of their colleagues – "after the first 30 seconds, there's not much that's weird" about being back at the school, Josh said.

Instead, he sees it as an asset. Students know "that you've been there and you get it. You understand the workload and the demands on the students."

"You understand what the kids are about," added Jordan, who returned to Toronto to become a social sciences and history teacher after a decade doing graduate work in history in the United States. Although he enjoyed it, as he approached his 30th birthday, the idea of returning to his own community and working at a school like CHAT, with which he has a connection, seemed increasingly compelling.

Jordan, now the father of a baby boy, spent his first few years at CHAT doing the "Buffalo shuffle," heading off to Canisius College in Buffalo, N.Y., every week to complete his bachelor of education degree.

At one point the brothers taught the same media course. Now, although there are days when they don't run into each other at school, they still "bounce ideas off each other" and brainstorm about issues.

Josh admires the way Jordan "challenges his students to think and be analytical in a way that maybe they're not used to, but he does it in a non-threatening way." In 2002, Jordan – who like his brother, has a background working at summer camps – was named a Teacher of Excellence, a privately sponsored award for Toronto Jewish day school teachers.

Jordan, in turn, praises Josh's ability to take "kids who are going in a million different directions, and somehow with only a few words move them in a direction that works."

Josh, who has taught classes on classroom management and "creativity in the classroom" at UJA Federation Board of Education's Midrasha L'Morim, studied theatre as an undergraduate at York University. He entered teaching because he realized how much he enjoyed working with young people at summer camp. The father of two young children is still involved with camp during his summer break.

Josh, left, and Jordan Sable demonstrate their juggling skills in a light moment at CHAT. [Frances Kraft photo]

Being the school's director of student activities, a half-time position that involves supervising extracurricular programming, "is similar to being a program director at a camp, but in a school environment," he said. "I like the balance [between student activities and time in the classroom]... It allows me to be creative and get involved in a lot of creative projects like the talent show, the school play and the fashion/dance show."

The school has a "work hard, play hard" atmosphere, Josh said.

"I think you have to have that mix to be successful as a student, and as a teacher," added Jordan.

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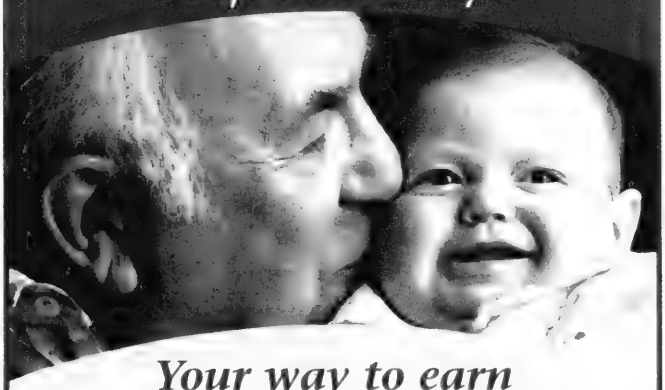

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A wee lesson about our relationship with God

By RABBI REUVEN TRADBURKS

RABBINICAL REFLECTIONS

There is a little wee aleph in the first word of this week's Torah portion, Vayikra.

In a Sefer Torah, a Torah scroll, you will sometimes find big letters or small letters or dots over words. These are written in order to draw your attention to those words. I had a music teacher who would draw a little pair of glasses over a note or phrase that he wanted me to pay attention to. Well, the sofrim, the scribes who transcribe Torahs, don't write a pair of glasses (that's forbidden), but they make, based on tradition, certain letters bigger or smaller than others in order to catch your attention, or to indicate a double entendre – a secondary level of meaning.

So why does the Torah put a little wee aleph in the word "Vayikra?"

The words "vayikra el Moshe" mean "and He called to Moshe." If you drop the aleph, you end up with just "vayikar el Moshe" which means "and He happened upon Moshe".

Rashi understands the little wee aleph to be a statement of humility. Moshe felt very uncomfortable writing in the Torah that Hashem was calling him. It's one thing to say that I called the prime minister, but it's quite a different thing to say that he called me. Moshe squirmed a bit to write that Hashem was calling, so he was almost pretending that the aleph wasn't there – as if Hashem chanced upon Moshe, just kind of stumbled on him.

But which is it? Does He call us or do we call Him?

Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik pointed out that this is one of the differences between Shabbat and Yom Tov. All Jewish holidays are a meeting of man and the Shchinah – the only question is who is inviting whom over to their house. Are we inviting the Shchinah into our home, or is the Shchinah inviting us into her home?

On Shabbat we invite her into our home, while on Yom Tov, she invites us into her home.

On Shabbat, we introduce Shabbat with Kabbalat Shabbat – welcoming the Shabbat into our shuls and into our homes. On Yom Tov, in the time of the Temple, we were commanded to go to the Temple on a pilgrimage. We were to appear before Hashem – or, in other words, He invited us to His home.

This year, the first days of Pesach lead right into Shabbat. So do we welcome the Shchinah on Shabbat with Kabbalat Shabbat? The custom in many shuls is that we do not sing Lecha Dodi, because the Shchinah is already here on Yom Tov, so we need not welcome her anew.

So Moshe was actually right to be humble about the thought that Hashem would call him. But he ended up writing that aleph in the Torah nonetheless – because, well, Hashem did call him.

We should be both humble and proud at the notion we have a regular rendezvous with the Shchinah – on Yom Tov we are her guests, and on Shabbat she is ours.

Rabbi Tradburks is spiritual leader of Kehillat Shaarei Torah in Toronto.

Google and Wikipedia in Hebrew

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

The Jewish Highway

Without warning, Israel's online news landscape shifted this month. That's when Google came to town. Actually, Google has had a Hebrew presence for quite a while. But this month, Google turned heads with the launch of a Hebrew version of its news service. Today, we'll look at how you can use Google News to open your horizons to new Israeli publications and the latest news – and find out why many Israeli newspapers were less than thrilled about the newcomer.

The Hebrew Google News page looks identical to the English one except that all the layout elements have been reversed. **[http://news.google.com/news?ned=iw_il]** You can skim articles about politics, business and sports. When I looked, I saw articles from *Maariv*, and *Ha'aretz*, the websites of the radio stations Arutz 7 and Galei Tzahal, and some Hebrew sites that were less known to me Telesport, Kan Na'im and the Marker.

The site will be of particular interest to people who can read Hebrew but may not be able to type in Hebrew on their computer. Since the stories are laid out for you, are constantly being updated and link back to a variety of papers, it makes it easy to check what's new and just jump from story to story and news site to news site.

Google already has a lot of experience delivering news in many languages; however, Google noted that working in Hebrew was a bit different. "It's been fun and challenging to create this edition, having to accommodate text that reads right to left, and adjusting our algorithms to work with a whole new set of papers." **[http://tinyurl.com/qzr3u]**

Google News does not actually create its news coverage. Rather, it constantly trolls through other news sites looking for breaking stories. It collects and excerpts headlines and small photos, creating links to them from its central news page. And it does it all without any journalists. Instead, Google has written algorithms or mathematical formulas – to determine which news stories should receive the most prominence.

And that's where the controversy comes in. Right after it quietly launched its Hebrew service, popular Israeli sites including Walla! **[www.walla.co.il/]** and *Yediot Ahronot*'s Ynet **[www.ynet.co.il]** told Google to keep its robotic hands off their content. "We asked to be taken off Google News until we finish examining the ramifications of the Google mechanism on the issue of copyright," said Ynet editor-in-chief Jon Feder. Walla! has hired a prominent law firm and is keeping its options open about litigation against Google. **[http://tinyurl.com/lm2zp]**

Ynetnews.com's Gal Mor said he thinks Google is making a mistake with its Hebrew news because programs are poor editors and cannot be trusted to decide which story should be given prominence. As well, questionable news sources are often listed next to credible ones. And Mor said there are just too few Hebrew news sources out there. "The Israeli engine contains just 100 content sources, as opposed to 4,500 in English." **[http://tinyurl.com/laq6p]**

Gal makes a good point. And right now, stories on Google are updated every few hours rather than every few minutes. But this is a new service, still in its beta or testing phase. So I feel that it is worth giving it a try – and the benefit of the doubt.

* * *

While you're waiting for the news to update at Google, here's another international site that has a strong Hebrew component – Wikipedia. **[http://wikipedia.org/]** Wikipedia is "a multilingual web-based free-content encyclopedia… written collaboratively by volunteers."

Barely five years old, the English version has more than one million entries, which dwarfs the Hebrew section's 33,676 entries. **[http://he.wikipedia. org/]** The Hebrew site can be searched by category (mathematics, Judaism, music, etc.) and key word. Featured articles are rotated regularly. And there's an interesting Did You Know section. Did you know that Golda Meir wanted to have a civil marriage ceremony but bowed to family pressure when her mother said it would kill her? **[http://tinyurl.com/aeqdd]**

Wikipedia is a collaboratively written site and inaccuracies (deliberate and accidental) slip through. But you are always welcome to set the record straight.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

Journey to Jericho

By SHANE SPRING

Guest Voice

Last summer, I returned to Israel for the first time since my bar mitzvah, 34 years ago. This time it was our daughter Andi's bat mitzvah that took us there. Our trip had all the highlights we hoped for, and one that was beyond my imagination.

I was unexpectedly invited to go to Palestinian-controlled Jericho with Rabbi Mordechai Elon, rosh yeshiva of Yeshivat Hakotel, and Marc Belzberg, director of the One Family fund. I had no idea what type of adventure I was in for.

The alarm jarred me awake at 4:15 a.m. We made a very quick trip to Jerusalem. Waiting at the side of the road were Marc; Ronnen Harary, who was also from Toronto; and Kobe Kimchy and Shuval Schijveschuurder, two Israelis who were joining us on this journey. The five of us packed into Marc's vehicle, and within moments, took off like a bullet following Rabbi Elon, whose driver appeared to be Mario Andretti but turned out to be a 23-year-old driver by the name of Gad. When I asked him about his daredevil driver, Rabbi Elon assured me, "In Gad I trust."

At the final Israeli checkpoint before entering Palestinian territory, we rendezvoused with two buses filled with Rabbi Elon's Grade 12 students, as well as with a multitude of military personnel and lots of weapons, all overseen by the Israeli commanding officer, Motti. Our convoy headed towards the Palestinian checkpoint where Palestinian military officials and police met us.

The two commanding officers from the PA, Motti and Khalled, embraced and greeted each other in what appeared to me to be like two old friends. Now the convoy grew as the Palestinian military joined us. Our destination was the Shalom Al Yisrael (Peace Upon Israel) Synagogue of Jericho, which was founded in the Byzantine period – sixth century CE – and unearthed in excavations in 1936. It is one of only three sites in Arab-controlled territory to which Jews are guaranteed access by the Oslo accords of 1993.

The buses, military vehicles and all their occupants pulled up to what appeared to be a new two-storey structure. The building was surrounded with barbed wire and then a perimeter of Palestinian military – who I assume were present to ensure the safety and security of their Jewish "guests."

The structure was actually a house that had been built over the remains of the synagogue. After the 1967 war, Jewish tourists visited the site by paying an admission fee to its Arab custodian. In 1986, the Israeli National Parks Authority purchased the building, which eventually became a yeshiva.

The remains of the synagogue consist of a very detailed mosaic floor with images of a shofar, a menorah, a lulav and the name of the synagogue – Shalom Al Yisrael – delicately laid out in tile.

Following the signing of the Oslo accords, Jericho was officially handed to the Palestinian Authority, and access to the site became much more restricted and regulated. Today, the Israel Defence Forces visit the site once a week to maintain and ensure a Jewish presence in this holy site. Our visit was one of these scheduled visits, in this case with the stated purpose of dedicating a sefer Torah.

When the morning *Shacharit* prayers were over, the marching in of the sefer Torah took place amidst much fanfare and celebration as the Palestinian military looked on. As part of the ceremony, I was honoured with an aliyah. I could not believe it! Here I was in a shul from the sixth century CE, and I was taking part in the service – lifting the sefer Torah for all to see.

> ***'I could not believe it! Here I was in a shul from the sixth century CE ... lifting the sefer Torah for all to see'***

Once the ceremony was over, all that remained was to celebrate. I took the opportunity to speak in this rather intimate setting with the Palestinian commanding officer. I commented on how ironic and odd it seemed that he and Motti and the other soldiers were so friendly with each other, and yet they could be killing each other the next day. Through an interpreter named Sharon, Khalled responded: "If it were up to us here in the field, we could make peace. When left to politicians, that is when we have problems."

One hour and 95 pictures later, after an aliyah, a l'chaim and conversations with both Jews and Palestinians, we were on our way home, leaving Palestinian territory and heading back into Israel.

Suddenly, while still in Palestinian territory, but now without any military escort, I realized that I had left one of my camera lenses on the table outside the Jericho synagogue. I asked Marc what I should do. I had two phone numbers for Khalled – he had given his telephone number to Ronnen. Marc suggested that I try the numbers. I had nothing to lose but an $800 lens, he said.

I dialed and the phone rang "Khalled?" I asked.

"Yes, Khalled," he answered.

"Me Canada" I said.

"Ah, Canada," he acknowledged.

Now where do I go? I wondered. I said, "I lost camera. You have camera?"

For fear that he did not understand my Arabic English, I asked in Hebrew if there was anyone who spoke English. Sure enough, someone got on the phone who spoke a broken English and he tried to convey that they had the lens – "Me have camera."

I doubted I had understood correctly and I asked if anyone there spoke Hebrew, figuring I would put Marc on the phone. Once on the phone, Marc laughed when the suggestion was made that we turn around – "Yeah, right, I am going to turn around and go back there."

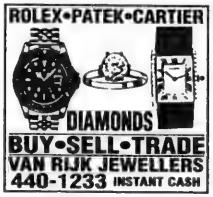
I eventually got Sharon, the soldier who was the interpreter in my initial conversation with Khalled, to phone and make whatever arrangements he could.

An e-mail I received from Marc Belzberg the next day summed it up: The Israelis were "amazed at how things went collecting the lens. It seems that there is very little contact with the other side and the relationship had been on eggshells recently. For the Israeli team, retrieving the lens was a serious test of their co-operation and of the Palestinians' desire to retain good relations." He said it took only one phone call and they brought it right to the checkpoint.

Just two weeks later, the lens arrived back in Toronto – safe and sound and having maybe played a small role in improving co-operation between two peoples who one day will have to figure out how to live side by side. It seemed fitting that it was a lens that brought focus and clarity to two opposing sides.

I'm grateful to all those involved in this adventure. To those of you who are soldiers in the Israeli military, I thank you for not only defending the Land of Israel but also defending us – Jews in the Diaspora who would not exist if it were not for that which you sacrifice your lives for – Israel!

Shane Spring lives in Toronto.



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York U unveils $100-million fine arts centre

By TANIA HAAS
Special to The CJN

The Accolade Project, York University's new teaching, exhibition and performance complex, officially opened on the first day of spring.

Lorna Marsden, the university's president; David Caplan, Ontario minister of public infrastructure renewal; Julia Foster, member of the Accolade Project campaign cabinet; Jan Hesseling, consul general of the Netherlands; and Gary Brewer, York's vice-president of finance and administration cut the ribbon at the launch of the $107.5-million expansion and renovation project.

"This building is a training place, and it was the result of the faculty's vision for studio and performance activities," said Phillip Silver, York's dean of fine arts.

"Special learning and special talent need to train in a special place. And now we have that place."

Silver has been the dean of the faculty of fine arts since 1998, when plans for the building gained momentum. He is a stage designer and he was a consultant for the renovation of McGill University's Moyse Hall and the theatre at the Canadian Museum of Civilization, as well as other Canadian performance facilities.

Working on The Accolade Project allowed him to translate his skills in set design to influence the cultural landscape of the GTA. "The geographic centre of Toronto is changing and we very much hope to be a part of that change," he said.

York University student dancers, the Sashar Zarif Dance Ensemble, performed at the launch of the university's new arts centre, the Accolade Project. York president Lorna Marsden is in the background, holding a wineglass.

Silver envisions artists showcasing their productions at Accolade, which houses York's departments of music and dance, as well as the Art Gallery of York University. The project also provides an entertainment venue for the burgeoning north Toronto and York Region communities.

Accolade's facilities include a 325-seat recital hall with an integrated recording studio; a 325-seat proscenium theatre with orchestra pit; and state-of-the-art classrooms, labs and studios. The structure has been designed to allow for subway access when the TTC is extended to York's campus.

Up until now, music students practised in converted dining halls and were marooned to the outskirts of campus.

Andrew Craig, York alumni and host of CBC-Radio's *In Performance,* likened the music students to "ferrets" hiding on the fringes of York.

"I like what you've done to the place, Dean Silver," said Craig before introducing the recital hall's inaugural concert.

Music student James McEleney, a bass player, was the only student playing in the York Faculty/Student Jazz Quartet, which performed at the concert.

"We had a fantastic faculty before this building, but now we have the space to showcase our work. And it will probably give us the public we need," he said.

The building makes the arts accessible to the non-art student and general public. For example, two to three times a week, the music department will put on noon-hour performances.

"We want to engage the general public. We have to – they are our future audience," said Silver.

Ribbon cutting ceremony, please see page 62.

BEIT RAYIM SYNAGOGUE & SCHOOL
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The Executive, Board of Directors, Staff and Members of Beit Rayim Synagogue & School mourn the untimely passing of our dear Rabbi

Rabbi Sol Tanenzapf, z"l

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The Tanenzapf/Tanen Families
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Israel-bashing wolves wear academic tweed

"The Israel Lobby" is a lengthy essay spanning nine pages in the March 23 issue of the *London Review of Books*. Written by U.S. academics John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, it's a heavy-handed attempt to undermine American support for Israel by impugning Israel's moral standing and its historical record, and by portraying it as wantonly aggressive and rejectionist toward the Palestinians and Arabs.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

What is especially troubling is that this polemic comes not from well-known Israel-bashers but from mainstream academics: Mearsheimer is professor of political science at the University of Chicago and Walt is at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

The *London Review* article is based on a purportedly academic 15,000-word treatise, "The Israel Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy," published by the Kennedy School. Its more than 80 pages are divided nearly equally between text and footnotes, giving the tract the appearance of careful scholarship.

Mearsheimer and Walt describe their writing as fair-minded, even "objective," based on incontrovertible evidence. "Some readers will find this analysis disturbing, but the facts recounted here are not in serious dispute among scholars," they write.

Since it gives the semblance of academic authenticity, both the Kennedy School paper and *London Review* article (which in some respects exceeds the original paper in shrillness and sensationalism) are bound to have some influence in certain circles.

The paper appears on the third anniversary of the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, and comes at a time when things are not going well there for U.S. President George W. Bush. Recrimination in the United States is growing, and the paper may be a prime example.

The paper's principal argument is that the U.S. pro-Israel lobby, aligned with mostly Jewish neo-conservatives who pushed for the war against Iraq, has manipulated U.S. foreign policy to secure American protection for Israel at the expense of U.S. national interests.

There is "little doubt that Israel and the [pro-Israel] lobby were key factors in shaping the decision for war. Without the lobby's effort, the United States would have been far less likely to have gone to war in March 2003," Mearsheimer and Walt wrote in the Kennedy school paper.

In the meantime, they argue, "Israel's enemies get weakened or overthrown, Israel gets a free hand with the Palestinians, and the United States does most of the fighting, dying, rebuilding and paying."

Space does not permit a rebuttal of the article's superabundant factual errors and distortions, including its principal thesis. What follows is a very small, though illustrative sample, at least with respect to Israel.

• The article ignores the fact that Iran is a major threat to Israel, even though it "is hundreds of miles away," as the authors note, precisely because Iran is developing nuclear weapons and already has long-range missiles capable of delivering nuclear warheads to Israel and its leader has repeatedly declared that Israel ought to be "wiped off the face of the earth." Also overlooked is that Iran is a threat to the peace and security of many other countries, including the United States, an oversight that's coupled with the authors' erroneous allegation that Bush is confronting Iran mainly because of pressure from the "pro-Israel" lobby.

• The authors repeatedly cherry-pick phrases out of context from Israeli sources such as journalists Ze'ev Schiff, Aluf Benn and Yossi Klein Halevi in order to push a grossly one-sided indictment against Israel and the "Lobby."

• The paper overlooks the historical reality that successive Israeli governments under prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin, Shimon Peres and Ehud Barak sought to reach genuine territorial compromise with the Palestinians. It insists that Israel has "refuse[ed] to grant the Palestinians a viable state of their own."

• It ignores Israel's unilateral withdrawal from Gaza and the northern West Bank in August 2005.

• The paper claims the U.S. and Israel failed to support and negotiate with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, and ignores the fact Abbas was unwilling to assert his authority against Palestinian extremists and terrorists, as he had promised.

What is most striking about Mearsheimer and Walt's article is not that it displays a bias, but that it is so blatantly one-sided – so oblivious to abundant countervailing evidence and argument as to result in a caricature of scholarship. It's dangerous precisely because it will be taken seriously by moderates impressed by the appearance of scholarly rigour.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee

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With the generous support of The Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto

New features in store for 2006 Walk With Israel

Annual event hits the streets on Sunday, May 28

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

Felicia Posluns remembers walking for Israel as a child. "To me the old UJA Federation Walkathon was walking 20 miles from way up north to City Hall, back up north. You had blisters on your feet. It was a real accomplishment."

The event has changed since then, but the feeling of camaraderie, the pride in completion, and the support for Israel has stayed the same.

"This is much more of a party," says Posluns, who now serves as co-chair of the Walk, along with her sisters-in-law Nelly and Sara Zagdanski. "This is walking with lots of people and really celebrating together, keeping the whole community together."

This year's UJA Federation Walk With Israel, which will be held on Sunday, May 28, has a few new things in store.

For the first time, walkers can create a personal donation web page complete with their photo and a personal note to family and friends. Sponsors who donate online will automatically receive a tax receipt for donations of $10 or more. The Walk With Israel website, www.ujawalkwithisrael.com, also features contests, a route map and information on the event.

ARR-YEAH the Lion, the friendly mascot of UJA Federation's Walk With Israel, is back this year as the Walk takes place on Sunday May 28.

At the Walk, participants will be entertained by DJs from five different companies: Corey Mandell, Superior Sound, Mint Events, Magen Boys Entertainment, and Sole Power.

The party atmosphere will continue with the RioCan Carnival at the end of the Walk. It will feature hair colouring, airbrush tattoos, face painting by Party Impressions and giveaways by Incredible Novelties. "This year we're taking the RioCan Carnival to a different level," says Nelly Zagdanski. "It will be a fun carnival atmosphere, with rides, pretzels, and cotton candy."

Another new feature is the Office SuperCentre Treasure Hunt. Children will follow clues to find replicas of Arr-yeah the Lion, the Walk mascot, hidden along the route.

"It's a family day, it's a community day, it's a fun day, it's a celebration day—it's a really feel good event," says Sara Zagdanski. "For people who have participated before, they understand that and it keeps them coming back."

The annual event raises money for UJA Federation activities, such as supporting underprivileged children, sending Jewish kids to summer camp, and *birthright israel*.

The Walk is the largest community event that shows our solidarity with Israel, says Nelly Zagdanski. "It's critical for the entire community to come out. We can only show our strength and solidarity and support by coming out in numbers."

For more information, please call the Walk With Israel Hotline at 416.631.5700 or visit www.ujawalkwithisrael.com.

Exhibit celebrates Toronto's Jewish business pioneers

Toronto's Jewish community boasts an abundance of doctors, lawyers, and large business owners, but that wasn't always the case.

A new exhibit, sponsored by the UJA Federation Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA) on the fourth floor of the Lipa Green Building for Jewish Community Services at 4600 Bathurst Street, celebrates the modest beginnings of Jewish Toronto's business community.

"Taking Care of Business: An Historical Glance at Business and Labour Within Toronto's Jewish Community," documents the role of commerce in the community.

As in most North American cities, Toronto's early Jewish immigrants had difficulty finding jobs due to language, religious, and occupational barriers.

"A lot of people who immigrated here started out as peddlers," says OJA director, Ellen Scheinberg. "Then they bought a little shop … a lot of them succeeded and became big businessmen or entrepreneurs, but it all started with the peddler."

Once they had raised enough money to settle down, common businesses for early Jewish Torontonians included restaurants, jewelry shops, clothing, shoe and hat stores, bakeries, butcher shops, pawn shops, and groceries.

Stores that were on the ground floor of the owners' home were especially popular, because they allowed the entire family to participate in the business.

Murray Koffler preparing pharmaceuticals in the Koffler Drug Store on Bathurst Street. (Photo taken by Al Gilbert, 1950.)

The exhibit displays photographs, artifacts, and archival documents on loan from community members and drawn from the Archives' holdings. It features a wide variety of businesses and individuals, including Moishe Stern, the city's first Jewish milkman, Murray Koffler, working at his pharmacy during the early years, before he founded the Shoppers Drug Mart chain.

"People are intrigued to see early material from businesses that mean a lot to them like Tip Top Tailors, United Bakers and Koffler's Pharmacy," says Scheinberg.

"Taking Care of Business" was originally displayed at the United Jewish Communities General Assembly recently held in Toronto, and was sponsored by the Ladovsky family, owners of United Bakers Dairy Restaurant, now in Lawrence Plaza. "Our late father, Herman Ladovsky, was a man who loved his community," says Ruthie Ladovsky. "He loved going up to the Archives on a regular basis. He would go through old papers and pictures and try to shed some light on early Jewish Toronto."

Love blooms at Toronto's General Assembly

With three singles' missions and twelve years on the National Young Leadership Cabinet under his belt, Joel Alperson, incoming chair of the United Jewish Communities (UJC) annual campaign, had seen many couples meet through UJC programs. But he never thought it would happen to him. Certainly not at the General Assembly (GA), which took place in Toronto in November. "The GA didn't seem like the type of event where I was likely to meet somebody," he says.

The Omaha native, who has taken a leadership role with the organization that represents nearly 200 North American Jewish Federations, was at a GA cocktail party when an old friend from the Young Leadership Cabinet walked in. With him was Torontonian, Daphna Pollack.

"There was an instant chemistry," says Alperson. "We were laughing and having fun from the moment we met."

While they were talking, Pollack, who was working at the GA as a greeter, was holding her greeter's vest behind her back with her left hand. "I couldn't tell if she was engaged or married or anything," says Alperson. "It was driving me crazy."

Joel Alperson

Pollack - an active member of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto Young Adult Division - it turns out, was neither engaged nor married. The two had a long lunch the next day, and Alperson quickly decided to extend his stay in Toronto.

By the end of February, they were engaged. "I knew very quickly," says Alperson. "I felt so strongly about her, and our time together was so easy, so fun, so much laughter. There was no reason to wait. We're both old enough to know what we want."

This is an exciting time in Alperson's life for more reasons than one. Three days before the big proposal, Alperson was officially named national chair of the UJC campaign in the United States.

"These two events were both life dreams of mine," says Alperson. "If somebody told me these two dreams would've come at all—that's amazing. But within three days of each other—it's an embarrassment of riches."

Once wed, the newlyweds will live in New York, but these days Alperson is spending a lot of time in Toronto planning the May 29 wedding with his fiancée. "The distance makes it harder," he says, "but if there's a real desire to get together it will work."

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

French Jewish community is nervous following Halimi murder

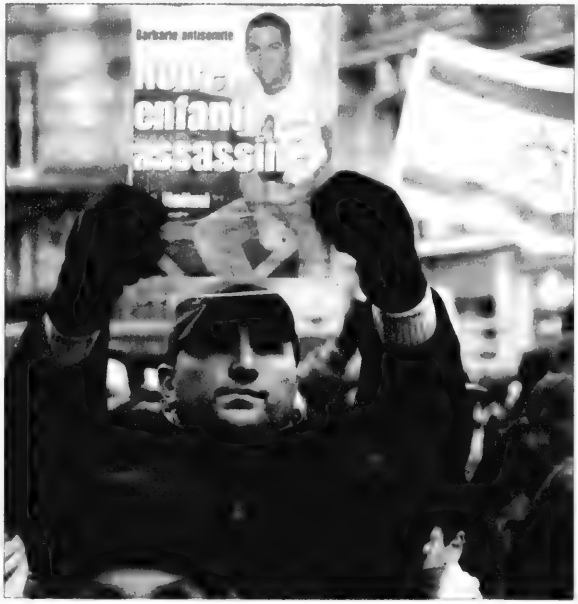
Authorities now more aware of potential antisemitic activities, says Paris-area resident

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

Following the brutal torture and murder of Ilan Halimi, a 23 year-old Jewish man in Bagneux, France last month, Paris-area Jews are both more cautious and more wary.

That's the opinion of Yona Sperber, a 53-year-old Jewish woman, born and raised in Toronto, who has lived in Meaux, a small city just outside of Paris, with her Parisienne-born husband since 1995. A mother of three, Sperber says that while her family doesn't live in fear of antisemitic violence, there is now a palpable sense of caution in her community.

"Before Ilan Halimi was killed, there was already plenty of antisemitism in France, so, maybe that's why we're not so scared, we were so used to hearing about it," said Sperber in a telephone interview with *Jewish Toronto*. Sperber lived in North York before her move to Europe. "Believe me, when you live in Toronto and you walk along Bathurst Street, or maybe Bayview, you have a feeling of freedom as a Jew, a feeling of tolerance and acceptance. Not in France, here you have to be careful; you need to be aware of your surroundings. Since his death, my 20-year-old daughter, Laura, is now afraid to wear her Star of David outside the house."



A man holding a photograph of Ilan Halimi takes part in a march in Paris, France to show opposition to racism and antisemitism after his brutal killing. The sign says in French "Antisemic barbarism. Our child murdered". (AP Photo/Francois Mori)

"This case is the first time since World War II that a French person has been killed for being Jewish," says Roger Cukierman, head of the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions (CRIF), an umbrella organization of French Jewish organizations.

But, Sperber admits, if anything good could possibly come out of such a tragic act of hatred, she thinks it has.

"There's a lot more attention being paid to France's Jewish population; the authorities here are taking things much more seriously than they have in the past," she said. "It's a shame that it took this murder to make them understand, but maybe that poor man's death won't have to be in vain. Also, the schools, I believe, are teaching students more about the importance of tolerance, sensitivity, and respect for others."

Sperber points to an incident at a synagogue on Shabbat immediately following Halimi's murder.

"A group of young Arabs began roughing up a few Jewish kids after they came out of Shabbat services," she says. "I've never seen police respond as quickly as they did that day; they might not have taken that incident so seriously just a while ago."

According to Sperber, the Jewish community in her community and others, has responded to the murder by galvanizing itself, and talking openly of the situation with each other.

"Synagogues have been holding a lot of gatherings where Jewish residents get together and talk about the situation, what safety measures they should be taking, but mainly, I think, it's just a good way to show that we're together in this, as one strong community."

With the *shloshim* – the 30th day of mourning after Halimi's death on March 30 – nearly 2,000 visitors to the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto web site, www.jewishtoronto.com have sent condolences to the Halimi family. To include your name in the electronic condolence book, visit www.jewishtoronto.com and click the Halimi icon.

A kosher Pesach for Cuban Jewry

Imagine a Seder table without matzah, without wine, without kosher food of any sort.

Once again this year, Cuba's 1,500 Jews won't have to.

Almost 19,000 pounds of Kosher-for-Passover food are Cuba-bound, courtesy of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and Canadian Jewish Congress Ontario Region

The Haggadah, which is read at the Passover Seder, clearly compels Jews to ensure that all who are hungry have a place at the table. Cuba's Jews are not immune to the rampant poverty on the island. Even a doctor or teacher makes no more than thirty dollars a month, and tourists often tell of children begging for soap, money, or food.

CJC's Ontario Region has been sending Passover food to Cuba since 1961. This year, for the first time, the program is being operated in conjunction with UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, as well as other Ontario communities like Hamilton and London.

"It gives us an opportunity as a successful, well-established Jewish community to help another Jewish community fully celebrate Passover," says CJC Ontario Regional director Steven Shulman.

A young member of Cuba's Jewish community is all smiles after receiving kosher food from a joint UJA Federation/Canadian Jewish Congress food drive, ensuring a kosher Passover for more than 1,500 Cuban Jews. (Photos courtesy of Mircea Popescu Photography)

In Cuba, the food will be divided among the country's 540 Jewish families according to the number of people in each family. Everyone in the community receives enough kosher food for the whole week. While most of Cuba's Jews live in Havana, there are also communities in Santiago, Camaguey, Santa Clara, Cienfuegos, and Guantanamo.

"Kosher food is not available in this country; therefore the shipment from Canada of kosher foodstuff for the celebration of Pesach is vital to preserve our Jewish lifestyle and identity," said Dr. Jose Miller, and Adela Dworkin, the president and vice president of the Casa de la Communidad Hebrea de Cuba, a Jewish communal organization, in a February 15 letter. Sadly, Dr. Miller has since passed away.

Donations to the Cuba Food Drive can be made at www.ujadonations.com/pesachincuba

One cool way to spend a day

Hands On Toronto of UJA Federation's Young Adult Division, recently attracted over 80 volunteers who gave their time to do mitzvot (good deeds) all across the community. According to co-chair Tracey Steyn, "volunteers spread out across the GTA and lent a hand at seven diverse projects, including feeding the homeless, sorting and packaging food, painting and cleaning, and just generally getting their hands dirty while helping the community's most disadvantaged members."

"The spirit of the volunteers is absolutely amazing - they derive a tremendous sense of purpose in giving back and helping others less fortunate than themselves" explained co-chair Sharlene Milgram.

(Pictured) Packing food boxes at the Second Harvest food sort are from left to right: Ella Morrison, Sharon Vinderine, and Sammy Jakubowicz. Hands On Toronto events take place throughout the year and feature bi-annual mega events - in the winter and summer.

To become involved, please contact Michelle Golfman at 416.631.5854.

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Eitz Chaim is looking for two administrative positions to be filled. We need a full time **Executive Secretary / Administrative Assistant** to begin immediately after Pesach. The qualified candidate has experience in an office setting, preferably a school office, has strong computer skills, good people skills, is high energy and a self-starter. The salary is competitive.
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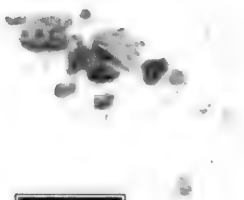

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From left, Michael Hyam and Fred Cowen chat with Eliahou Sasson at the Sephardic Kehila Centre last year. [Frances Kraft photo]

'Iraqi tradition is to keep the family close'

Continued from page 6

Michael Hyam, 27, tried out a few congregations before settling on the Iraqi one. "The davening [is] great, it's serious, and the people are really nice."

Fred Cowen, 32, adds, "We daven, we laugh, we love to sing. When there's a simchah, it's joyful... It's a great experience. It's very unique, it's warm and very welcoming."

Izy Hemi, a native of India whose grandfather left Iraq in the late 1890s, has helped keep Iraqi Jewish tradition alive in Toronto by reviving at least 20 traditional Iraqi tunes

Whenever there was a Jewish holiday or a special occasion like a wedding, he said, he would call Oren Eliyahu, the Iraqi Israeli cantor that the congregation brings in for the High Holy Days. "He would sing [the relevant songs] on my answering machine, and I would make copies of the recording, so we could learn the tunes."

Once the older congregants heard the recordings, the tunes would come back to them, said Hemi, a board member.

Iraq has a rich, 2,500-year Jewish history as home to the Sanhedrin and the burial place of the prophet Ezekiel and Ezra HaSofer, noted

Hemi and Aharon.

"Iraqi tradition is to keep the family close, and what keeps them close is the faith and spiritual tradition," said Sasson.

The congregation's current focus is to bring in more young adults like Hyam and Cowen, said Aharon. "We'll try to have more activities for the young guys and the singles."

Renée and Naim Dallal, founding members of the organization. [Frances Kraft photo]

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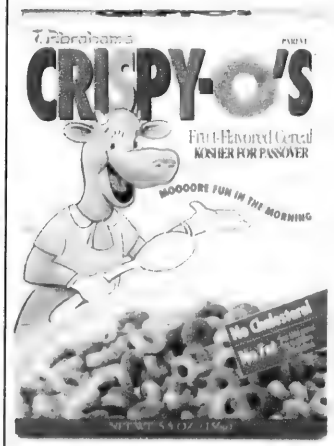

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Israel's security situation troubles settler leader

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

When Israel Danziger looks at the situation facing Israel, both at the micro and macro levels, what he sees causes him no end of grief.

At the micro level there's increasing Palestinian violence – not perhaps of the spectacular bus-bombing variety, but deadly attacks nevertheless: shooting at Jewish drivers in the West Bank; infiltrations of settlements, stabbing attacks; children smuggling large quantities of explosives; rocket attacks.

At the macro level, Danziger, head of the settler advocacy group Mishmeret Yesha – the Guardians of Judea and Samaria – sees the conflict becoming more religious in nature, with Israel facing neighbours motivated by a theological desire to expunge the Jewish state.

Hamas has won the Palestinian parliamentary election with an avowed agenda of wiping out Israel, but Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Egypt may all fall to Islamic governments in the coming years, he predicted.

And that doesn't include the growing menace from a nuclear-armed Iran.

"We're heading into very rough waters," Danziger said, "and the question is, what are we going to do about it?"

Danziger doesn't offer a specific solution. He was in Toronto to inform Canadian Jews about the situation in the West Bank and to convince Jews to change the way they think about the conflict.

"If you're not going to say it's a religious war, then we're just going to be playing games," he said.

Mishemeret Yesha is an umbrella organization founded in 1988 during the first Palestinian intifadah that provides a wide variety of services: it helps residents of the territories establish security committees, it provides free loans to upgrade security measures, it provides defensive equipment for West Bank vehicles, it provides free loans for medical equipment, it sets up mini trauma centres, it has created a security network in West Bank communities and it funds cottage industries in the territories.

As a spokesperson for the organization, the 53-year-old Brooklyn native travels to North America to raise funds and provide information about the reality on the ground faced by residents of the territories.

Some of the news he provides is good: despite continuing attempts at terrorist infiltration of settlements, increased security measures have succeeded in blocking many of the attacks.

Right around Purim, he said, the Israeli army caught two Palestinian youngsters near Nablus, each with 15-kilogram charges packed in large clay vases. "It was a Purim gift," he quipped.

Meanwhile, terrorists continue to fire an average of five rockets a day from Gaza, with one recently landing only 50 yards from the Ashkelon power station.

"This is some of what is going on. People here are not aware of this," he said.

While the Israeli army continues its incursions into Palestinian towns to disrupt planned terror attacks, the Palestinians continue to amass weaponry to be used after the Israeli election.

"It's only a matter of time before they will be lobbing rockets into Netanya, Kfar Saba, Ra'anana, Ben-Gurion Airport, the area around Jerusalem," and other parts of pre-1967 Israel, Danziger predicted.

Holocaust program marks fifth anniversary

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

A Holocaust education program designed to heighten awareness among Canadian and European teachers marks its fifth anniversary this year.

Mark Webber

Michael Brown

The Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Anti-Racism Education is the brainchild of two York University academics, Mark Webber and Michael Brown.

"We thought there was a need to ensure that the next generation of teachers would know how to teach the Holocaust and combat racism and anti-Semitism," said Webber, a professor of German studies.

An initiative of York's Centre for Jewish Studies and the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies, the program brings together Canadian and European university students.

Thirty two students – 16 Canadians, eight Germans and eight Poles – are enrolled in this year's program.

The vast majority are not Jewish.

"We want to get to people training to be teachers," said Webber, who is also director of the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies.

In a typical year, students spend two weeks in Poland and another two weeks in Germany, then they develop teaching materials. Later, European participants travel to Canada to present their projects and take part in seminars.

Webber believes the program, which was initially called "Learning from the Past, Teaching for the Future," has had a beneficial effect.

Students often spend two weeks in Poland and two inGermany

"The students tell us that the trip itself is life-changing and often determines their future career."

Having embarked on a teaching career, they make use of and build on what they've learned in the program, Webber added.

Polish graduates of the program have already published a volume of essays on the Holocaust, and in Germany, a book about the program's various projects is scheduled to be published shortly.

According to Webber, the program offers future teachers a unique opportunity "to connect the past with modern realities that can't be properly conveyed by textbooks alone."

Brown, the past director of the Centre for Jewish Studies and now a senior scholar at York, said the program's objective is to give the next generation of teachers in multicultural classrooms the tools "to dispel stereotypes" spawned by the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks in the United States and the current war in Iraq.

He added that participants "are extraordinarily aware of the potential for evil that racism presents and much more knowledgeable than their peers about the Holocaust and its implications for Jews and non-Jews in the past and the present."

Summarizing the program, Webber said, "By looking at the past, we prepare teachers to lead their students toward a better future. By looking at others, we not only overcome stereotypes about them, but also get to know ourselves better."

The project's official patron, Jutta Limbach, is president of the Goethe Institute and past president of the German Federal Constitutional Court.

It's funded by the Appels, the TransAtlantic Program of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Baden-Wuerttemberg Office for Civic Education, the Polish-German Youth Office, York University and its partner institutions in Germany and Poland, as well as private donors.

In addition, the Canadian embassies in Berlin and Warsaw, and the German and Polish consulates in Toronto, have provided assistance and support.

Ten recommendations offered to address anti-Jewish hate

Continued from page 3

The audit noted that in 2005 as in the two previous years, "the single most active group in carrying out anti-Semitic incidents was found to be made up of persons who identified themselves as Arab." The number so identified was 56, down from 80 in 2004.

The audit offered 10 recommendations to address anti-Jewish hate. Among them: publish guidelines for laying hate crime charges to ensure consistency across Canada; establish dedicated hate crimes units in all jurisdictions; criminalize membership in racist groups or display of racist symbols; amend the Criminal Code to include Holocaust denial as a hate crime.

"The elevated levels of anti-Jewish activity, compared to just five years previously, indicates that anti-Semitism is indeed an unfortunate fact of Canadian life," said Frank Dimant, B'nai Brith Canada's executive vice-president. "At present there is much you can say and do in Canada to invoke prejudice against Jews, with little recourse in the criminal justice system."

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Greater Toronto Area

HOCKEY CHAMPS: The team from Leo Baeck Day School's northern branch, left, embrace the Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Cup after winning the Junior B final of the Jewish Day School Hockey League's Yitzhak Rabin Memorial Tournament on March 10. The team from United Synagogue Day School's Bathurst campus, top, won in the Senior division.

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Family Moments

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Mazel Tov to...

Melanie & Adam Seigel announce the arrival of Jaime Summer on March 4. Proud grandparents are Honey & Jerry Mahl, Susan Seigel, and great grandfather Harry Seigel.

Our super boy is three! Happy birthday Matthew. With love, your parents, Paul & Sharron Lungen, bubbies & zaydes, aunts, uncles and cousins.

Mazel tov to Benjamin Dankner on your 8th birthday. Lots of love from your parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

Mazel tov to Re'uel Spetgang on your first birthday! Much love from your parents, grandparents, great-grandfather, aunts and uncles.

Marc, Saul, Alissa, Felicia and Ryan want to wish mazel tov to Bubbie Faye and Zayde Moishe Alter on their 60th anniversary, June 16.

Mazel tov sweetheart on your 65th Birthday. All my love, Magda. Also best wishes from your children, Barry, Alanna, Ron, Sabrina and all the family.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.

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What's New deadlines: PLEASE NOTE HOLIDAY DEADLINES: Monday, April 3, is the deadline for the April 21 issue and Wednesday, April 5, is the deadline for the April 27 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, March 30

HAGGADAH HIGHLIGHTS

Join Mekorot for a morning of coffee and a shiur with **Ilana Sober** and enhance the discussion at your seder table. 9:45-11:15 a.m. at 1 Twin Circle Crt. $10. 416-877-2050

IDENTITY AND ETHNICITY

Prof. Ann Killebrew, of Penn State, speaks on "Excavating Egyptians, Israelites and Philistines: Identity and Ethnicity in the Biblical World." 7:30 p.m. at the University of Toronto, 81 St. Mary St. Free. www.utoronto.ca/cims

ZIONISM & REDEMPTION

Torah in Motion presents **Rabbi Moshe Taragin**, of Yeshivat Har Etzion, on "Understanding Secular Zionism as a Divine Tool of Redemption," 8 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. $10. 416-633-5770

Friday, March 31

THE HOLOCAUST'S LESSONS

Following Friday night services at Temple Har Zion, **David Matas**, senior counsel of Bnai Brith, speaks on "Lessons from the Holocaust." 905-889-2252, ext. 5

Saturday, April 1

GETTING READY FOR PESACH

Darchei Noam Congregation hosts "Getting Your Home Ready For Pesach" with **Fredelle Brief**, following Shabbat services and kiddush. 15 Hove St. 416-638-4783

NA'AMAT CHARITY BINGO

Simcha/Kadima, of Na'amat Canada, holds its annual charity bingo event at the 272 Codsell Ave. 7:30 p.m. Tickets $20, includes cards, refreshments, door prizes and live auction. 416-636-5425

MARTINI AND CASINO NITE

Join the Beth Sholom Young Couples Committee at 8:30 p.m. Reserve in advance. $15, non-members $20. 416-783-6103, ext. 229, or e-mail leigh@bethsholom.net.

Sunday, April 2

BREAKFAST CLUB

Eli Rubinstein speaks on "Rare Jewish Folktales for Adults (and Children)" at the Habonim Breakfast Club. 10 a.m. 5 Glen Park. $6.

SINGLES 35+ BRUNCH

Adath Israel Dynamic Singles 35+ presents "Israel in Song: A Journey," with **Cantor Linda Segal** at their Sunday brunch. 11:30 a.m. $15 if prepaid by March 30, $20 at the door. 416-635-5340

SHOLOM ALEICHEM

Enjoy an afternoon of Yiddish theatre and music in English and Yiddish with **Rafael Goldwaser, Harvey Atkin, Theresea Tova, Bryan Katz, Mitchell Leonard Smolkin** and the Bialik Hebrew Day School Choir. 2 p.m. at Beth Tzedec Congregation. Free.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The Centre for Jewish Studies at York University presents The Ten Commandments in Modern Jewish Culture. **Prof. Marc Brettler**, of Brandeis University, speaks on "The Biblical Text and Its North American Afterlife" at 2 p.m. and **Prof. Jenna Weissman Joselit**, of Princeton University, speaks on "When Moses Came Down From the Mountain: The Ten Commandments and Their Hold on the Modern Imagination" at 3:30 p.m. at the Executive Learning Centre, Schulich School of Business. 416-736-5823

RIKUDIYAH 2006

Join more than 400 dancers, from 17 schools, for Toronto's annual Israeli dance festival for children.

Continued on page 29

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What's New

Continued from page 28

2:30 p.m. at the Tait McKenzie Building at York University. For info, call **Teme**, 416-636-1880, ext. 364.

A HEALING SERVICE

The Toronto Healing Project holds a healing service with **Rabbi Jennifer Gorman** and **Judy Shier Weisberg**. 3-4 p.m. at Lipa Green, 4600 Bathurst St. Wheelchair access. 416-944-3359

THE BEADLES (SHPEELERS)

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation presents its 12th annual musical evening of Jewish song, with The Beadles (formerly The Shpeelers) and the duo of **Bill Berle** and **Gord Lindsay**, and classical renditions by **Catherine, Daniel** and **Noam Bierstone**. 7 p.m. Proceeds support Jews For Judaism. $18, $29/couple. 416-783-0582

TORONTO'S 1ST SYNAGOGUES

Darchei Noam Congregation presents **Robert Burley**, of Ryerson University, on "Images of Toronto's First Synagogues." 7 p.m. 15 Hove St. 416-638-4783

SAVE A CHILD'S HEART

The University of Toronto acappella group, The Varsity Jews and Kol Neshama perform a concert to benefit Save a Child's Heart. 7:30 p.m at Holy Blossom Temple. www.varsityjews.com for more info. $18, students $8

CDN JEWISH HISTORY

Temple Israel of London presents **Gerald Tulchinsky**, professor emeritus at Queen's University, on "What's Different About Canadian Jewish History?" 8 p.m. at the Jewish Community Centre, 536 Huron St. 519-858-4400

JEWISH ETHICS

Torah in Motion presents "Making Money: A Question of Ethics," a panel discussion with **Rabbi Dr. Asher Meir**, author of syndicated column The Jewish Ethicist; **Pinchas Rosenstein**, director of the Business Ethics Center of Jerusalem; **Dr. Mark Schwartz**, Atkinson School of Administrative Studies; and **Rabbi Jay Kelman**, chartered accountant. 8 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation. 416-633-5770

Monday, April 3

LIBRARY BOOK CLUB

A Changed Man by **Francine Prose** will be discussed at the Holy Blossom Temple Book Club. 10 a.m. 416-789-3291, ext. 235

GOD LOVES STORIES

Enjoy "Because God Loves Stories," performances by **Michael Wex, Dan Yashinsky, Eli Rubenstein** and **Allan Merovitz**, at the Alec Gelcer Annual Storytelling Memorial Concert, 8 p.m. at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. PWYC, $10 suggested. 416-656-2445

JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

Enjoy *Journey to Jerusalem*, an oratorio that recounts the journey of the Jewish people from Abraham to the birth of modern-day Israel. Composed and directed by **Eyal Bitton** and narrated by **Marsha Lederman**, featuring **Cantor Tibor Kovari, Michele Tredger**, the Beth Tikvah Choral Society and the Beth Tikvah Gala Orchestra. 8 p.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. For tickets, call 416-221-3433, ext. 354.

Tuesday, April 4

YUMMY PESACH DESSERTS

Beth David Sisterhood presents "Doc Marvin's Pesach Delectable Desserts." **Dr. Marvin Gelkopf** demonstrates and shares his baking expertise. 7:30 p.m. Non-members $5. 416-633-5500

Wednesday, April 5

PASSOVER CELEBRATION

Join parents, toddlers and preschoolers as United Synagogue Day School and Beth Tzedec Synagogue prepare for Passover with "Song, Circle & Celebration," 9:30-10:30 a.m. 1700 Bathurst St. RSVP, 416-224-8737, ext. 137.

TREATING OSTEOPOROSIS

Dr. Hana Weidenfeld speaks on "Naturopathy and the Treatment of Osteoporosis" to the B'nai Brith Dr. W. Filderman Lodge, 6 p.m. at 15 Hove St. 416-631-0634

EAST MEETS WEST

Holy Blossom Temple Sisterhood presents **Rose Reisman**, cookbook author and nutritional consultant, preparing "East Meets West" recipes at 7:15 p.m. Tickets, 416-789-3291. Portion of proceeds go to Reena Foundation and One Family Fund.

Other news

HEBREW CLASSES

The Canadian Zionist Federation offers Hebrew-language studies beginning the week of April 2, at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Classes offered on Sunday and during the week, during the day and in the evening at 4600 Bathurst St. To register, contact 416-633-3988 or e-mail czf@jazo.org.il.

ZELIKOVITZ ART EXHIBIT

Holy Blossom Temple presents an exhibition of art by **Joel Zelikovitz** from April 5 to May 10. The opening reception takes place Thursday, April 6 at 7 p.m.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 62

BREAKFAST & SERVICE

Beth David Young Families Committee present a Shabbat breakfast on Shabbat Hagadol, Saturday, April 8, at 9:30 a.m. followed by a participatory family service at 10 a.m. RSVP at 416-633-5500 by Tuesday, April 4. No Charge.

PASSOVER FOOD DRIVE

Make your donations of kosher-for-Passover food at grocery stores, day schools and Council House and support the National Council of Jewish Women Food Drive. Volunteers are needed to make deliveries on Sunday, April 9, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Call 416-633-5100 or e-mail pfd@ncjwc-ts.org.

ROOM AT YOUR SEDER?

JIAS, Jewish Immigrant Aid Services Toronto is looking for host families to invite recent immigrants to one of their Pesach seders. Call 416-630-6481, ext 30.

SECOND SEDERS

Association of Jewish Seniors 35th annual second seder takes place on Thursday, April 13, 7:30 p.m. at the Bernard Betel Centre. $20. Reserve by April 5 at the centre or call **Tammy Parker** 416-635-2860.

Shaarei Tefillah Congregation and **Rabbi Moshe Stern** host a second seder Thursday, April 13. For information, call 416-787-1631.

Temple Israel of London host a seder on Thursday, April 13. For information, call 519-858-4400.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Birthdays, Hockey Games and Holidays – Making It Work After Divorce: A workshop for parents facing the important issues around their children's life cycle events. Monday, April 3, at 4600 Bathurst St. from 7 to 9 p.m.

Younger Widow/Widower Bereavement Group: A six-session discussion series for individuals 60 and under who have recently lost a spouse. Tuesday, April 4 at 4600 Bathurst St. from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

When You're About To Separate – What To tell The Kids: A workshop, for parents about to separate or in the early stages of separation, dealing with how and when to tell the children and how to best meet their child's needs. Tuesday, April 4, at the Promenade Mall, Suite 313, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Tzedec Congregation Senior Haverim Program host the Medina Theatre Ensemble with **Roselle Stone, Joe Starr, Oscar Goodman**, and **David Atkin** performing excerpts from two plays of **Neil Simon**, *The Prisoner of Second Avenue* and *The Sunshine Boys*. Monday, April 3, 1:30 p.m. $2. 416-781-3511

Lunch and Learn in Retirement presents **Dolly Bell** on "Growing Up Jewish in China." Wednesday, April 5, 1 p.m. Bring a dairy lunch, coffee, tea and cookies served. $1. 416-789-3291

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. Call 416-630-9444.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Casino Rama, Wednesday, April 5. Call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. March 30, sing-along. Call **Menachem Wallach**, 905-731-7748.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Seniors Open Computer Lab Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., and Fridays, 1:30 p.m.-4 p.m. $1.50/hr or $10/10 hours.

Passover catering: order by April 10.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Central registration is now starting for all fitness and recreation programs. Call ext. 235 or register at BJCC.

Joker's Club with **Sam Crystal**, Wednesday, April 5, 1-2 p.m. Free.

Family Sing-Along Concert featuring Sing-Along Randi, Sunday, April 9, at 2 p.m. For tickets, call ext. 235.

Centre Camp Passover Camp, Monday, April 10-Friday, April 21. Call ext. 378.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Brown Bag Book Club, Thursday, March 30: **Marilyn Herbert** leads a discussion of *Confessions of Max Tivoli* by **Andrew Sean Greer**. Bring your lunch and discuss a good book. $9. Babysitting available.

Ever Again, the new documentary from the Simon Wiesenthal Center, Thursday, March 30. **Avi Benlolo**, of the centre, and **Bernie Farber**, of Canadian Jewish Congress, introduce the film. Q&A after the film. $10 in advance, $15 at the door. Tickets at MJCC, 416-635-2883, ext. 303, or e-mail cadams@ujafed.org.

Women's Passover seder, Sunday, April 16, 2-5 p.m. Members $20, non-members $30. Reserve at ext. 0.

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Axler, Anna	Mar 9/06	111 Avenue Rd.
Grunwald, Magda Noemi	Mar 9/06	32 Clarissa Dr.
Batcher, Florence	Mar 10/06	Private
Robinson, Florence	Mar 10/06	2121 Bathurst St.
Orch, Louis	Mar 9/06	Private
Waldman, Brian Harold	Mar 9/06	133 Torresdale Ave.
Leveson, Tessa	Mar 13/06	1 Cordoba Crt.
Gold, Jack	Mar 12/06	33 Hawkeaf Cres.
Wax, Belle	Mar 13/06	3000 Dufferin St.
Gat, Yaffa	Mar 14/06	166 Wilson Ave.
Jablonsky, Lily	Mar 15/06	100 Canyon Ave.
Greenspan, William	Mar 15/06	Private
Kaplan, Broneka	Mar 15/06	Private
Behar, Sarah	Mar 16/06	715 Finch Ave. W.

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Clara Lebovits	Mar 11/06	55 Ameer Avenue
May Stern	Mar 10/06	112 Mona Drive
Molly Shapiro	Mar 9/06	150 Heath Street West
Joe Sonshine	Mar 13/06	73 Fifeshire Road
George Weiss	Mar 13/06	208 Waterloo Avenue
Charlotte Belz	Mar 13/06	76 Kentland Crescent
Abram Miller	Mar 15/06	12 Rockford Road
Greta Hahn	Mar 14/06	42 Rondeau Drive
Freda Baum	Mar 15/06	55 Ameer Avenue
Leslie Donne	Mar 15/06	180 Glen Cedar Road
Cyril Berlin	Mar 14/06	55 William Street East
Lillian Rosen	Mar 16/06	1121 Steeles Ave. West
Bernice Zalkin	Mar 18/06	2700 Bathurst St.
Bob Bokar	Mar 16/06	650 Briar Hill Avenue
Pauline Muroff-Cohen	Mar 17/06	100 Canyon Ave.
Ben Freedman	Mar 16/06	198 Old Forest Hill Rd
Herschel Fogel	Mar 16/06	240 Oriole Parkway
Ruth Joseph	Mar 17/06	85 Skymark Drive
Sol Tanenzapf	Mar 18/06	131 Torresdale Avenue
Sadie Sheffe	Mar 18/06	2121 Bathurst Street
Mitchell Duckman	Mar 19/06	173 Owen Blvd.

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late

SHIRLEY KLEIN ז"ל

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Beth Avraham Yoseph (BAYT) Section

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Obituary

Rabbi served Beit Rayim for the past 14 years

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Although his family anticipated a much smaller crowd, more than 700 people attended the funeral for Rabbi Sol Tanenzapf last week.

"He never made a big deal about how many people he touched," his son Melech Tanen told *The CJN*. In his eulogy, however, Tanen noted that people "in the most random places" have sought him out to tell of the late rabbi's kindness or helpfulness.

Rabbi Sol Tanenzapf

Rabbi Tanenzapf was part-time spiritual leader of Beit Rayim Synagogue for the past 14 years, following a decade leading Congregation Shaarei Haim.

He was also a humanities professor at York University, where he taught from 1968 until his death March 18.

Despite health problems in recent years, Rabbi Tanenzapf, who belonged to B'nai Torah Congregation, "attempted to live each day as normally as possible," said Rabbi Marvin Pachino, a personal friend who officiated at the funeral. He died in his sleep of a heart attack, having taught Greek and biblical traditions at York as usual that week.

Rabbi Tanenzapf's love of teaching was a major factor in giving his life purpose, said Rabbi Pachino. He also derived "profound spiritual satisfaction" from his congregational work, and adored his wife Elaine, the high school sweetheart he married in 1958, said Rabbi Pachino.

Despite Rabbi Tanenzapf's tendency to be self-effacing, "there was one thing that he was proud of and that was his grandchildren," said Tanen at the funeral. Two of them delivered eulogies, along with eight other friends and family members.

Rabbi Tanenzapf, a native New Yorker, received his PhD in Philosophy from Yale University in 1967. He was ordained from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1968, and received an honorary doctorate of divinity there in 1994. He also taught there, as well as at the City University of New York, before coming to Toronto. Although he retired from York officially at 65, he continued teaching, and had only two weeks of classes left before he had to retire fully. He had just finished writing his students' final exam, Tanen said.

Rabbi Tanenzapf was "an excellent teacher devoted to his students," said Syd Eisen, who originally hired him to teach Hebrew language and Jewish philosophy at York. Over the years he also taught religious studies, spoke at academic conferences and published many papers.

The range of his learning was "enormous," and he was appreciated for his sincerity, integrity, kindness and decency, said Eisen, also a friend.

Colleague Martin Lockshin remembers the rabbi as "a brilliant man" who "truly cared about other human beings."

For Rabbi Tanenzapf's 69th birthday Feb. 22, his wife surprised him by distributing a compilation of his Divrei Torah in book form.

"He uplifted the spirits of his congregants not only with the message of his lessons but with the message and lessons of his own character," said Rabbi Pachino. Even so, he "was very down to earth. He wasn't above doing laundry, washing dishes and making breakfast for his wife every morning."

Chuck Ticker, a former president of Beit Rayim, said in his eulogy that, unlike other rabbis, Rabbi Tanenzapf "listened more than he spoke and shunned the limelight." When he did speak, he said, "you knew it was an important and a well considered opinion."

Ticker also commented on the rabbi's sense of humour, as did family friend Ruth Miskin, who called his monologues "devastatingly funny, wickedly creative and expertly executed."

In addition to his wife and and son Melech, Rabbi Tanenzapf leaves his son Shlomo Mark of Potomac, Md. and seven grandchildren.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

ייִדיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פֿון: אַלעק סילווער

שלום עליכם — ניינציק יאָר נאָך זיין פּטירה

פֿון שמחה סימכאָוויטש

אין אַפּריל דעם 29טן, 2006, וועט אויספֿאַלן דער ניינציקסטער יאָרצייט פֿון **שלום ראַבינאָוויטש** — דער געניאַלער הומאָריסט און קלאַסיקער פֿון דער מאָדערנער ייִדישער ליטעראַטור, באַקאַנט אינעראַל ווי **שלום עליכם**. ער איז געבוירן געוואָרן אין 1859 אין פּערעיאַסלאַוו, לעבן קיִעוו, און איז אויעק פֿון דער וועלט אין ניו־יאָרק אין עלטער פֿון 57 יאָר.

שלום עליכם איז געווען און פֿאַרבליבן דער סאַמע פֿאָפּולערסטער און סאַמע באַליבסטער ייִדישער שרייבער. און נישט בלויז ייִדישער, וויייל אַ גרעסערע צאָל פֿון זיינע שאָפֿונגען זיינען איבערגעזעצט געוואָרן אין אַרום צוויי צענדליק שפּראַכן. זיינע קאָמעדיעס און דראַמעס ווערן נאָך אַלץ געשפּילט אין פֿאַרשיידענע לענדער און אויף פֿאַרשיידענע לשונות. די מוזיק־שפּיל „דער פֿידלער אויפֿן דאַך" (Fiddler On The Roof), באַזירט אויף זיין ווערק „טוביה דער מילכיקער" האָט, ווי באַוווּסט, איינגענומען די וועלט.

דער שליסל צו שלום עליכמס געוואַלדיקן דערפֿאָלג מוז מען, נאַטירלעך, זען אין זיין גאַט־געבענטשטן הומאָר, וואָס איז אַ דעלטענער זשאַנער אין דער ייִדישער און אין דער אַלגעמיינער ליטעראַטור. צווישן דער קלייניער צאָל שרייבער־הומאָריסטן מוז שלום עליכם פֿאַרגלייכט ווערן ווי אייניער פֿון די גרעסטע.

די קרוין פֿון זיין רייכער שאַפֿונג זיינען שלום עליכמס דריי אומשטאַרבלעכע ביכער: „מנחם מענדל פֿון יעהופּעץ", „טוביה דער מילכיקער" און „מאָטל פּייסי דעם חזנס". דאָס זיינען דריי אייגנאַרטיקע און אומפֿאַרגעסלעכע געשטאַלטן און טיפֿן פֿון אַן אוניווערסאַלן באַטייט, פֿונקט ווי דאָן קיכאָט, האַמלעט אָדער אָבלאָמאָוו איז אין דער מערב־אייראָפּעישער און רוסישער ליטעראַטור.

מנחם מענדל איז דער פֿראַטאַפּ פֿון אַ לוסט־מענטש, וואָס פֿאַרמאָגט אַ ווילדע ענערגיע און אַ תּאוה פֿאַר גראַנדיאָזע אונטערנעמונגען, פֿון וועלכע עס לאָזט זיך אויס אַלע מאָל אַ בוידעם. טוביה דער מילכיקער רעפּרעזענטירט דעם אידעאַלן ייִדישן פֿאָלקס־מענטש. שלום עליכם דערהייבט טוביהן, דעם פּשוטן מילכפֿאַרקויפֿער, צו אַן אוניווערסאַלער פּיגור פֿון אַן אידעאַלן מאַן, פֿאָטער און גוטהאַרציקן מענטש.

דער דריטער, מסתּמא דער סאַמע באַליבסטער העלד פֿון שלום עליכמען, איז דער יתום מאָטל פּייסי דעם חזנס. דאָ, ווי אין אַנדערע קינדער־מעשׂיות, האָט שלום עליכם צו נישט געמאַכט דעם באַגריף פֿון „קליינע יידעלעך", וועגן וועלכע עס האָבן געשריבן מענדעלע אָן אַנדערע, אַז ייִדישע קינדער זיינען בעריבט פֿון זייער קינדהייט. מאָטל, ווי די אַנדערע שלום עליכמשע קינדער, איז אַ שפּילעוודיקער קונדס, וואָס האָט ליב צו לאַכן און זינגען, ווי אַנדערע קינדער פֿון זיין עלטער, נישט קוקנדיק אויף זייערע פֿאַרזאָרגטע און פֿאַראַגהמטע עלטערן. זיי לאַכן לויט שלום עליכמס באַרימטן זאַץ: לאַכן איז געזונט, דאָקטוירים הייסן לאַכן.

דער דאָזיקער לייטער־אומשולדיקער שלום עליכם געלעכטער וואַרעמט יידישע הערצער אומעטום אָן אין אַלע צייטן. אפֿילו אין די מוראַדיקע יאָרן פֿון חורבן איירופּאַ האָבן זיינע שריפטן געטראָגן היילזאַם אָן טרייסט פֿאַר די צעבראָכענע יידישע הערצער. אין טעג פֿון אבֿלות אָן טרויער, וויי אין טעג פֿון פֿרייד אָן יום־טובֿ, וועט שלום עליכמס ווערט זיין נעהערט אָן נעשעצט פֿאַר לאַנגע דורות.

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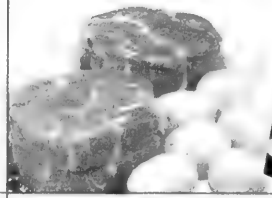

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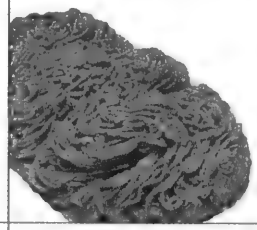

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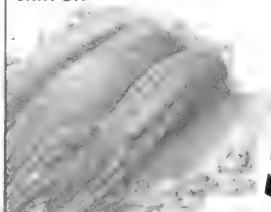

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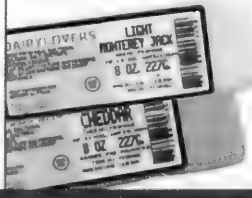

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Bomb-sniffing dogs help prevent suicide attacks

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

To sniff and protect.

The olfactory twist on the Toronto Police Services' motto would do well in Israel, where since 2003, a highly trained corps of sniffer dogs is said to have thwarted dozens of bomb attacks against civilians.

"Pups for Peace" has been so successful in the fight against terrorism that Israeli police have issued an urgent worldwide request for 200 more of the bomb-detecting canines, and 70 new handlers.

The cost: $2 million (US), which is why Pups for Peace (PFP) Canada is issuing its own urgent request for funds and volunteers to raise them.

"The program is definitely working," says Mike Freedland, executive director of PFP Canada. "It's a common sense solution."

PFP Canada was set up in 2004 and has raised $225,000 to date, most of which came from UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. The Canada Revenue Agency recently granted the group charitable status, meaning it can issue tax receipts for donations, Freedland noted.

He added that volunteers are needed for event planning and fundraising.

Israel currently has about 100 sniffer dogs deployed in bus and train stations, crowded markets, malls, busy streets – anywhere front-line civilian defence is needed against an explosive device.

The objective is detection and deterrence, Freedland said. Pups for Peace's best customer to date has been Israel's transport ministry, he added.

Israel already has bomb-sniffing dogs in military and police units, but they have different duties.

Sniffer dogs used in Israel to detect bombs.

Each dog and handler team costs about $10,000 (US) to deploy. That includes the animal's purchase price, training and handling, veterinary care, kennel costs, and other expenses. The training period is two to three months.

Some costs are defrayed by the companies that use the animals.

PFP was founded by Glenn Yago, a Los Angeles economist who initiated the program in April 2002 in response to the Passover massacre at a Netanya hotel in which 29 Israelis were killed and more than 100 injured by a Palestinian suicide bomber.

At first, the dogs were trained in southern California and then shipped to Israel. But in 2003, a training facility opened at an old army base in the Golan Heights.

When the Israel Defence Forces and local police reported the effectiveness of the dogs, PFP received the blessing of the internal security and transportation ministries.

Spurred by statistics indicating that 60 per cent of terror attack casualties are bus passengers, a pilot project was initiated in Netanya in co-operation with the national bus company, Egged. The project's success resulted in several requests for dog-and-handler teams to be dispatched to bus stops across the country.

Freedland says that for security reasons, the Israeli government doesn't disclose how many attacks the canines have prevented. But a Las Vegas magazine has put the number at 70 in the first year the dogs were deployed.

In a case that made news in Israel last July, four explosive-sniffing dogs – Ruby, Heide, Mira and Moshe Herzl – thwarted a suicide bombing at Caf Caffit, a popular cafe in a trendy west Jerusalem neighbourhood. A Hamas operative wearing a gun and explosive belt was reportedly taken into custody.

In 2004, a bomb-sniffing dog fell in the line of duty. Toska, a three-year-old Belgian shepherd, died following an attack by Hezbollah on the Lebanese border that killed one Israeli soldier and wounded eight others.

Toska was given a full military burial at the IDF's Oketz (K-9 unit) cemetery.

Freedland says the dogs aren't limited to any breed. "They just have to have a lot of energy and stay active. And they're usually quite young." Generally, it's German shepherds, Labrador retrievers and Belgian Malinois that are preferred. Many of the dogs are purchased in Holland.

While they're well treated and fed, the professional life of a bomb-sniffing dog is only a few years.

How sharp are those wet noses? The Pups for Peace website says dogs can detect 19,000 types of explosives. The owe their talent to 250 billion olfactory cells in their nasal passages, compared to a mere 125 million for the inferior human proboscis.

They can also sniff through so-called junk odours – people, perfume, waste, even metal and zero in on the smell of an explosive.

"They're better than any machine," Freedland says. "They should be on every street corner in Israel."

PFP Canada can be reached at 416-877-2877.

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Seniors Scene

Plan to keep active after retirement

By FRANCES GOODMAN PELLATT
Special to The CJN

MONTREAL — We all know it is important to put away money for our retirement so that we can afford to continue living in the manner to which we have become accustomed. However, what about planning and preparing for filling up those hours that we once spent working?

Do we consciously and meticulously plan for our freer timetable as we do for our finances? Do we consider the fact that our days will not be filled with work-related responsibilities? Do we look at activities such as volunteering, taking courses or renewing hobbies?

> ***There is life after retirement; we just have to plan for it***

One gentleman I spoke with said he always knew he would not have a problem filling his time once he retired. He noted that he had started reducing his work week several years prior to actually retiring. First he reduced his schedule to four days a week, then the following year to three days, and so on. Fortunately, as a medical professional, he was able to do this.

Now, fully retired at 70 years of age, he has more time to enjoy his grandchildren and look after his home and garden. He also taught himself to draw after reading *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain* (a book by Betty Edwards that he highly recommends), and is taking art and painting courses. As men and women get closer to the age of 60, a time when some can consider taking early retirement and receive a government pension, many people are choosing to continue to work to age 65 or beyond because of the need to have something to do and to feel productive.

One woman who took the option of retiring early admits she did not think about what she would do after retirement, although she had five years to plan for it. She had thought she would continue doing private work in her field of expertise, but as yet, nothing has come of this idea.

"Of course I never considered I would just stay home and do nothing," she says, "and I'm now doing things for myself that I never had time for before, like playing bridge, exercising, visiting my children and grandchildren, and going back to doing sculpting, which I always loved."

She acknowledges that it is painful to realize she no longer is regarded as a knowledgeable, driven professional and feels she has lost her sense of identity and the respect she received when she was working.

"I sometimes feel guilty about not being productive in the way I was when working," she says, "and I know I can easily become depressed, but I am enjoying my leisure time and pursuing my own interests."

Whether we are self-employed or working for someone, eventually we all have to acknowledge the fact that it is time for lifestyle changes. We may not be able to manage the work physically any longer, or other considerations may force us to retire earlier than anticipated. But whatever the reason, we must put some thought into filling up our waking hours.

Retirement should be a time for yourself, a time to continue growing and learning and being rewarded for your efforts in a different way than receiving a weekly salary cheque. If there are things you liked to do when you were younger, but earning a living and raising a family took precedent over them, now is the time to pursue those interests.

Do you like to learn new things? Big cities have many institutions where you can enrol in interest courses – whether in the arts, the sciences or something else. Do you like to entertain or teach? Hospitals and organizations can use dedicated volunteers and offer training to enhance your skills.

Many people fear retirement as a bad thing. But giving up work does not mean giving up living. There is life after retirement. We just have to plan for it.

DANCING AT BAYCREST: Members of the Reach Dance Academy recently performed a Holocaust memorial dance at Baycrest to music from *Schindler's List*.

YORK U Centre for Jewish Studies at York University

The Leonard Wolinsky Lecture on Jewish Life and Education

Sunday, April 2, 2006

The Ten Commandments in Modern Jewish Culture

2:00 p.m. ▶ Professor ***Marc Brettler***
Brandeis University

"The Biblical Text and Its North American Afterlife"

- Intermission & Reception -

3:30 p.m. ▶ Professor ***Jenna Weissman Joselit***
Princeton University

"When Moses Came Down From the Mountain: The Ten Commandments and its Hold on the Modern Imagination"

Executive Learning Centre, Schulich School of Business
Robert R. McEwen Auditorium, Steeles Campus.

The Wolinsky Lectures are sponsored by the Centre for Jewish Studies, the Faculty of Arts, and the Faculty of Education of York University in cooperation with the Toronto Board of Jewish Education.
Inquiries: 416-736-5823

YORK U Centre for Jewish Studies at York University

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Tues./Thurs. – 10:30-12:30 p.m. – 115 Vanier College

Classes begin Thursday, September 7th.

Yiddish at York is made possible through a generous grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto.

For further information about the course call 416-736-5823.
To register as a visiting student call 461-736-5000.

Passover Food Ideas

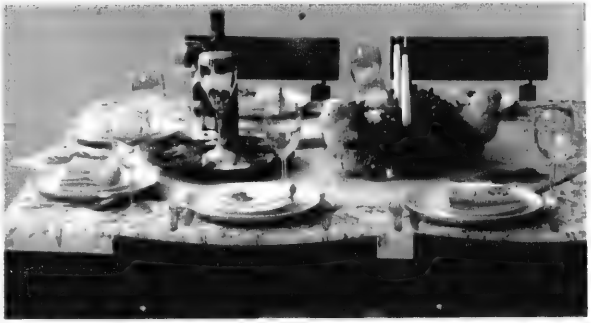
Distinctive, flavourful Passover wines from around the world

At Passover, more than on any other holiday, wine is a most important element. Wine is required for the seder, and having excellent wine gives this joyous yom tov a distinctive, memorable flavour.

For generations, Jews all over the world have gathered every year to recount our liberation from slavery to freedom. This year, as well as thinking about our fellow Jews in far away countries, you can bring them right to your elegant table. How? Serve some of the many superb kosher for Passover wines produced in the finest, international wineries, or present these wines as a gift for your host or hostess.

Israel: From the Efrat Winery, Israeli series, is the Cabernet Sauvignon-Merlot, 2004, winner of Bronze Model. Young, fresh and lively, with soft tannins and an appealing berry-cherry personality. Hints of spices and Mediterranean herbs add complexity.

The Shiraz, 2004, is delicious 100 per cent Israeli Shiraz, a fruity wine with pleasant plum and wine berry fruits. Intense red colour and lovely purple hues. On the palate, it exhibits full-bodied wine with fine, ripe tannins complemented by French oak.



A seder table as seen in *Entertaining on the Jewish Holidays* by Ella Banin, Modan publishing house.

Italy: From southern Italy, the Primitivo has a fearsomely intense depth of colour that gives the promise of much to follow. A huge bouquet, brooding, deep and filled with jammy fruit, with hints of vanilla and tobacco leaves, rose petals and a subtle hint of wood. Just like the nose, the mouth is also filled with interlocking sensations, with sweet fruit flavours on the entry. Deep ripe tannins hold everything together, right into the long, dry finish.

Chile: From Chile, three notable wines include the Alfasi Cabernet Sauvignon, light-bodied with soft berry flavours, the Alfasi Merlot RSV (Reserve) full and aromatic with a touch of oak, and the Alfasi Merlot, dry, light-bodied with a taste of ripe berries.

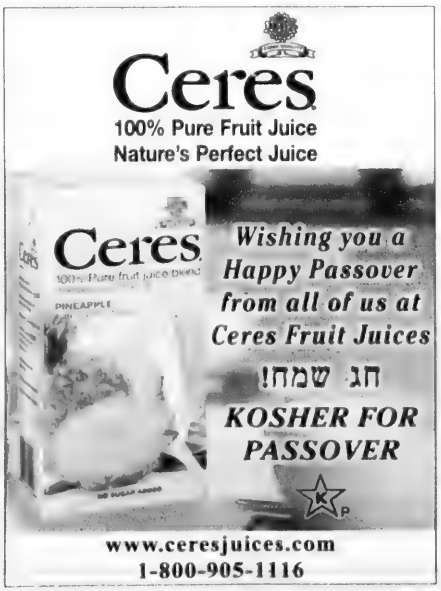
France: From France, the Baron Herzog selection is the Cabaret Sauvignon, a light and delicately styled red wine with a soft flavour and smooth finish.

Australia: From Australia, the Altoona Hills merlot is rich and complex, with layers of ripe plum and licorice flavours.

California: From Baron Herzog, the Syrah, with distinct berry and blackberry fruit notes, is highlighted by subtle oak with intriguing complexity.

South Africa: From Eshkol Winery, the Cabernet Sauvignon 2003, has won four medals, including the Gold Medal from the Tasters Guild International Wine Competition. Has a leafy, minty, stony elegance with firm tannins tailored for the table, and a dry finish with a long lingering aftertaste.

Available at the LCBO. For more information, contact agent Mazel Wines 416- 631-8071.



In Iran, 'charoset was our Passover treat'

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Baking shmurah matzah in her native Iran was a major community event, says Soheila Sabeti.

"For three months before Passover, four or five bakeries were set up especially to bake the matzah. We would go to buy it in the middle of the night, because the bakers baked all day and then sold it at night when it was dry," says Sabeti, who left Iran in 1988 with her husband and two small boys.

These bakeries baked enough matzah to supply one neighbourhood in Tehran, which had about 80,000 Jews prior to the 1979 Islamic Revolution, she says.

"Our Passover preparations started before Purim because we needed to prepare everything ourselves. There were no commercial products," says Sabeti, director of admissions at the Toronto Heschel School.

"We had one room set aside most of the year for our Passover items, such as the pistachios and almonds that we bought raw and roasted ourselves."

After leaving Iran, Sabeti and her family lived in Israel for about a year. They came to Toronto in January 1990, and her third son was born five weeks later. Her boys are now 23, 21 and 16.

Sabeti says she still only prepares meat and pareve dishes during Passover, because there were no Passover dairy products in Iran, and she has continued the custom here.

The seder, which was conducted from a Farsi and Hebrew Haggadah, was similar to an Ashkenazi Haggadah, she says, "but we did have a few different customs. At one point, we would place three pieces of matzah on a large white table cloth, and we would all shake the cloth over our heads while we sang a blessing. It was very dramatic."

Soheila Sabeti

"We made enough charoset to last the eight days because it was our Passover treat. We ground dates, almonds, walnuts, and hazelnuts – some people added sesame seeds – and mixed it with wine or grape juice.

"It is still culture shock for me to see apples in charoset. It is supposed to signify the material the Jews used to make the bricks, and when charoset is made with apples, it is the wrong consistency. I still make it every year, whether or not I have a seder at my home."

A typical seder dish consisted of layers of rice, meat and potatoes, she says, and for dessert "we would place walnuts inside dates and roll then in sugar or shredded coconuts, or roast almonds and coat them with a paste of melted sugar and rosewater. Delicious!"

The end of Passover was also a special time, Sabeti says.

"We used to bring greenery and flowers into our home, and we served grains, and dairy products such as milk, yogurt and porridge.

"We would visit our friends and family and bring them flowers. That signified the start of spring and of better times."

Passover had a special feel, she says. "The food and energy was different. I still try to make it feel like the old days, but it's more convenient here. We see more and more Passover products. It takes away the feeling of Passover being different."

SOHEILA'S CHAROSET

450 g (1 lb.) natural almonds
250 g (1 cup) pitted dates
150 g (3/4 cup) walnut pieces
100 g (1/2 cup) white sesame seeds
500 ml (approx. 2 cups) sweet red wine or grape juice

Mix the first 3 ingredients in a large bowl and rinse with cold water. Add the sesame seeds to the mixer in the bowl and mix well. Using a meat grinder or electric blender, grind the mixture, gradually adding small amounts of wine or grape juice to the mixer until desired consistency is reached in the paste. The results will be more consistent by using a meat grinder.

The charoset can be refrigerated for up to 10 days in a tightly sealed container and makes a great low-fat, high-protein snack with matzah.

Memories and customs

The CJN *shares with our readers the memories and customs of individuals we spoke to, who have come to Canada from other parts of the Jewish world.*

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3 tbsp (45 ml) chili sauce
3 tbsp (45 ml) chopped chives or green onion
3 tbsp (45 ml) chopped fresh parsely

Remove skin and bones from salmon, if desired. In medium bowl, combine salmon, yogurt, mayonnaise, chili sauce, chives and parsely; mix until fairly smooth. Chill until serving. Serve with crudities.

Visit us at cloverleaf.ca for many more exciting recipes!

Wishing You a Happy & Healthy Passover

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Fish kebab, or broiled fish with chermoula as seen in *Saffron Shores Jewish Cooking of the Southern Mediterranean* by Joyce Goldstein, Chronicle Books

NCJW food drive helps people in need celebrate holiday

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

If Paula Frisch and Sheila Mostyn had their way, the annual Passover food drive conducted by National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section, would no longer be necessary.

The co-chairs of the 23rd annual volunteer-run food drive, supported by Mazon Canada, Canadian Jewish Congress and UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, say it humbles them to know how many people need help and how much is needed to help them.

"We're also overwhelmed, though, with the community's help [in past drives.] It takes the whole community [to run the drive]," says Frisch.

Last year, she says, they delivered almost 2,800 boxes – compared to 239 boxes the first year – that were filled with basic food items necessary to observe the holiday traditions, including matzah, gefilte fish, potato pancake mix, macaroons, wine, jam, juice, candles and a Haggadah, as well as non-perishable food for meals throughout the week.

Along with their box, each family is given a Chai kosher frozen chicken.

Recipients include recent immigrants, the disadvantaged, seniors, shut-ins, students living away from home, women in shelters and others who are referred by social service agencies, clergy, doctors and educators.

"We're missing a pocket, though, of unaffiliated Jews who are desperately in need. We're trying to find them, but we depend on people to give us their names. We're asking people to call Council House if they know of families or [individuals] who genuinely need a box and wouldn't otherwise be able to celebrate the holiday," Mostyn says.

Food donations – items must be kosher for Passover and bought this season – can be dropped off at about 20 stores, as well as at synagogues and schools.

NCJW's list of most needed items includes matzah, oil, wine, gefilte fish, tuna, soup, side dishes, coffee, tea, canned fruit, grape juice, matzah and cake meal, jam, honey and packaged desserts

"When you go shopping, pick up a few extra items and drop them in the box," Mostyn suggests.

The food is definitely appreciated, says Frisch, but cash donations are always welcome because they can then buy food items wholesale. "Food donations meet only about 20 per cent of the food we need."

School groups are booked throughout the drive, which started on March 20, to help prepare and pack boxes, and volunteers are also needed on delivery day, Sunday, April 9, to help deliver the boxes.

"Volunteers can just show up at 9 a.m. on delivery day, and if possible, we ask that they bring a dolly. Students who would like to help fill the cars are asked to call ahead. All students who help out will get community service hours," Frisch says.

All the effort becomes worthwhile, Mostyn says, when they receive thank-you messages from the recipients. "They are overwhelmed by the community's generosity. These are people who often feel lost in society. To receive a gift [such as this] means a lot."

Call NCJW at 416-633-5100.

Grade 5 students from Bialik Hebrew Day School help prepare boxes for National Council of Jewish Women of Canada, Toronto section's annual Passover food drive. [Carolyn Blackman photo]

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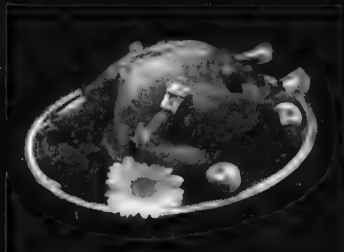

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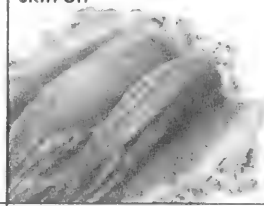

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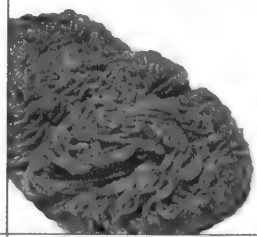

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Pesach is not really so different for the cook

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

I have seen experienced and capable cooks go into a complete panic when it comes to Passover. It is as if they had never stepped into a kitchen before and are totally clueless about what and how to cook.

It's really quite simple. Once you've learned the basics, i.e., what not to eat on Passover, and then become familiar with standard substitutions, it becomes very easy – simply a matter of adaptation. If you look at the Passover cookbooks on the market, you will notice that most of these recipes are standards, made year round, with just a tweak here and there to make them Passover-friendly.

We don't have to be seduced by and dependant upon commercialized fast-food products in order to enjoy the holiday. Passover celebrates our freedom from slavery, and it should not be viewed as slavery for the family cook. It is also just one week of the year, albeit an important one.

It is not necessary to go crazy hunting for a jar of kosher l'Pesach Chinese duck sauce! There are a lot of delicious cooking possibilities if you use ordinary, fresh ingredients. In truth, it is through our caring and creativity that we transform ordinary ingredients into extraordinary food. The holiday then provides the inspirational spice.

Marion Siner Gordon's Coconut Cake with Apricot as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

SAUTEED MATZAH BALLS

This is a great way to use up leftover matzah balls. There are no specific amounts to this dish. Just make extra matzah balls according to your favourite recipe. Saute "tons" of sliced onions in oil. When onions are golden brown, add matzah balls and continue cooking until they are heated through and lightly golden.

LEMONY CHICKEN BREASTS

From *Passover Cookery* by Joan Kekst, this is a lovely light dish.

8-10 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves (2½ lb.)
juice of 1 lemon
3 garlic cloves, minced
½ cup olive oil
2 egg whites, lightly beaten
6 tbsp. matzah cake meal, seasoned with salt, pepper and ¼ tsp. ginger

Pound heavy ends of breasts between sheets of wax paper to cook evenly. Drizzle lemon juice and scatter half the garlic pieces over breasts and turn them to marinate for 20 minutes.

Dip chicken in egg whites and lightly coat in matzah cake meal mixture. Heat 2 tbsp. oil in an 11-in. sauté pan on medium high. Saute breasts quickly, 4 minutes per side. Saute in batches adding oil as needed. Place chicken breasts in a shallow, ovenproof casserole. Set aside. May be prepared in advance up to this point.

Preheat oven to 350. Thoroughly heat chicken breasts in the oven for 15-20 minutes. Serves 8.

Lemony Sauce
1 cup mushrooms, sliced
juice and grated zest of 1 lemon
1 tbsp. sugar
1 cup rich chicken stock
1 tsp. potato starch mixed with 3 tbsp. chicken stock
3 scallions, thinly sliced
¼ cup pimiento stuffed green olives

To prepare sauce, sprinkle mushrooms with a bit of lemon juice. Combine sugar, remaining lemon juice, broth and potato starch with lemon zest in a medium saucepan. Bring to a simmer, stirring constantly for 3 minutes. Add mushrooms, cook 3 minutes, adjust flavour and consistency with a bit more chicken stock if needed.

Coat chicken breasts thoroughly, and sprinkle scallions and olives over the chicken breasts.

Preheat oven. Heat chicken 15-20 minutes and serve with sauce.

PASSOVER NUT TORTE

This is a moist, delicious cake that is delicious all year round, but a wonderful treat for Passover.

9 eggs, separated (room temperature)
1½ cups sugar
1 tsp. vanilla
10½ ounces hazelnuts, unsalted, unpeeled, finely ground

Preheat oven to 350. In a large mixing bowl, beat egg yolks for 1 minute. Add sugar and vanilla and continue beating until thick and lemon coloured. Add ⅔ of the nuts and beat until combined. In another mixing bowl, beat egg whites until stiff. Fold them into the yolk mixture, gently but thoroughly. Fold in the rest of the nuts and pour into a well-greased 10-inch tube pan.

Bake for about 1 hour, until the cake springs back when lightly touched. Cool in the pan completely upside down. Make sure the cake is done or it will fall out of the pan!

Note: The cake can be iced with lemon icing if desired, but it is delicious as is. Makes 16 servings.

Lemon Icing
5½ oz. unsalted butter or margarine, softened
2 cups powdered sugar, sifted
1½ tbsp. lemon juice
1½ tsp. grated lemon rind

Combine the ingredients thoroughly in a medium sized bowl. Let the bowl sit over hot water for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, before spreading on cake.

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Desserts for special occasions

By EILEEN GOLTZ
Special to The CJN

While I'm a proponent of simple desserts not only at the seders but also for chol hamoed, I inevitably get requests from readers for whom a birthday or anniversary or special event falls within the week of Passover.

When I have to make a special dessert during Pesach, the sweet of choice has got to be something as special and unique.

The following recipes are some that I've collected over the years, and are all wonderful.

YAM PUDDING

3-4 large yams
¼ cup fresh-squeezed orange juice
1 tsp. cinnamon
½ tsp. nutmeg
slices of blood oranges (or other citrus fruit) for garnish

Individually wrap yams in heavy duty aluminum foil and bake at 350 for 3 hours. This will caramelize the pulp giving it a smooth, sweet flavour.

Cool yams overnight in refrigerator. Remove foil and yam skins (they should fall off) and put pulp in food processor. Add juice, cinnamon and nutmeg to food processor and blend for 8-10 minutes until pudding is light and fluffy.

Chill and serve in individual dessert dishes garnished with fruit. Serves 4.

HONEY PECAN CAKE

1¼ cups honey, divided
1 cup chopped toasted pecans
½ cup dried cranberries or other dried fruit
½ cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
2 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
6 eggs, separated
¼ cup matzah meal
6 tbsp. potato starch
½ tsp. salt

Preheat oven to 325. In a medium bowl, mix together ½ cup honey, pecans, dried fruit, chocolate chips and cocoa powder.

In a separate bowl, combine remaining ¼ cup honey, egg yolks, matzah meal, potato starch and salt.

In a small bowl, beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Fold ¼ of whites into egg yolk mixture. Mix egg yolk mixture back into remaining egg whites.

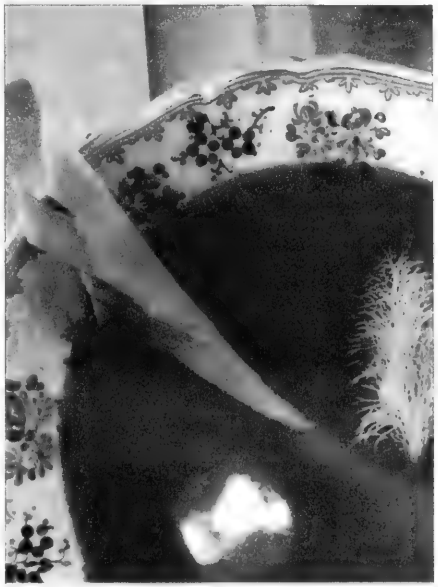
Spread ½ of batter in greased 9-in. spring form pan. Spoon half of pecan mixture on top. Repeat with remaining batter and pecan mixture. With spoon, gently swirl filling into batter. Bake for 45 minutes, or until cake starts to pull from sides of pan and toothpick inserted near centre comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes; remove cake from pan and cool on wire rack. Serve warm or at room temperature. Makes 8 servings.

CHARLOTTE'S STRAWBERRY RASPBERRY AND RHUBARB CRISP

When buying rhubarb, look for bright red stalks because they are sweeter. They don't even need to be peeled, just sliced. Or, if you prefer, you can substitute frozen rhubarb.

2 cups fresh or frozen rhubarb (about 12 oz.); if fresh, trim ends and slice into ½ in. pieces; if frozen, do not defrost

Continued on page 44



Cold Rossl Borscht as seen in *The Passover Table* by Susan R. Friedland, Harper Perennial publishers.

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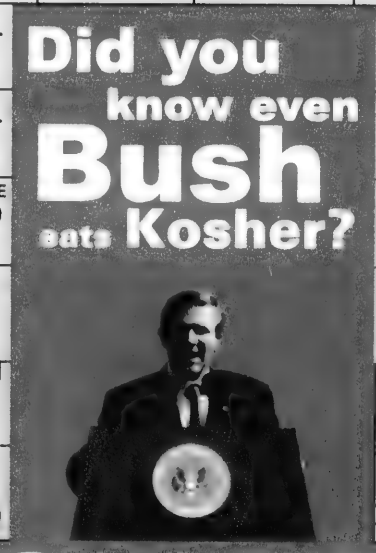

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MON-WED 9-6	FR- SAT 9-5
THURS 9-8	SUN 10-5

PASSOVER 2006

Some different sweets to try

Continued from page 42

1 cup (½ pint) fresh or frozen raspberries, not defrosted
2 cups (about 10 oz.) fresh strawberries, cored and halved or quartered, if large
1½ cups sugar
3 tbsp. packed potato starch
regular or nondairy whipped cream or ice cream for serving (optional)

Crumb Topping
¾ cup matzah meal
20 soft coconut or almond macaroons, crumbled with fingers (about 1 cup packed)
4 tbsp. margarine or butter, melted

Preheat oven to 350. Grease a 9-in. square baking dish. In a medium bowl, gently stir together rhubarb, raspberries, strawberries, sugar and potato starch. Set the mixture aside while you make the topping.

In a medium bowl, stir together matzah meal, macaroons and melted margarine. Stir fruit to distribute potato starch and sugar, and pour into prepared baking dish. Sprinkle topping over fruit.

Bake for 40 to 45 minutes, or until fruit is tender when pierced with a toothpick and sauce is thick and bubbling. Cool at least 30 minutes before serving.

Crisp may be baked up to 8 hours before serving. Serve warm or at room temperature. If desired, serve with ice cream or whipped cream or pareve topping. Serves 8.

PESACH APPLE SQUARES

½ tsp. salt
½ cup peanut oil
1 cup matzah meal
juice and grated rind of 1 lemon
3 eggs separated, whites beaten stiffly
2 large apples, pared and sliced
1 cup mixed sugar and cinnamon

Preheat oven to 375. In a bowl, combine the sugar-cinnamon mixture, salt and matzah meal. Add the egg yolks, oil and juice and grated rind of lemon and mix well together. Fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Pour half of this batter into a greased 8x8-in. pan. Cover batter with thinly sliced apples. Sprinkle with remaining batter. Bake for 45 minutes in 375 oven. Cool completely before cutting into squares.

LEMON CHIFFON CAKE WITH STRAWBERRY SAUCE

From Let My People Eat!

1 (9-oz.) box Passover angel food cake mix
1 cup water
¼ cup sugar
¼ cup vegetable oil
3 large eggs
½ tsp. vanilla extract or 1 packet vanilla sugar
2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
zest of 1 lemon grated
1½ tsp. matzah meal

Sauce
1 (8-oz.) jar strawberry preserves
1 tbsp. potato starch
2 tbsp. dry red wine
½ cup pineapple preserves
½ pint fresh strawberries, thinly sliced
1 cup toasted almonds, chopped, for garnish (optional)

Preheat oven to 350. From cake mix, empty bag containing the powdered egg whites into a large mixing bowl. Add water and mix on low until egg whites are dissolved, and then slowly increase the speed. When soft peaks begin to form, slowly add the sugar, a little at a time. Beat on high 1-2 minutes or until soft peaks form and then set aside.

In another large bowl, beat oil and eggs 1-2 minutes until mixed and light in colour. Add vanilla, lemon juice and zest and mix well. To the oil and egg mixture, add second bag from cake mix along with matzah cake meal. Mix on low until blended. Fold into beaten egg whites. Pour into ungreased angel food cake pan or 9-in. tube pan. Bake 35 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool completely before removing the cake. Serve with the sauce of your choice. Serves 10 to 12.

Sauce: Place strawberry preserves in a small saucepan. In small bowl, mix together the potato starch and wine, then add to the preserves. Heat on medium-high until it begins to boil. Reduce to low and stir until thickened.

Remove from heat. Fold in the pineapple preserves and strawberries. Pour some over the cake or cake slices, sprinkling with almonds. Makes 2 cups of sauce.

Olive and orange salad as seen in *The Healthy Jewish Cookbook* by Michael van Straten, Frog Ltd.

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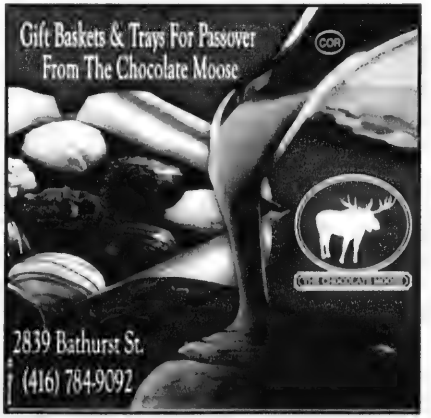

Remembering Passover in India

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Diana Mingail's mouth waters as she describes *halek*, a date syrup used throughout Passover in her native Calcutta, India, which she left in 1954 with her husband and small children.

"It was used as our charoset, but we ate it all week. We would dampen a piece of matzah, add lots and lots of walnuts to the *halek*, and wrap the matzah around it. What a treat."

The weeks leading up to Passover were exciting, she says. "The whole house was in an uproar. My mother would clean every nook and cranny, and throw out a lot. We had to defend our possessions.

"All the children would begin practising their Haggadah reading at least a month before Passover. We took great pride in it," says Mingail, whose parents were born in Baghdad.

She says she can still see the festive seder table laden with food. "We didn't have particular seder food – meals were always prepared by a cook – because we ate the same festive food we had for Shabbat, but one of my favourites was *aloo makullo*, whole potatoes that were parboiled and then deep fried until the outsides were crusty and golden and the insides were soft. They were the most delicious things we ate all year."

Rice was eaten at every meal, she says, throughout the year and during Passover. The rice was made with or without vegetables and was often served with chicken spiced with lots of chilies, turmeric, ginger and garlic. "We would buy the turmeric in root form, and the cook would make a paste out of it for every meal.

"We also had *khutta*, sweet and sour okra or beets."

Cake was unheard of during Passover, says Mingail. "When guests came, we would pull out nuts and raisins. People were always visiting back and forth. We remained in a festive mood all week."

Ruby Ezekiel, who was also born in Calcutta, says her ancestors were from Iraq, but she is a third-generation Indian.

"Our seders were simple. My father and my cousins would make the wine… but just enough for the *Kiddush*," says Ezekiel, who has been here since 1958.

At any festive meal in India, Ezekiel says, there was no such thing as a main course. "We would put everything on the table except the soup, which was served first.

"Because there was no oven, we would stew the chicken like a pot roast. I remember going to the market with my father to buy a fresh chicken and watching it be slaughtered and feathered."

Like Mingail, she says her family had no particular seder food. "We made what we fancied. If we had a meatball curry, it would be served with plain rice. If we had a vegetable dish, the rice would be prepared with raisins and almonds. Fish and meat were never served at the same meal.

"Dessert was usually fresh fruit such as mangoes and oranges, and dried fruits such as dates and figs."

HALEK

Date syrup made especially for Passover

3 lb. pitted dates
water

Wash the dates and soak in water overnight (dates must be well covered with water). Next day, boil the dates in the same water over high heat until they soften. When cool enough to handle, remove dates from water and squeeze the juice out through cheesecloth.

Continued on page 47

Diana Mingail

Ruby Ezekiel

Memories and customs

The CJN *shares with our readers the memories and customs of individuals we spoke to, who have come to Canada from other parts of the Jewish world.*

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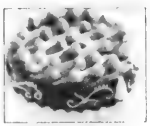

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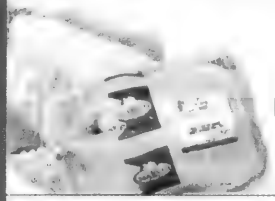

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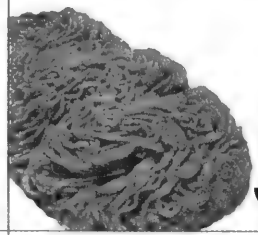

7.69/kg
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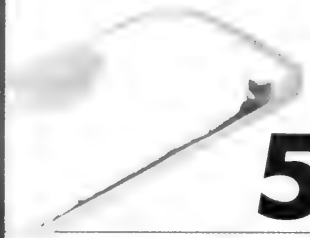

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'Cake was unheard of during Passover'

Continued from page 45

Cook the extracted juice over high heat until it comes to the boil. Turn down to medium-high, and as it starts to thicken, lower heat to medium. Stir from time to time, but not constantly. If a thick white froth/foam forms on top in the early stages, skim it off. But do not skim constantly, as it will skim off the thickening process. It is the right consistency when a few drops in cold water will form a soft ball.

When thickened, remove from heat. Cool and store in refrigerator. Will keep for a couple of months.

Fill a bowl with halek and mix with a generous amount of ground walnuts.

GADJAR MEETHA

Stewed chicken and carrots

Meetha indicates a dish lightly seasoned with lemon and a bit of sugar for contrast sweet and sour. This basic recipe is the most popular *meetha* preparation – chicken and carrots.

2 cups shredded carrots
2 tbsp. + 2 tsp. oil
1 tsp. crushed garlic
1 tsp. crushed fresh gingerroot
¼ cup sliced onion
1 tsp. ground turmeric
1 tsp. salt, or to taste
⅛ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
1 chicken, 3 lb., cut into serving pieces, including the giblets
1 cup water
2 bay leaves
4 cardamom pods
2 to 3 tbsp. lemon juice
2 tsp. brown sugar

Stir-fry the carrots in the 2 tsp. oil in a skillet over moderate heat for 3 minutes. Remove skillet from the heat and set aside.

Heat 2 tbsp. of oil in a large pan over moderate heat. Add the garlic, gingerroot, onion, turmeric, salt and black pepper. Stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the chicken and brown the pieces for 3 minutes.

Add the water, bay leaves and cardamom, bring to a boil and cover pan. Cook the chicken until nearly done, about 20 minutes.

Add the carrots, lemon juice and brown sugar. Stir the mixture and continue to cook over moderate to low heat for 15 minutes more to combine the flavouring and almost completely evaporate the liquid. At this stage, adjust the lemon, sugar and salt if you wish more intense flavour. Serves 6.

MAHMOOSA

Potato Fry and Eggs

2 tbsp. oil
¼ cup thin-sliced onion
1½ cups julienne pieces of potato
½ tsp. ground turmeric
½ tsp. salt or to taste
4 eggs beaten
1 tbsp. chopped fresh coriander
2 scallions, sliced thin

Heat oil in skillet and brown onion over moderate heat for 2 minutes. Add the potatoes, turmeric, salt and stir well. Cover the pan and cook for 3 minutes to soften the potatoes. Uncover and fry for 3 minutes longer to brown them.

Add the eggs, coriander and scallions and stir the mixture well to distribute the eggs. Cover the pan and continue to fry for 5 to 10 minutes to ensure the potatoes are cooked. Uncover and stir-fry until the mixture is dry and soft.

Spinach variation:

Steam ½ lb. spinach in ½ cup water over high heat for 3 minutes to wilt and partially cook the spinach. Drain well, cool enough to handle, and squeeze the spinach dry. Chop it into coarse pieces.

Cut enough potatoes into ¼-in. dice to make 1½ cups. Prepare the mixture by adding the potatoes to the onion and cooking for the same length of time.

Add and stir-fry the spinach. Add the balance of the ingredients. To intensify the flavour, you may increase the salt, corian-

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Sweet & Sour Meat Balls	Cole Slaw
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls	Honey Cake
Roast Chicken	Chocolate Cake
Lockshen Pudding	Mandlebroit
Potato Pudding	Macaroons
Carrots Tzimmes	Seder Plate
New Dills	Charoses

$259.00 for 10 people

SAMPLE MENU #2

Gefilte Fish & Horseradish	Cole Slaw
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls	Lemon Roll
Roast Chicken	Apple Cake
Roast Brisket of Beef	Macaroons
Apple Farfel Pudding	Passover Cookies
Pan Roast Potatoes	Seder Plate
Carrots Tzimmes	Charoses
New Dills	

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SAMPLE MENU #3 — *Low Fat Menu* Only 20g Fat per person

Gefilte Fish & Horseradish	Cole Slaw
Cabbage Borscht	Cucumber Salad
Roast Turkey Breast (precarved) or Baked Chicken Breast	New Dills
Farfel & Mushrooms	Fresh Fruit Salad
Candied Yams	Passover Cookies
Green Beans Almondine	Seder Plate
	Charoses

$299.00 for 10 people

SAMPLE MENU #4

Gefilte Fish & Horseradish	New Dills, Cole Slaw
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls	Honey Cake
Roast Brisket of Beef	Macaroons
Chicken Fingers	Mandelbroit
Lockshen Pudding	Passover Cookies
Pan Roast Potatoes	Seder Plate
Green Beans Almondine	Charoses

$299.00 for 10 people

SAMPLE MENU #5

Gefilte Fish & Horseradish	Lockshen Pudding
Chicken Soup & Matzo Balls	Mandelbroit
Roast Chicken	Seder Plate
Roast Brisket of Beef	Charoses
Green Beans Almondine	

$139.00 for 10 people

SALADS
Cole Slaw
Pickled Beets
Tossed Salad
Cucumber Salad
Fresh Fruit Salad

DESSERTS
Apple Crumble Cake
Chocolate Cake
Chocolate Brownies
Honey Cake
Lemon Roll
Macaroons
Mandelbroit
Passover Cookies

ADDITIONAL SELECTIONS

MEAT DISHES
Roast Turkeys
Chopped Liver
Cabbage Rolls
Veal Roast
Flanken in Borscht
Roast Duck
Turkey Breast
Lemon Chicken Breast
Baked Chicken Breast
BBQ Chicken Wings
Honey Garlic Wings
Chicken Fingers
Knishes - Potato or Beef
Kishke

VEGETABLE DISHES
Vegetarian Loaf
Matzo Lasagna
Stir Fry Vegetables
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Passover Food Ideas

Jewish Food List: a source of information on kosher food

By JUDY BART KANCIGOR
Special to The CJN

Time was, when planning my Passover menu, I'd pore over cookbooks and magazines, wade through those yellowing newspaper clippings that I swear I'm going to file some day, or just call Aunt Sally. But these days, with the click of a mouse, I can lean over a virtual back fence and schmooze with 1,900 Internet neighbours from New Zealand to Kalamazoo to exchange recipes and customs or solve culinary crises.

"We're now five generations or so from the great immigrations," says Brian Mailman (his real name), owner and moderator of the Jewish Food List, established in 1996 as an international e-mail community. Members from 45 countries, including Israel, Canada, South Africa, Australia, Iceland and Japan, focus on Jewish food, cooking history and traditions.

"A lot of knowledge is getting lost by assimilation and attenuation," notes Mailman, who was classically trained in French cuisine and writes the column "I Can't Believe It's Kosher" for www.ujc.org. "The younger folk wanting to 'return' are tutored by the empty-nesters who are eager to share, kids asking the village elders some of the basic how-to's and how much's."

"The Jewish Food List connects me to cooks from all over the world," says *CJN*'s Norene Gilletz. "If I have a culinary question when researching ingredients or recipes, I know someone on the list will respond. It's a true community, and the many wonderful friends I have made over the years, some of whom I've met in person, have definitely influenced the way I write cookbooks today."

A typical request: "At my dentist's today I picked up an old *Gourmet* magazine, but the Passover recipe for Porcini Matzo Polenta Wedges was ripped out," Eliane Driessen of Amsterdam writes. "Does anyone have it?" Within hours Nancy Berry of San Francisco and Maxine Wolfson of Rhode Island have posted it.

Moderators Wendy Baker, (New York), Sharon Kuritzky (Buffalo) and Maxine Wolfson (Rhode Island) assist Mailman as the 10 to 12,000 e-mails are posted each year, but even non-members can browse the 5,300 or so recipes (about 2,000 for Passover), archived by members Naomi Horowitz (Chicago), Shayla Gunter-Goldstein (Toronto), Annice Grinberg (Israel), Liliana Wajnberg (Brazil) and Hindy Gershman (New York.)

Besides recipes and cooking tips, the daily e-mails awaken forgotten food fantasies. Dalia Carmel of Manhattan, who owns over 5,000 cookbooks, remembers growing up in Israel when eggs were rationed to five per week for their family of three. "As a result, my mother and I dreamt of the day that we could eat as many eggs as we wanted. In 1951, we were invited to a seder by relatives who raised chickens. On the table was a large bowl filled with peeled hard-boiled eggs. I managed to consume nine!"

Members may discuss unconventional choices for the seder plate. Vegetarians take note! Michele Wolgel Rose of Chicago substitutes an avocado pit for the roasted egg, and Sue Honeyman of Connecticut replaces the shank bone with a roasted beet. Francine Weistrop of Massachusetts uses ginger for the bitter herbs.

"A potato was often used by eastern European Jews for karpas because of the absence of green vegetables at Passover," notes Wendy Baker of Upstate New York, one of our resident authorities on all things kosher.

"My father's family always used potato," Lori Cahan-Simon of Cleveland agrees, "but added parsley as karpas in the new country, so we have, in effect, parsley potatoes!"

And why an orange on the seder plate of late? A widely circulated myth has it that Dr. Susannah Heschel once addressed a convocation of Orthodox rabbis, one of whom commented, "A woman belongs on the bimah like an orange belongs on the seder plate."

Actually, Heschel began the tradition as a gesture of solidarity with gays and lesbians. "It does lead to lively discussions both from the enthusiastic feminists and the skeptical traditionalists," says Malkie Altman of Long Island.

Continued on page 49

Chickpea Croquettes as seen in *Saffron Shores Jewish Cooking of the Southern Mediterrean*, by Joyce Goldstein, Cronicle books.

Got a question? – Get an answer quickly

Continued from page 48

"Among those who attend our seders are people from a variety of traditions," adds Lorri Lewis of Palo Alto, Calif. "Unexpected foods on the table help create interest among the guests," prompting Mailman to comment, "These many symbols on the seder plate sound like the list itself, all traditions on one plate!"

Challenge breeds creativity, and at no time of year is the challenge to create delicious meals greater than at Passover. And if Passover is a challenge, then creating Passover desserts is the decathlon. As the recipes pour in, Leslie Hoddeson of Scarsdale, N.Y., wails: "All these desserts are making me fat! They sound so delicious, I want to make them all!"

To join the Jewish Food List or view the recipe archive, go to www.jewishfood-list.com.

Judy Bart Kancigor is the author of Cooking Jewish: 652 Great Recipes from the Rabinowitz Family *(Workman, July 2006) and can be found on the web at www.cookingjewish.com.*

KURDISH CHAROSET (HALIK)

- cup pistachio nuts
- cup walnuts
- cup almonds
- cup sultana raisins
- cup dark raisins
- cup dates
- 2 apples, peeled
- tsp. cinnamon
- cup fresh pomegranate juice

Grind the nuts coarsely together in a food processor. Add dry fruit and blend to a paste texture. Grate apples and add to mixture. Stir in cinnamon and pomegranate juice. Mix well. The paste should be sweet, tart and crunchy. Makes about 4 cups.

Posted by Ruth Baks (Source: the *Jerusalem Post*, March, 21, 2002, *The World of Haroset*, by Elizabeth Levy)

CHOCOLATE MOUSSE HAZELNUT CAKE

For the cake:
matzah cake meal (for pan)
3 oz. hazelnuts, toasted and ground, 1 cup
cup matzah cake meal
2 tbsp. potato starch
¼ tsp. cinnamon
8 egg yolks, room temperature
cup sugar
2 tsp. vanilla, optional
4 egg whites, room temperature
⅛ tsp. salt
⅓ cup sugar

For the mousse:
8 oz. semisweet chocolate
¼ cup strong freshly brewed coffee
4 eggs, separated, room temperature
1 tbsp. Passover brandy or rum
2 tbsp. sugar
shaved semisweet chocolate

Preheat oven to 400. Grease bottom of 10-in. springform pan. Dust with cake meal, shaking off excess. To make cake, combine hazelnuts, ½ cup cake meal, potato starch and cinnamon in small bowl.

Using electric mixer, beat yolks and ½ cup sugar until slowly dissolving ribbon forms when beaters are lifted. Blend in vanilla if desired. Using clean, dry beaters, beat whites and salt in another bowl until soft peaks form. Gradually add ⅓ cup sugar and beat until stiff but not dry. Gently fold ⅓ of whites into yolk mixture to lighten. Fold mixture back into whites. Sprinkle with hazelnut mixture and fold gently.

Turn batter into prepared pan, spreading evenly. Bake until top is brown and tester inserted in centre comes out clean, about 20 minutes. Cool cake completely in pan; cake will deflate.

Continued on page 50

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Jewish food list is a handy reference

Continued from page 49

To make mousse, melt chocolate with coffee in double boiler over gently simmering water; stir until smooth. Let cool.

Beat yolks into chocolate mixture 1 at a time. Blend in brandy. Beat whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add sugar and heat until stiff but not dry. Gently fold whites into chocolate mixture. Spread mousse onto cake. Cover and refrigerate until mousse is firm, several hours or overnight.

Just before serving, remove springform from cake. Sprinkle top with chocolate. Makes 12 servings.

Posted by Carole Walberg (adapted from Patricia Connell, *Bon Appetit*, 1985)

BAKED PEARS AND GRAPES

1½ to 2 cups Muscat wine
½ cup sugar
2 tbsp. honey
½ cup orange marmalade
½ vanilla bean, cut in half lengthwise, seeds scraped out and reserved
6 ripe pears, peeled, cut in half lengthwise, cored
1 lemon, cut in half
1 bunch red seedless grapes
Ice cream for serving

Preheat oven to 375. Pour wine into 9-in. square baking dish if pears are small. (If pears are large, you will need larger baking dish.) Add sugar, honey, marmalade and vanilla bean (both seeds and pod).

Rub pears with cut lemon to prevent discoloration. Place pears in baking dish, cut side down. Add grapes between pears. Spoon wine mixture over pears. Bake, uncovered, 40 minutes. Serve warm topped with ice cream, if desired. Makes 6 servings.

Posted by Judy Sobel (adapted from Lidia Bastianich).

Ginger Lemon Sherbet as seen in *The Healthy Jewish Cookbook* by Michael van Straten, Frog Ltd..

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Matzo Ball Soup with Noodles
BBQ Chicken & Brisket*
Potato Kugel or Farfel or Stuffed Potatoes
Carrot Tzimmes
Broccoli & Mushrooms or
Green Beans Almandine
Cole Slaw, Dill Pickles
Matzo
Seder Plate Ingredients
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Sponge Cake or Marble Cake
Macaroons

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The Canadian Jewish News regrets an error in the Passover Food section of the **March 23, 2006** issue.

In Yitz's Catering Service ad
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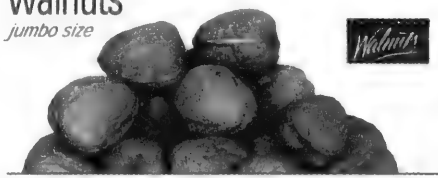

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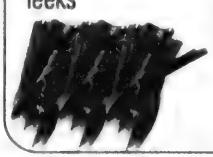

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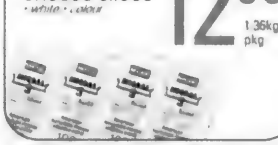

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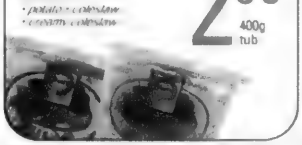

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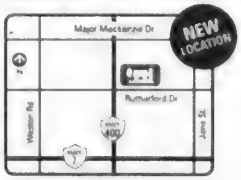

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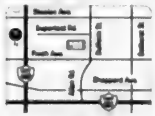

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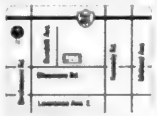

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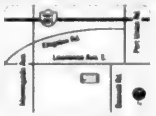

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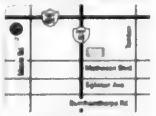

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Satisfying your sweet tooth at Passover

By DAPHNA RABINOVITCH
Special to The CJN

At Passover, there's certainly no paucity of packaged treats and cake mixes lining the grocery store shelves. However, with a little ingenuity and whimsy, you can come up with several sweet tooth satisfiers all on your own.

Many of your regular recipes can be changed over for Passover by following a simple formula. For every 1 cup of all-purpose flour, subsitute 1/4 cup matzah cake meal and 1/4 cup potato starch. If the recipe only calls for 1/2 cup of all-purpose flour, substitute 2 tbsp. of matzah cake meal and 6 tbsp. (or 1/3 cup) potato starch. Of course, the texture will be a bit different, but I'm confident, you'll be pleased with the results. Kosher for Passover baking powder (found in most packaged goods) contains no cornstarch and is hence allowed at Passover. Also, try to use a medium ground matzah cake meal, rather than a fine one, since it tends to result in a moister product.

KILLER DOUBLE CHOCOLATE COOKIES

1 cup granulated sugar
4 eggs
1 tsp. kosher for Passover vanilla
1 lb. bittersweet chocolate, melted and cooled
1/3 cup potato starch
2 tbsp. matzah cake meal
1/4 tsp. kosher for Passover baking powder
1/4 tsp. salt
1 lb. white chocolate, coarsely chopped

In bowl, using electric mixer, beat eggs with sugar and vanilla until pale yellow, about five minutes. Fold in melted chocolate until completely smooth.

In separate bowl, combine potato starch, matzah cake meal, baking powder and salt. Using wooden spoon, stir into chocolate mixture. Stir in white chocolate.

Drop tablespoonfuls of batter, about 2 in. apart, on parchment paper-lined baking sheets.

Bake in centre of preheated 325 oven for 12 to 14 minutes or until set at edges but still soft in the centre – do not overbake. Cool on pan on rack for 3 minutes. Transfer cookies to wire rack to cool completely. (Cookies can be stored at room temperature in airtight container for up to 5 days). Makes about 5 dozen cookies.

Variation: Dissolve 2 tsp. of espresso powder in vanilla, stirring until smooth. Proceed as recipe directs.

ROASTED PINEAPPLE WITH CARAMEL SAUCE

1 large ripe pineapple
2 tbsp. margarine or unsalted butter, melted
2 tbsp. pineapple or pear juice
1/3 cup packed brown sugar

Continued on page 53

A SEDER PLATE as seen in *The Passover Table* by Susan R. Friedland, HarperPerennial Publishers.

You can adapt your regular recipes

Continued from page 52

Caramel Sauce:
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
1/2 cup water
2 tbsp. margarine or unsalted butter
1 cup whipping cream or non dairy liquid cream substitute

In heavy large saucepan set over medium low heat, combine sugar with 1/2 cup water, stirring until sugar is dissolved. Increase heat to medium and let boil, without stirring but brushing down sides of pan often with wet brush, until mixture is a deep amber colour, about 12 minutes. Remove from heat. Whisk in margarine. Averting face, pour in cream or cream substitute. Return to pan to heat and stir over low heat until smooth. Let cool slightly and use immediately or cover and refrigerate for up to two days. Rewarm gently before using.

Pineapple: Peel pineapple; quarter lengthwise and remove core. Slice each quarter lengthwise into 4 strips. Arrange pineapple strips on parchment paper-lined baking sheets.

In bowl, stir together butter and juice; brush half over pineapple slices. Sprinkle with half of the sugar.

Roast in centre of preheated 400 degree oven for 10 minutes. Turn all slices over; brush with remaining butter mixture and sprinkle with remaining sugar. Roast for 15 to 20 minutes or until pineapple is golden. Let cool slightly on pan.

Cut each slice into thirds and serve with caramel sauce. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

Roasted pineapple is also terrific served over sorbets, cakes or even yogurt.

Margarten Family's Apple Kugal as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

WHITE CHOCOLATE AND FRUIT FUDGE

1 1/2 lb. white chocolate, coarsely chopped
1 can sweetened condensed milk
1 tsp. vanilla
1/3 cup chopped dried apricots
1/3 cup dried cranberries
1/4 cup chopped walnuts

In heavy-bottomed saucepan, melt white chocolate with sweetened condensed milk, stirring often to keep smooth. Remove from heat. Stir again if any butterfats have been released. Stir in vanilla, apricots, cranberries and walnuts.

Spread mixture evenly in parchment paper-lined 9-inch square pan, with parchment paper extending 2 inches over 2 sides. Cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or for up to 5 days.

To serve, lift the fudge out of the pan by pulling on the excess parchment paper. Cut into squares. Makes 6 dozen pieces.

CINNAMON ALMOND MACAROONS

1 1/2 cups sliced almonds (about 5 oz)
2 cups granulated sugar
2 tbsp. packed light brown sugar
1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
3 egg whites

In bowl of food processor, finely grind together almonds, 1 1/4 cups of granulated sugar, brown sugar and cinnamon. Transfer to bowl.

In separate bowl using electric mixer, beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add remaining granulated sugar; beat until stiff and glossy peaks form. Fold one-third of almond mixture into meringue; fold in remaining nut mixture.

Using pastry bag fitted with a 1/2-in. tip or small wet spoon, pipe batter onto parchment paper lined baking sheets in 1-in. rounds.

Bake in centre of preheated 350 degree oven for 10 to 12 minutes or until cookies are golden brown. Cool on pan on rack for 2 minutes. Transfer macaroons to wire racks to cool completely. (Cookies can be stored at room temperature in airtight container for up to 7 days.) Makes about 5 1/2 dozen.

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Passover Food Ideas

Fresh Tuna with Tomato Coulis as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

Pesach tips for diabetics

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Meals on Pesach don't have to be limited to "potatoes, potatoes and more potatoes," says registered dietitian Serena Beber, a diabetes educator at Toronto's East General Hospital.

Beber was speaking at the March meeting of the Jewish diabetes chapter of the Canadian Diabetes Association, held at Shaarei Shomayim Congregation.

The key, she said, especially for diabetics, is to think and plan ahead, so that you can control your blood sugar.

While noting that "Pesach is only eight days – it's not the end of the world if blood sugar is a little bit higher than usual," nevertheless you still have to be careful to balance diet, exercise and medication, she said.

Most people think of the Pesach diet as raising blood sugar levels, Beber said. However, some medications, especially insulin and glyburide, actually lower blood sugar, which can be just as serious as high levels. Together with erratic mealtimes and less time for regular exercise, people can wind up in severe straits.

This is especially true for the first seder, when we tend to eat very late, meals tend to be high in carbohydrates, and we must drink the wine and eat the matzah to conform to rabbinic and talmudic injunctions.

"It may well be necessary to adjust your medication, but talk to your doctor – don't make these decisions on your own."

Foods at the seder tend to be full of "matzah, matzah meal and farfel," Beber said. Also, many families use potatoes for the *karpas* part of the seder, when vegetables are dipped in salt water (others use celery, which has no carbs at all).

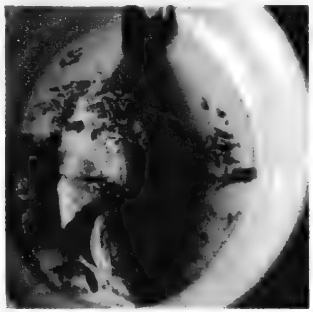
Contrary to popular belief, Beber said, wine, or alcohol generally, doesn't necessarily raise blood sugar levels – it can lower them instead. "Wine stops the liver from making the sugar it needs, leading to low blood sugar. Make sure to have a snack in the afternoon to counteract this effect."

Wine can be diluted to half strength, so long as it still tastes like wine, Beber said, or one can drink dry wine, which has a very low sugar content. It is especially important to dilute the first cup of wine, she warned, since you are drinking it on an empty stomach. Just to further complicate matters, blood sugar tends to be higher at bedtime, and you may need more insulin then. "Again, speak to your doctor."

She also suggested that you test your blood sugar at bedtime – you may need a snack.

At the seder, she pointed out, "you don't need to eat everything on the menu."

Continued on page 55



Far left is Nutty Spinach with raisins as seen in The Healthy Jewish Cookbook, by Michael van Straten, Frog Ltd.

Centre is Artichokes in Parsley Sauce as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

Left is Striped Bass with Sorrel as seen in *The New York Times Passover Cookbook*, edited by Linda Amster.

Diabetics can enjoy Passover

Continued from page 54

In response to a question from the audience, Beber recommended eating foods with a low glycemic index rating (the glycemic index ranks carbohydrate foods by how much they raise or lower blood sugar). Choose whole wheat matzah, for instance.

The latest Canadian Diabetes Association food diagram shows the ideal plate as consisting of half vegetables and one-quarter each grains and proteins.

"Protein does slow down the increase in blood sugar and keeps you full longer. However, it is hard on the kidneys, which are at risk anyway for those with diabetes."

Eat lots of vegetables, high fibre foods, fruits and seeds, she said, not just at the seder but for all Pesach meals.

Shopping should be planned carefully, Beber said. "You don't have to fill your cart with chips and cookies."

FROZEN STRAWBERRY SOUFFLE

4 cups fresh strawberries; reserve 6 and puree remaining berries in blender or food processor with ½ cup sugar
2 egg whites
2 tbsp. lemon juice
½ cup sugar
a little brandy (optional)

Beat together the egg whites and lemon juice. Gradually add the sugar and brandy, if using it, and beat until stiff peaks form.

Fold berry mixture into egg white mixture. Beat continuously at high speed until double in volume (about 10 minutes). Pour into glass serving bowl, cover and freeze at least 24 hours. Remove from freezer 15 minutes before serving and garnish with reserved berries. Makes 20 servings.

One serving of ½ cup has 50 calories, 0.5 g. protein, 0.1 g fat, 12 g carbohydrate.

PASSOVER VEGETABLE MUFFINS

3 tbsp. oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 green or red pepper, chopped
½ cup celery, chopped
1½ cups carrots, grated
1 cup zucchini, grated, drained
3 eggs, beaten
1 tsp. salt
¼ tsp. pepper
½ matzah meal

Preheat oven to 350. Saute onion and garlic in hot oil; add pepper, celery, carrots and zucchini. Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes. Let cool. Add beaten eggs, salt, pepper and matzah meal. Mix until blended. Line muffin tin with 12 baking cups. Spoon mixture into muffin cups. Bake for 45 minutes or until golden.

Each muffin is ½ starchy choice, ½ fruit and vegetable choice, 1 fat and oil choice, 11 g carbohydrate, 3 g protein, 5 g fat and 77 calories.

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Coast to Coast

German baroness to be sued for lost Stern art

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The estate of the late Montreal art dealer Max Stern is about to sue a German aristocrat in Rhode Island for a painting that was among hundreds the Nazis forced Stern to liquidate in Germany some 70 years ago.

Concordia University's Clarence Epstein, who is heading an international quest to locate and return to the estate about 400 art works that Stern lost or had to sell for a small fraction of their value, announced last Friday that legal proceedings will be launched in "the upcoming weeks."

Epstein said the legal route is being taken after discussions with the current owner failed.

Concordia, along with McGill University and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, are the heirs of the Stern estate. The will stipulates that the universities are also to be the beneficiaries of any reclaimed property. Stern, who died in 1987, and his late wife, Iris, had no children.

The 19th-century oil painting in question is of a reclining woman, by Franz Xavier Winterhalter. It was taken on consignment by Estates Unlimited of Cranston, R.I., from the emigree Baroness Von Morsey Pickard.

According to Estates Unlimited owner Steven Fusco, the baroness told him the painting had hung in her father's home in Germany for many years.

Fusco is quoted in the *Warwick Beacon* as saying: "She had all the receipts and paperwork and it appeared as if it was like any other consignment." He expected the work to sell for between $50,000 and $75,000 US. Winterhalter, a German, was a popular portraitist among the European nobility.

Epstein contacted Fusco after the painting was posted for sale on eBay.

The painting, titled *Girl from the Sabiner Mountain*, is listed by the Art Loss Registry in London as confiscated, Epstein said. Documentation shows that the Winterhalter painting was included in a Lempertz auction house catalogue in Germany in 1937 and was sold to the baroness's father for $3,600.

According to the *Beacon*, the baroness's lawyer is arguing that Baron Von Morsey paid fair market value for the painting and that Stern most likely received at least part of the proceeds. The baroness inherited the work.

When his father, Julius, died in 1934, Max Stern took over the family art gallery in Dusseldorf, one of the most important in Germany. Soon after, the Gestapo informed him that, as a Jew, he was no longer allowed to trade in art. He was ordered to sell off his inventory with the "state-sanctioned" Lempertz auctioneers in Cologne, which is still in business.

The approximately 400 works, which included old masters from Holland and Belgium and 19th-century and contemporary German art, were sold in 1935-37, with "about two to five cents on the dollar" going to Stern himself, Epstein said. What's more, the buyers knew they were picking up huge bargains because it was a Jewish gallery being forced out of business.

Today, he estimated they would be worth "tens of millions of dollars."

The Winterhalter is one of 10 works so far located by Epstein, a cultural property specialist attached to the office of the Concordia president, who launched the search one year ago. Discussions with the current "possessors" of the other nine works, as well as with Christie's and Sotheby's, are "moving forward," he said.

Those responsible for museums and national collections are more sensitive to the issue of Nazi-looted art, but it is more difficult to persuade private collectors, who probably bought the works in good faith, that they have a "moral obligation" to relinquish them, Epstein said. But the fact is these works are now "tainted" and can never be resold on the legitimate market.

They have been found in corporate collections, including a casino, in museums and in private hands, among them the original purchasers or their descendants. They are in Germany, Holland and other countries, including Taiwan.

In total, Epstein has traced more than 40 of the missing works, but not yet located their whereabouts. They include works by European artists such as Jan Brueghel (in the Dutch state collection), Lodovico Carracci, Emile-Vernet Lecomte and Max Liebermann.

Many of the 40 have been offered on the market in the last two decades by the same 15 auction houses, most of them in Germany. Over the next few weeks, these establishments will be asked to co-operate in putting him in contact with the last known owners of these works. A list of all the Stern works in questions is also to be circulated to some members of the art trade and museums throughout Germany.

Epstein noted that, as recently as six months ago, Lempertz was still listing the Stern sale on its website as one of its major undertakings, without any acknowledgement of the circumstances.

Stern, who fled to Britain before World War II, was interned there during the war as an enemy alien and deported to Canada where he continued to be detained for a couple of years. Stern owned the Dominion Gallery on Sherbrooke Street for four decades and became one of the most influential art patrons in the country, playing a major role in the promotion of Canadian artists in particular.

After the war, Stern spent several years trying to recover some of his lost art, but only managed to get back about six or eight works, Epstein said.

Epstein said the executors of the Stern estate intend to pursue the lost art to the full extent of their resources. "Since Dr. Stern's death, the executors have distributed hundreds of works of art and tens of millions of dollars to universities and museums worldwide," he said.

Epstein has been working in collaboration with the New York State Holocaust Claims Processing Office, the National Gallery of Canada and the Art Loss Register.

Next fall, Concordia will launch a travelling exhibition and publication on the forced sale of Stern's property at Lempertz, and will participate in an international lecture series on issues surrounding Nazi looting, forced liquidation and stolen art. The series will be organized in conjunction with the Montreal Holocaust Memorial Centre.

CRTC OKs Jewish AM radio station for Montreal

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Montreal radio station whose slogan is "All Jewish, All the Time" has received approval from the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) for a spot on the AM band.

Radio Shalom has been given permission to operate a "commercial religious" station in French (60 per cent), English (30 per cent) and Hebrew (10 per cent) at 1650 kHz with a transmitter power of 1,000 watts, which will enable it to be heard in Greater Montreal, and possibly a little farther at night.

The not-for-profit Radio Shalom, which relies largely on volunteers, has been on the air since 1999. It is currently accessible with a special radio that picks up the subcarrier frequency made available through CIRA-FM 91.3, a local religious station operated by Radio Ville-Marie. For a couple of years, Radio Shalom has also been heard via the Internet.

Radio Shalom's first application for an AM spot was turned down by the CRTC three years ago.

Philippe Régnoux, program director at Radio Shalom, said he expects the station to be on AM by the end of May or early June. It is believed to be the only Jewish radio station of its kind, not just in Canada, but the whole Western Hemisphere.

Before receiving its licence, Radio Shalom must receive the go-ahead from the department of industry that it has met all the technical requirements, but this is considered a formality, Régnoux said. The licence will be valid until Aug. 31, 2012.

Stan Asher, who co-ordinates English programming, said the goal is to create a radio station that will be of interest to the broad spectrum of the Jewish community and even the general public. Although it is designated a religious station, much of its content will more accurately be described as cultural or ethnic in nature.

Asher, who has some 30 years of experience in community radio, is aiming for a lively, varied product.

"This is not just going to be rabbis praying and gloomy news about Israel. There'll be talk shows, phone-in shows, interviews, music, hourly news. It'll sound like a regular radio station, not some propaganda machine. I'd call it the Jewish equivalent of CJAD," he said. Most of the content will be local, live programming, with the rest packaged material available from Israel and elsewhere.

Radio Shalom will stretch the definition of Jewish, to include anything that has some interest to the community. For example, Asher's next interviewee April 3 on his show *Montreal Jewish Magazine* is Mark Abley, author of *Spoken Here: Travels Among Threatened Languages*, one of which is Yiddish.

Asher also teams up three times weekly with Pierre Lasry for *Montreal Focus: All the News about Jews*, during which they gab about any topical issues they fancy.

Asher would like to clear up the perception that Radio Shalom is only for Sephardim or is a service of the Rabbinat Sépharade du Québec. There are some links: the station's founder and president is Robert Levy, who is executive director of the Rabbinat, and its premises are across the street from the Rabbinat's headquarters, but it is not supported by the Rabbinat or any organization.

Régnoux said a board of directors including representatives of major Jewish organizations is being formed to oversee the station.

At present, the station has only two professional staff, Régnoux and Eloise Cohen, an on-air journalist, who came here last year under a cultural exchange program for young people between Quebec and France.

The station has taken the decision to respect Shabbat and Jewish holidays by airing no programming at that time.

That "dead air" has enabled Radio Shalom to comply with one of the CRTC's conditions that it provide "balance" in its religious programming. For 18 hours each week from Friday night to Saturday night, Radio Shalom will make its airwaves available to other religious and ethnic communities, which do not now have access to radio elsewhere. In addition, 15 per cent of the weekly airtime is to be devoted to programs produced by other religious groups.

The groups cited in the CRTC decision are the Communauté Catholique Congolaise de Montréal and the Association socioculturelle bulgare. Other programs to be broadcast on Radio Shalom include *La religion au Québec*, a review of religious matters, and *Sanatan Dharma*, which deals with Hinduism.

Régnoux said the content must remain predominantly French because the CRTC wants it to match the makeup of the general population of Montreal, rather than the linguistic reality of the Jewish community.

The CRTC has stipulated that the station air at least 90 hours of local programming per week during the regulated hours from 6 a.m. to midnight. (Radio Shalom is on 24 hours a day.)

Radio Shalom has committed itself to 42 hours of spoken-word programming and at least 11 hours of news and information of a general nature. It also affirmed before the CRTC hearings that providing "differing views on issues and events" will be a "fundamental principle."

There were objections to Radio Shalom's application. The Association québécoise de l'industrie du disque, du spectacle et de la vidéo (ADISQ) was concerned about how serious Radio Shalom is about developing Canadian talent. Radio Shalom has promised to earmark 20 per cent of its annual earnings to encouraging Canadian talent, a total of $35,000 over seven years. It may use this money to organize on-air talent contests.

Régnoux is confident an AM station will reach a much larger audience. Currently, about 7,000 people tune in each day to Radio Shalom on 91.3 FM Sea and the website has an average of 200 to 300 hits daily, he said.

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MEANINGFUL SHABBAT: **Grade 3 students at Bialik Hebrew Day School helped their fellow elementary students celebrate the meaning of Shabbat with a performance in four languages – French, English, Hebrew and Yiddish – that featured song, dance and drama. Pictured, from left, are Ethan Birbrager, Michael Ambar, Jasmine Katz, Rachel Wine and Kara Altow.**

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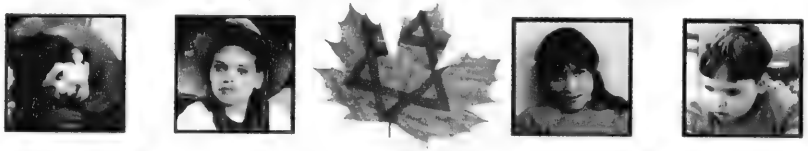

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Chamber choir to perform benefit in Owen Sound

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Lachan, the Toronto Jewish Chamber Choir, will perform a benefit concert in Owen Sound, Ont., on April 2 to raise funds to restore and repair Beth Ezekiel, the town's synagogue.

Beth Ezekiel president Jeff Elie said Lachan, a 25-voice ensemble that has performed all over Canada, the United States and Europe, will entertain the audience with a range of Jewish music from 11th-century liturgical pieces to modern and popular Broadway tunes.

Elie said he specifically asked that the choir perform "something light," which he hopes will appeal to a general audience.

"They'll be doing some Broadway melodies and songs from *West Side Story*, some things from *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Showboat*," he said.

While there is a strong Jewish theme, with the first part of the show featuring Yiddish selections, Elie said the performance will be geared toward exposing a non-Jewish audience to Jewish culture.

"There are only about 50 Jews in Owen Sound," he said, explaining why the concert hopes to attract members of the non-Jewish community.

Money raised to help improve the aging shul

"Because our shul is so small, we're having the event at a local church," he said, adding organizers are hoping to fill the 700 seats of Owen Sound's Knox United Church.

The concert will also feature a performance by the Georgian Bay Children's Choir, which will open for Lachan.

Elie said the Beth Ezekiel Synagogue will be open to the public before the concert, and he hopes that will be another opportunity to expose the Owen Sound community to Jewish life and culture.

Elie said that the money raised from the concert will go to improving the aging shul, a former church that was turned into a synagogue after the Jewish community bought it in 1946.

"The shul is in need of repair. This is one way to raise money for the restoration and improvement of the shul," he said, adding that Lachan has been kind enough to perform a benefit, which means it won't be paid for the performance.

He said that although there is a Jewish theme to the concert, he's confident that it will appeal to the entire community.

"I think there will be a positive reaction to this. People in Owen Sound are always eager to learn about the Jewish community and I hope people will come away from this performance with the spirit of friendship and peace."

For more information or to buy tickets, visit www.bethezekiel.org.

Coast to Coast

Job fair aims to keep young Jews in Winnipeg

By REBECA KUROPATWA
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — About 30 Jewish students and new graduates came out this month to an event designed to find jobs for them in Winnipeg so they'll stay and help reverse the decline of the city's Jewish community.

"Good to Go," held March 16 at the Asper Jewish Community Campus, is the first completely youth-oriented program initiative organized by the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg's Grow Winnipeg initiative, said the program's placement consultant, Cliff Huot.

"Until now, [Grow Winnipeg's] emphasis has always been on new immigrants and mature people re-entering the workforce. There has not been enough energy put into trying to keep younger people in Winnipeg," Huot said.

Grow Winnipeg was established by the federation about four years ago to increase the size of Winnipeg's Jewish population through greater immigration. It also seeks to encourage former Winnipeggers to move back, and to persuade younger members of the community to stay.

Winnipeg's Jewish population stands at about 15,000, up from 14,765 in 2001, according to the census that year. At the community's height in 1961, some 19,400 Jews lived in the city.

At the "Good to Go" event, organizations, businesses and employment advisors had the opportunity to meet young adults ages 17 to 25 and discuss education, job training, career opportunities, internships and summer employment.

"People say that the community doesn't do enough for them," Huot said. "We want to show them that this is not the case."

Huot said that he "wants to show youth that the grass will not necessarily be any greener when they leave Winnipeg."

He added that there's "a misconception out there that if new graduates move out of Winnipeg, they will have more options. It's not that clear-cut an issue. If youth move away, they might have more opportunities to make more money, but they will also have to spend a whole lot more just to make ends meet."

Huot "wants young Winnipeggers to know that staying in Winnipeg is a solid option for them. Here, there are less pressures, more quality of life, and living expenses are much more affordable. Elsewhere, there is a boom or bust economy."

Participants and business representatives alike were positive about "Good to Go," saying they'd be interested in attending more such events, Huot said.

A wide variety of participating businesses and government organizations set up display tables, including Great West Life, the City of Winnipeg, the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and the Manitoba Civil Service Commission.

HELPING OTHERS: **Netivot HaTorah Day School recently hosted an evening called Netivot HaTzedaka, which stressed Jews' responsibility to help people in need. Featured were student performances on the theme, as well as original artistic tzedakah boxes that every student in the school created. [Photo by Rebecca Ansel]**

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Coast to Coast

Montreal police giving hate crime high priority

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Two years after making a commitment to better deal with hate-motivated crime, the Montreal police department says the system now in place is working and incidents have declined significantly.

At a media conference held during Action Week Against Racism last week, Inspector Yves Riopel said such crimes, whether against a person or property, are given high priority and handled by teams specialized in this area.

Unlike most other large Canadian cities, Montreal does not have a hate-crimes unit. Immediately after the firebombing of United Talmud Torahs in April 2004, Jewish community leaders urged the city administration to create such a unit. Following the leaders' meeting with Mayor Gerald Tremblay, then-police chief Michel Sarrazin and other city officials, Peter Yeomans, who was then the executive committee member in charge of public security, announced that there would be a "clarification" within the force on the handling of hate-motivated crimes and more serious attention given to even relatively minor incidents.

Last year, the department put into place a protocol to be followed when an apparently hate-motivated crime occurs, Riopel said. At the same time, the system is flexible enough to be adapted according to the circumstances, he added

The officers first responding to an incident or complaint are required to determine whether it involves hatred or discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion or other categories protected by the human rights charter.

Their report is then reviewed by the immediate supervisor and the sergeant-detective at the local station, who can agree with or overrule the report's conclusion, or ask for further information about the incident, Riopel said.

If deemed a hate-motivated crime at this stage, the matter is directed to the department's operational centre where two investigative units, one dealing with crimes against persons and the other with crimes against property, take over the case, but only if there is an arrest at the scene, or a witness or physical evidence.

Each of these units consists of a lieutenant-detective, two sergeant-detectives and an analyst.

While they do not work exclusively on hate-motivated crime, Riopel said it is the same people always handling such cases. What's more, he added, they place such crimes "at the top of the files." For example, if a swastika is painted on a synagogue, it gets attention before other types of graffiti, he said.

When there are no arrests or leads, the case goes directly to the organized-crime unit, or anti-gang squad as it is better known, to which Riopel is attached. More serious incidents, such as arson, or multiple incidents, like vandalism at several sites, also go straight to the organized-crime unit or other special units such as the arson squad, he said.

Previously, hate crimes investigations were carried out at the local station level.

"While we don't have a hate-crimes unit as such, the procedure we follow is very similar," Riopel said. "The structure we have in place is very adequate, considering the volume we have to treat."

The number of crimes deemed to be motivated by hated has declined a lot in recent years. In 2002, there were 51, in 2003, 38, and in 2004, the most recent statistics available, 18, he said.

Riopel said this trend may be explained by the increase in the number of local stations allowing police to get to better know their neighbourhoods and develop closer ties with the population they serve, as well as greater focus on prevention.

Canada's Criminal Code limits hate crime to propaganda that incites hatred against an identifiable group or advocacy of genocide. Sleiman El-Merhebi, for example, was not charged with a hate crime, although police judged it to be motivated by hate against Jews because of what was written a note left at the scene. Proven hate motivation may result in stiffer sentencing.

During the media conference, assistant police director Yves Charette stressed the department's desire to have more dialogue with minorities and to sensitize its personnel to the city's cultural diversity. The department also intends to increase the number of people from ethnic, visible and aboriginal communities on the force.

FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER VISITS: Canadian Jewish Congress officials recently met with French Foreign Minister, Philippe Douste-Blazy during his official visit to Ottawa. Areas of discussion centred around steps taken by French authorities to offer security to French Jews in the wake of the anti-Semitic slaying of Ilan Halimi amongst other issues. Seen, from left, Bernie M. Farber CEO of Canadian Jewish Congress, French Foreign Minister Philippe Douste-Blazy, and Dr. Victor Goldbloom, chair of the CJC National Executive.

On Campus

Pro-Israel and pro-Palestinian students squared off in York University's Vari Hall at a rally held to commemorate the death of activist Rachel Corrie. [Jeff Justiz photo]

Protesters urge York U to dump 'Israel lobbyists'

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

A rally urging two York University figures to resign over their support of Israel led to a confrontation between pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli students earlier this month.

Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR), the Arab Students' Collective (ASC) and the Grassroots Anti-Imperialist Network (GRAIN) organized a demonstration March 16 called "Israel Apartheid and York University" to pressure the university to meet a list of demands outlined in a letter delivered to Julia Koschitzky, who sits on the board of directors of the York University Foundation, York's fundraising arm.

Aside from calling on Koschitzky, who also sits on *The CJN*'s board of directors, and York president Lorna Marsden to resign, the student groups also demanded that York cut ties to the Israeli corporate and academic establishments, apologize to students for calling Toronto police to remove students from a January 2005 rally, and apologize to Prof. David Noble, who is suing the university for $10 million for saying he made anti-Semitic allegations about the foundation, York's campus newspaper *Excalibur* reported.

In 2004, Noble distributed flyers at a pro-Palestinian rally that said the foundation was being run by staunch pro-Israel lobbyists.

The March 16 rally was held to mark the death of Rachel Corrie, an American student and member of the International Solidarity Movement who died in 2003 when she was accidentally crushed by an Israel Defence Forces bulldozer that was demolishing a Palestinian home in the West Bank.

When Adam Hummel, president of Hillel at York, heard of the planned demonstration, he and Hillel's Israel affairs committee decided to gather people from various campus groups to promote a different image of Israel.

"I knew the rally would be about Israeli Apartheid Week [held last month at the University of Toronto, and] about the 'Jewish connection' at York," Hummel said, adding that Ahmed Habib, the York Federation of Students vice-president of equity and services, spoke to the protesters about the plight of the Palestinians and urged the crowd to support the intifadah.

Habib did not return calls for comment.

Hummel said that while protesters were chanting phrases such as, "From Iraq to Palestine, occupation is a crime," and put up signs that read "Globalize the Intifadah," the supporters of Israel were dancing the horah, singing *Hatikvah* (Israel's national anthem), and trying to promote a message of peace.

"There was lots of shouting back and forth," Hummel said, guessing that about 200 people gathered in York's Vari Hall rotunda, and supporters of Israel were greatly outnumbered.

"A lot of Jewish students were concerned and offended by what they were seeing," he said.

But, he added, when most of the protesters left on their march to the president's office shouting anti-Israel slogans, the ones who remained took part in productive, encouraging talks.

"When the leaders of the rally weren't there to push people into a certain point of view, people got to hear the other side of the story," Hummel said.

Noble said that although he wasn't involved in organizing this latest rally, he said he did speak to protesters about the "Jewish connection" at York.

He also said he supports the students' request to get rid of both Marsden and Koschitzky.

"Marsden should have been thrown out years ago," Noble said.

"In terms of Koschitzky, I don't think they should stop there. They should get rid of the whole gang. The connection between Israel lobbyists and the York University Foundation is quite unsavoury. They clearly influence what goes on at York."

In another matter, Noble, who is Jewish, has filed a human rights complaint against York in an effort to end its practice of closing down for the Jewish High Holy Days.

York spokesperson Richard Fisher said the university would not respond to the demonstrators' demands.

"We are not going to reply, as the letter was unsigned and undated, so it would be like replying to tract," he said.

"It also had a major error of fact in that Ms. Koschitzky is not employed by the foundation," he added, noting that the letter said she is a foundation employee when in fact she's a volunteer.

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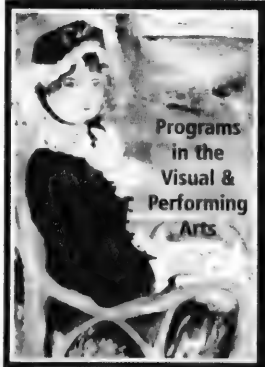

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On Campus

Varsity Jews sing to save a child's heart

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

The Varsity Jews are planning to sing their way into the hearts of the Jewish community in the hopes of raising enough money to save a child's heart.

A Jewish a cappella group at the University of Toronto affiliated with Hillel of Greater Toronto, the Varsity Jews will be performing at the Holy Blossom Temple on April 2, with all proceeds going to Save a Child's Heart, an organization that provides underprivileged children all over the world with free open-heart surgery.

Avi Shack, 19, a second-year U of T student taking sociology and Jewish studies who has been with the group for two years, said the show, called Big Shtick, "is about spreading people's interest in Jewish music and Judaism and spreading the feeling of friendship and community."

Shack said he knew he wanted to get involved with Hillel from the moment he showed up on campus two years ago.

"I went to a Hillel club fair and bumped into Shayna Levitan who was my brother's friend," said Shack, who is the publicity co-ordinator of the group.

Levitan, the group's manager who was one of the original members of the group that was founded by former director Jeremy Burko in 2002, told him about the Varsity Jews.

After seeing the group perform at a Hillel Shabbat dinner, he auditioned to be part of the 16-person choir.

"I think the music can help students engage in a deeper connection with the Jewish community," Shack said.

At the Sunday night performance, Shack said people can expect to hear traditional Jewish standards such as *Yerushalayim Shel Zahav* in a cappella arrangements, as well as parodies.

"We've put an interesting twist on Jewish standards as well as classic rock songs," he said, adding that they changed the name of a song called *Rainbow Connection*, originally sung by Kermit the Frog in *The Muppet Movie*, to *Jewish Connection* and changed the lyrics to be about Jewish geography.

From left, musical director Robby Burko, choir manager Rachel Malach and publicity co-ordinator Avi Shack pose for a picture during rehearsal at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life at the University of Toronto.

"We like to think our music is enjoyable for any age group. Everyone finds our music humorous. The crowds usually get into it, tapping their feet and clapping their hands to the beat."

Since the Varsity Jews made their debut as the first campus Jewish a cappella group in Canada four years ago, another group emerged out of York University called Kol Neshama and they will be performing that night as well.

Last year, the Varsity Jews managed to raise about $2,500 for One Family Fund, an organization that supports families of Israeli victims of terror.

This year, Shack said the goal is to sell 1,000 tickets. Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor who offered to match whatever they can raise this year, they hope to raise $10,000 for Save a Child's Heart, which would be enough money to pay for a heart transplant at the Wolfson Medical centre in Holon.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit www.varsityjews.com.

NEW FINE ARTS CENTRE OPENS: Cutting the ribbbon at the launch of York University's new art centre, the Accolade Project, from left are Julia Foster, member of the Accolade Project campaign cabinet; Jan Hesseling, consul general of the Netherlands; Gary Brewer, York University's vice-president of finance and administration; Lorna Marsden, York's president; and David Caplan, Ontario minister of infrastructure renewal.

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Iran's air force not a threat to IAF, officer says

By YAAKOV KATZ
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Iran's air force does not pose a threat to the Israeli Air Force, a high-ranking IDF officer told the *Jerusalem Post*.

IAF warplanes, the officer said, are capable of overcoming the air defence systems of all of Israel's neighbours.

"None of our neighbours pose an aerial threat that the air force would not be able to deal with," he told the *Post*.

He stressed, however, that Tehran's race for nuclear weapons is not exclusively Israel's problem.

"Israel's greatest threat these days comes from Iran and their efforts to obtain nuclear power," he said. "But this is not just our problem and is a threat to the entire free world."

The Iranian air force is made up of MiG 29 squadrons and other warplanes, some 30 years old. Iran's air defence systems, which are currently heavily deployed near the various nuclear sites, also feature Russian SA-2, SA-5, SA-6 and shoulder-launched SA-7 missiles, according to a report prepared by Tel Aviv University's Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies. The Iranians also have aged U.S.-made Hawk missiles and have been seeking to purchase the sophisticated S-300P from Russia.

The United States is the preferable choice for launching a military strike against Iran, the officer said. "America is a world superpower," he said. "And they could do it the best."

But, the officer added, Israel is closely following diplomatic developments on Iran at the United Nations Security Council. "At this stage, we believe that the U.S. and Europeans will stop Iran and its crazy leader [Mahmoud Ahmadinejad]," he said.

Similar remarks were made two weeks ago by former IDF chief of staff Lt.-Gen. (res.) Moshe Ya'alon, who said the IAF is capable of carrying out air strikes against several dozen sites. Earlier this month, the *Post* reported that Israel's Arrow 2 missile defense system is capable of intercepting Iranian Shihab and Scud missiles.

The air force, the IAF officer said, is continuously purchasing new planes and developing new capabilities to ensure it maintains superiority over Israel's enemies and deters them from even thinking of an attack. He said Syria, for example, recently abandoned attempts to build a strong air force and has started investing most of its defence funding in ground-to-ground missiles.

But while Israel has not ruled out military action against Iran, Mofaz told the *Post* this month he believes diplomatic efforts could succeed in stopping Tehran's race for the bomb.

"If the [expected UN Security Council] sanctions – and the Iranians are afraid of them – will be extensive and decisive, they can influence the Iranians," he said. As to the possibility of an Israeli military strike against Iran, Mofaz said, "Israel will defend itself."

In an interview last week with the *Post*, Gary Berntsen, the former senior CIA operative who led the search for Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan in 2001, said that he, too, believes Israel should not carry out any operation.

"It's better for the United States to do it. If you [Israel] do it, we'll have all sorts of problems in the Middle East, all sorts of countries that will align themselves with the Iranians over this. Politically it makes more sense for the U.S. to do it."

He said the United States has the ability to easily destroy Iran's nuclear facilities and could use bunker-buster bombs and other weapons to do so.

"We can take care of it in a couple of days with air strikes, and they wouldn't be able to stop us," he added.

Berntsen, who left the CIA last June after more than 20 years of service, believes it will be difficult to persuade Iran to stop its nuclear program.

"They are determined to get this no matter what, and they will lie and cheat and do whatever they have to do to get themselves a weapon," he said.

Berntsen ruled out covert action because of the scale of Iran's nuclear program. "This is a huge system of facilities they have. This is not going to be a small sort of engagement. We are probably going to have to destroy 30 facilities in 30 locations," he said.

Berntsen also ruled out a ground operation. "This is a huge country. There are 70 million people there. It's gigantic. We don't need to be getting into something like that," he said.

However, he believes the United States should first exhaust all political options. He added that if Iran doesn't disarm, U.S. President George W. Bush will carry out an attack regardless of domestic opposition. "This is a guy who doesn't put his finger in the air to see which way the wind is blowing. President Bush means business."

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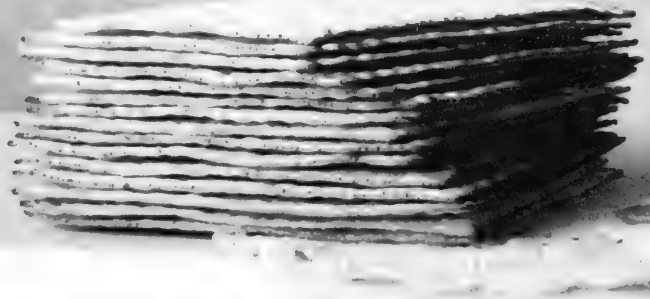

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Israel Briefs

PA won't arrest terrorists

Hamas' designated chief of the Palestinian Authority security forces said he would not arrest wanted terrorists. "The day will never come when any Palestinian would be arrested because of his political affiliation or because of resisting the occupation," Sayed Seyam, the interior minister in the new Hamas-led government, told Reuters. Seyam even said PA security forces would actively oversee attacks on Israel. "Talks with the factions in the future will focus on the mechanisms, the shape and the timing" of attacks, he said.

Israel helps PA with bird flu

Israel pitched in to help Palestinians contain a suspected outbreak of bird flu in Gaza. Israeli veterinarians were dispatched to advise their Palestinian counterparts after several dozen chickens died at a Gaza farm, apparently the latest victims of the H5N1 virus discovered this month in Israel. Israel is also testing the carcasses on behalf of the PA. In the West Bank, Palestinian farmers have been placed on alert for further outbreaks.

Libya halts peace trek

An interfaith peace trek across the Sahara ground to a halt when Libya refused to let in the Israeli participants. The *Jerusalem Post*, which sent a reporter to cover the month-long desert voyage by the coexistence group Breaking the Ice, reported that the nine trekkers were turned back to Egypt after reaching the Libyan border. "Israel does not exist as a country, it is Palestine. We don't allow occupiers into our country," a Libyan official was quoted as saying. The nine-member group includes three Israelis, as well as a Palestinian, an Iraqi and an Iranian. Libyan leader Moamar Gadhafi also pledged his support for Hamas during a visit to Libya by the group's exiled leader, Khaled Meshal.

Bush: U.S. will protect Israel

U.S. President George W. Bush said the United States would use "all military might" to protect Israel. Asked about Iran's nuclear threat, he told Cleveland's City Club, " I've made it clear, and I'll make it clear again, that we will use military might to protect our ally, Israel."

Western Wall cable car?

The city of Jerusalem may make the Western Wall accessible by cable car. Quoting a municipal source, *Yediot Achronot* reported there is preliminary approval for a plan to erect a cable-car network linking the Old City's Wall Plaza with a station on the far side of the Hinnom Valley, half a mile away. The project aims to relieve congestion on the roads and walkways leading to Judaism's holiest site.

With files from JTA

Israeli town copes with Qassams

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

SDEROT, Israel — " It's a disaster, period," exclaimed Eli Moyal, the mayor of this embattled development town in the northern Negev desert.

"Two Qassams fell at 7:30 this morning in an empty field, and the day is not even over," he fumed, puffing on an acrid cigarette.

It was high noon in Sderot, 18 kilometres south of Ashkelon and only a few kilometres east of the Gaza Strip, on this day in the first week of March.

Moyal, the son of Moroccan immigrants, was in a combative mood as he talked about the plague of Palestinian Qassam rockets that have hammered this town of 25,000 inhabitants, sometimes with deadly results, since March 2002.

"Yesterday, we got eight Qassams," he said, his voice growing still more indignant."Our enemies are very close. They have thousands of Qassams in their arsenal."

Eli Moyal

For the past four years, ever since it became the first Israeli city to be targeted by these crude short-range rockets, Sderot, mainly populated by North African and Russian Jews, has borne the brunt of the Qassam barrage.

Hamas, which developed the Qassam to circumvent the security barrier that the Israeli army erected around Gaza in the 1990s, successfully fired the first Qassam into Israel in February 2002, approximately 1½ years after the outbreak of the second Palestinian uprising.

In the face of these attacks, Israel launched its first armed incursions into the Palestinian autonomous areas since the 1993 Oslo accords, thereby changing the dynamics of its often contentious relationship with the Palestinian Authority.

Hamas and the even more radical Islamic Jihad have fired more than 1,000 Qassams at Israeli settlements since 2002, with Sderot paying the heaviest price in terms of casualties and property damage.

On June 28, 2004, the first two civilians in Sderot were killed by Qassams. Sderot suffered two more fatalities – two Ethiopian children – on Sept. 29 of that year. A fifth resident died of his wounds on Jan. 21, 2005.

In addition, many other local residents have been injured, Moyal noted.

Moyal, whose home was one of the first residential structures in Sderot to be damaged by a Qassam, said that tens of buildings have been hit. "We've stopped counting," he said with an exasperated tone.

The Qassams have had a negative effect on commerce, observed Moyal, a Likud politician who succeeded the current leader of the Labor party, Amir Peretz, as mayor in 1998.

"Business is totally down," he reported glumly.

In a bid to revive morale, the Israeli government has encouraged companies to invest in Sderot.

"Ten factories have been built here in the last two years," Moyal said. "We have jobs and zero unemployment, but salaries are very low, minimum wage."

The biggest impact of the Qassams has been psychological. "This is the major problem," he said in an interview in his sun-dappled office in the centre of Sderot, which is marking its 50th anniversary as a town this year.

"Half the kids suffer from post-traumatic stress. They can't concentrate on their studies. They refuse to go out after sunset. They sleep with their parents. The backfiring from cars scares them. Three kids have been hospitalized."

Moyal is less than sanguine about the future.

"This problem will become worse. A lot of dangerous weapons are being smuggled into Gaza through Egypt. The Qassams are becoming more sophisticated and deadly. They will inflict more casualties. An Al Qaeda cell is operating in Gaza."

Moyal urged the government to act more aggressively against Palestinian launchers of Qassams. "We know the addresses and names of the terrorists in Gaza. We know where they sleep."

In a reference to the nearby Gaza town where many of the launches have taken place, he said, "The Israeli army should destroy Beit Hanoun. Let it be vanished. But Israel is doing nothing. There is no government in Jerusalem. We are weak. Our spirit is broken. We have no leadership, no ideology. We are facing war, and I say this loudly and clearly."

In fact, Israel has retaliated. Prior to its unilateral withdrawal from Gaza last summer, Israel raided Beit Hanoun repeatedly, but to no avail.

In still other actions, Israel targeted Hamas bomb makers. In a helicopter strike on Oct. 2004, Israel eliminated Adnan al-Ghoul, the developer of the Qassam rocket. Last month, Israel killed Islamic Jihad's chief rocket maker, Khaled Dahdiouh, in Gaza City.

Last year, Israel installed the new Maamim radar system to give residents sufficient time to find refuge. But in a scathing report issued last January, Israel's state comptroller, Micha Lindenstrauss, accused the government of dragging its feet in protecting border towns such as Sderot.

And the Qassams keep coming, lamented Avi Sulimani, the director of Sderot's sole community centre, a non-descript building less than five minutes away by car from Moyal's office.

"It's very frightening," said Sulimani, whose parents were Iranian immigrants. "We're only one kilometre from Beit Hanoun by air. Many homes don't even have bomb shelters. It's a very big problem. The government has promised to reinforce roofs, but the work is proceeding too slowly due to budgetary reasons. We have only 15 to 20 seconds to run to a shelter once a Qassam has been fired."

Sulimani said that about 50 families have left Sderot since the Qassam reign of terror began, and he noted the value of homes has plunged by one-third.

"Sderot is not a pressing issue for the government," he charged. "The government is interested in Tel Aviv and the centre of the country, but not the periphery. If Kfar Saba was attacked by missiles, the government would find a solution. Sometimes, we feel the state has other priorities. Sderot is the test of Zionism."

Sulimani, nevertheless, has no intention of succumbing to despair. Recently, in a spirit of defiance, the community centre's youth choir released a cassette titled *I'm Not Afraid of the Qassams*.

Although he thirsts for revenge, Sulimani would oppose an Israeli re-occupation of Gaza. "It would be very dangerous for our soldiers. Air bombardments would be better."

What of the future? He smiled. "God only knows."

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Israel's first post-ideological election

Jerusalemites walk by a wall of election posters [Isranet photo]

Continued from page 1

territory without receiving concessions in return.

This, then, is Israel's first post-ideological election. There is widespread consensus that both peace and Greater Israel are unattainable. The argument is over tactics, not vision.

That's why the centrist party, Kadima, continues to lead in the polls – despite having replaced Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, the country's most popular politician, with acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, one of the country's least popular politicians. Kadima, an alliance of disillusioned Likudniks and Laborites, is in effect Israel's first national unity government in the guise of a party. Kadima has declared the end of the left-right debate over the territories, and proclaimed both sides the losers.

Olmert has promised to unilaterally set Israel's borders within the next four years. Shaul Mofaz, Kadima's defence minister, wants it to happen within the next two. Kadima's policy is a return to the pre-Oslo vision of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin, who promised, in his 1992 campaign, not peace but separation – in his words, to "take Gaza out of Tel Aviv and Tel Aviv out of Gaza."

This election is the political equivalent of the security fence: an expression of despair, and even revulsion, toward Palestinian society. Kadima represents the victory of the left's policy of withdrawal, but for right-wing reasons. Israelis have rejected both the peace process and Greater Israel, not only because those policies didn't work but because each, in its way, would continue to entangle them with the Palestinians.

Yet Kadima's unilateralism is hardly an exciting option, even for those of us who support it. Unilateralism, after all, is an admission that our extravagant politics of expansionism and concessions have failed. And with the rise of Hamas, unilateralism, though never more justified in principle, has also never seemed more risky. Can we really withdraw and further empower a Hamas regime that would bring Iranian weapons and advisers to the outskirts of Tel Aviv and Jerusalem? Or is a military confrontation in which Israel destroys the Hamas infrastructure on the West Bank a prerequisite for a relatively safe unilateral withdrawal? Either way, not much reason for a unilateralist to gloat.

Even more than Kadima, the party that most explicitly represents the longing for separation from the Palestinians is the largely Russian party, Yisrael Beiteinu, Israel Our Home, headed by Avigdor Lieberman, a former Netanyahu aide. In synthesizing positions identified with the far left and the far right, Yisrael Beiteinu offers its own bizarre version of the centre.

Lieberman, who lives in a West Bank settlement, has adopted the left's warning against the demographic threat to the Jewish state of annexation. He even supports redrawing the border in Jerusalem, along ethnic lines. But, he argues, why stop at the 1967 border? About 20 per cent of Israel's population, after all, is Arab, whose emotional loyalties lie in Palestine. Why not simply move the security fence around Arab-Israeli areas and unilaterally withdraw? Lieberman has even offered to evacuate his own settlement, in exchange for moving the fence around Arab-Israeli towns and villages which he considers a humane version of the far right's vision of "transfer" of Arabs from the Jewish state.

> ***'Kadima's unilateralism is hardly an exciting option'***

In truth, probably most Israeli Jews would welcome separation from the area known as the Triangle, which borders the West Bank and is the centre of Israel's growing Muslim fundamentalist movement. Sharon raised that possibility about two years ago, but reconsidered when confronted with the fact that international law forbids stripping citizens of their citizenship against their will. Yossi Beilin, architect of the Oslo process and now head of Meretz, once raised the possibility of a territorial swap between the Triangle and the West Bank settlement bloc of Gush Etzion near Jerusalem.

Yet, however tempting, Lieberman's approach is disastrous. Yisrael Beiteinu is the first mainstream party – polls show it gaining more than 10 seats – to target Arab Israelis as the enemy. Given the constraints of international and Israeli law, the only likely outcome of Lieberman's proposal will be to further alienate Arab citizens and increase the prospect of civil war. And so, even as the pragmatic centre of Kadima replaces the utopian left and right, Yisrael Beiteinu is proving that the centre isn't immune from the politics of fantasy.

This article first appeared in The New Republic. *Yossi Klein Halevi is a foreign correspondent for* The New Republic *and senior fellow of the Shalem Center in Jerusalem.*

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'France has produced monsters,' Ilan Halimi's mother says

BY BRETT KLINE
JTA

PARIS — Ruth Halimi is afraid. Since her son Ilan was tortured to death in February, she hasn't had a moment's peace. Her life has been ravaged forever.

"It's a nightmare," she says. "Sometimes I think I'll wake up and find it isn't so, but it is. Ilan is gone, and I must keep on living. I must keep on living."

In her modest apartment, she receives journalists but insists that they take no pictures of her.

"I don't want my face in the newspapers, on television or on the Internet," she says. "I'm afraid there are more barbarians out there and that they'll find me."

Ilan Halimi, 23, was left for dead in the train station of a Paris suburb on Feb. 13 after being kidnapped and tortured for three weeks by a gang demanding ransom. He died on the way to the hospital.

More than 10 suspects have been arrested, including the leader of the gang, Youssouf Fofana, who was extradited from the Ivory Coast, where his parents were born.

Suspects told police that they tried to kidnap Jews because "all Jews are rich," and that they put cigarettes out on the victim's face because "he was Jewish and we don't like Jews."

Halimi says something is wrong with the educational system in France.

"France has produced monsters," she says, her face thin and skin tight, fraught by nerves and pain. "It's not about being Muslim, because all the gang members went to secular, public schools. They have grown up with no feelings, like mechanical monsters."

Most of the gang members were Muslim, of North African Arab and black African origins, but others involved were not, including the superintendent of the building where Halimi was held.

"They promised him 1,500 euros, so he gave them an empty apartment to use and said nothing," Halimi said of the superintendent. "What kind of a man is that?"

She answers her own question: "It's a man who simply does not care."

Many residents reportedly knew someone was being tortured in the basement, but did not intervene or alert authorities.

"It was an open secret in the neighbourhood that a Jew was being held and tortured, and nobody called the police anonymously, not one person," she says, shaking her head. "The elevator was blocked for 10 days and people were guarding the door to the apartment, and nobody called the police. It was not that all those neighbours were anti-Semitic. It's more that they simply did not care."

She doesn't find it difficult to believe that most French people do not think this was an anti-Semitic crime.

"Everyone agrees that this is a sick crime," she says, "but beyond that, most French people simply do not care, one way or the other. That's the way they are."

Halimi has been very critical of the French police. She says they broke the first rule in the book by telling her to break off contact with the kidnappers.

"Everyone knows you maintain contact. Otherwise, they become enraged, and that is exactly what happened," she said.

Even Interior Minister Nicolas Sarkozy "told me that the police had failed. He said, 'I am taking this personally because I am the head of the police.'"

"I feel like the French police abandoned me," she adds. "I think they wanted to catch the gang members, but they were not thinking about Ilan. It was cold-blooded, with no feeling, like they didn't care."

She is careful to say she has nothing against Muslims.

"I grew up with Muslims in Casablanca, in Morocco," she says. "I never had any problems, never. The problem is with France. I think the country has become sick from a lack of feelings, a lack of emotion."

Halimi says she always has been a religious Jew.

"I have always prayed to God," she says. "I still pray every day. This is what gets me through every day.

"Without my God, I would have collapsed already. They took my baby boy."

She begins to cry. The tears flow. She does not try to stop them. Her son-in-law Rafi is there. There are friends in the apartment. People from her building stop by regularly.

"There are good people here," she says.

Halimi wants to leave France.

"Ilan always wanted to go the United States," she says. "The whole family wants to go. Myself, I want to go to New York."

For the first time, she has a small smile on her face, but it does not last.

The murder was front-page news for weeks, but now it has been replaced by a new drama rioting in the streets over a new labour law for young people.

No trial date has been set, but Halimi trusts her lawyer, Francis Spizner. "He wants to tear these guys apart," she says.

Halimi's ex-husband has been talking to the press, but she does not talk to him.

The tears have returned. The French Jewish community is taking care of her needs – she and her family will not go hungry. But she no longer feels at home in France. And her boy Ilan is gone forever.

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Culling of flu-infected poultry nearly complete

By RUTH EGLASH
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Israel's Agriculture Ministry announced Saturday that it had nearly completed the culling and burying of poultry infected with the H5N1 strain of bird flu in several communities in the south.

Last Friday, Army Radio reported that Israel's Chief Sephardi Rabbi Shlomo Amar permitted the continued culling of poultry throughout Shabbat because he decided it was a life-saving measure.

More than one million chickens and turkeys have been destroyed at Kibbutzim Ein Hashlosha, Nir Oz, Sde Moshe and Holit, as well as Moshav Amioz, since the virus was first detected earlier this month.

Poultry was also found to be contaminated with the virus in the nearby Palestinian Authority-controlled Gaza Strip, where more than 13,000 birds were destroyed.

Meanwhile, *Ma'ariv* reported on its website that birds found dead on a farm in the Galilee region did not die from the bird flu virus.

Veterinarians confirmed last Thursday that the H5N1 strain of bird flu that was found in several communities in the south of the country had also been detected on a moshav in the Jordan Valley.

Eshkol Regional Council head Uri Naamati said, however, that no new cases of avian flu had been found on farms in the Eshkol region in the south. The Agriculture Ministry also carried out tests on bird carcasses found in the Sharon region Thursday, but results showed that the birds had not died from the virus.

Meanwhile, following the discovery of bird flu in Gaza, Health Minister Ya'acov Edri directed his ministry to give the Palestinian Authority 300 doses of Tamiflu tablets, which are designed to combat the deadly virus.

Late last Thursday night, Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz responded positively to a request from PA President Mahmoud Abbas to transfer poison to Gaza to assist in exterminating the infected chickens in the area.

The decision to help the Palestinian Authority came as a result of a request issued by a World Health Organization official to the Health Ministry.

Experts estimated that the outbreak of bird flu in Israel would cost the state between 25 million to 30 million shekels.

For farmers affected by the virus, the main question now is of compensation, Naamati said.

"I believe we will be compensated," he said, adding that the government had promised to reimburse farmers at a 50 per cent advance on direct damages within the next week, with the rest of the compensation to follow in a month.

Singer gave up banking to pursue music

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

Amanda Martinez admits it was a gutsy move, but she has no regrets.

After landing a job as the Latin American relationship manager with one of Canada's leading banks after graduating with a master's degree in international business from York University, Martinez left it all after six months to pursue her passion – singing.

"I realized after I started working that my heart wasn't into what I was doing," she says. After seeing a musical performance at a midday concert at the First Canadian Place in downtown Toronto, Martinez quit her job and hasn't looked back.

Amanda Martinez

Martinez is one of several singers performing as part of Global Divas: A Celebration of International Women and Song at Kool Haus, 132 Queens Quay E. on March 30 at 8 p.m.

The daughter of a Mexican-born father and South African Jewish mother, Martinez says music was always part of family gatherings. Travelling to Mexico gave her a feel for the jazz, Latino and Afro Cuban music scene in which she's been performing professionally since 2001.

"I grew up listening to a lot of my dad's musical collection, which had a huge influence on me," she says. "Music is in my blood."

This is Martinez's first performance with the Global Divas project, now in its fourth year.

Global Divas features some of Canada's rising and esteemed global music artists, all immigrants, or children of immigrants, and raises money for St. Stephen's Community House, which provides accommodation and counselling for immigrants, the homeless, youths and low-income families in the Kensington and surrounding areas of Toronto.

This year, proceeds go toward the St. Stephen's Youth Arcade, a drop-in program designed to accommodate the needs of adolescents from diverse backgrounds.

"This is an amazing opportunity to help the youth in our community," Martinez says. "For me it is exciting to perform alongside these women."

Martinez is also excited about her upcoming solo CD, *Solas*, to be released this June. "It will contain a mixture of different influences - Brazilian, Mexican folk and Afro Cuban rhythms," she says. She composed some of the songs herself. She sings primarily in Spanish and Portuguese and also has a handful of songs in English.

On March 30, she will perform about three songs and will be backed up by the event's musical director, Jane Bunnett, and her band Spirits of Havana.

Other artists at the concert include African music performer Muna Mingole; Inuk throat singer Tanya Tagaq Gillis, who will be showcasing her unique vocal stylings; award-winning jazz singer Kellylee Evans; and Zaki Ibrahim, whose music is shaped by the diversity of her South African apartheid-era hometown.

When she's not singing, Martinez can be heard hosting *Café Latino* on Jazz FM 91.1, a show that incorporates Latin jazz with Afro Cuban and salsa.

"This is a great learning experience," she says of her show. "I get great feedback from my listeners. There are only a few stations that showcase this type of music."

Tickets for the Global Divas concert are $30 and can be purchased at Ticketmaster, 416-870-8000 or www.ticketmaster.ca. Or call the Global Divas hotline at 416-925-2103, ext. 238. Gala tickets are also available from the hotline.

For more information, visit www.ststephenshouse.com.

The fourth annual Global Divas Concert, which rasies funds for St. Stephen's Community House, takes place on March 30 at the Kool Haus in Toronto.

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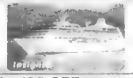

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Arts & Travel

Comedian/actor Howie Mandel becomes a game-show host

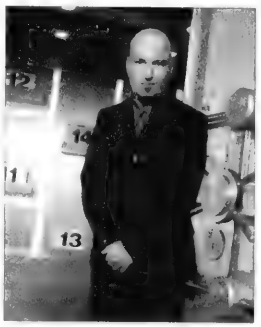
By BYRON PASCOE & PAUL TELNER
Special to The CJN

Entertainer Howie Mandel didn't finish high school and went into retail like any good Jew, he said.

"I was selling carpet. I thought I would be in business, get married and live within a 10-mile radius from where I grew up in North York. I would have been happy doing that."

His television, film and stage success "came out of left field," he said.

On a lark, while on vacation in Los Angeles in the 1970s, Mandel got up on stage on amateur night at The Comedy Store. "There was a producer in the audience who said, 'How would you like to do television?' I thought it was a joke, it was so cliché Hollywood," he recalled.


Howie Mandel

It turned out the producer had a television show called *Make Me Laugh*, which became Mandel's ticket to the talk- show circuit from Mike Douglas to Merv Griffin. Diana Ross saw Mandel and invited him to open for her at Caesar's Palace.

Mandel and his girlfriend, Terry, now his wife and mother of his three children, moved to California, where he gained respect and recognition for his standup comedy specials.

"I went to a general audition and as luck would have it, they fired somebody off of a pilot. It was *St. Elsewhere*," he said.

Playing Dr. Wayne Fiscus for six seasons on the NBC hospital drama led to Mandel's feature films roles in the '80s, before the explosion of his animated series *Bobby's World*, which is based on one of his standup comedy characters. The Emmy-nominated children series ran eight seasons on Fox and now appears in syndication six days a week in 65 countries.

Since then, he's had his own talk show, done more film and television and continued to perform standup.

Last November, Mandel got a call to host a new game show. "Absolutely not," he told the producer. "You just read cards with trivia questions. "They called me back and asked to spend an hour to talk about the game. I said, 'Ya know what, I'm a little hungry and I'm heading to a deli. Come and buy me a sandwich.' I am a Jew at heart. The way to me is through lunch."

The producer showed up, paid for Mandel's pastrami sandwich, and pitched the show. "I thought I was being 'punk'd' [a reference to a TV show that pulls pranks on celebrities]," Mandel said.

"It [the game] looked like an eighth grader had done a school project. He had a game board, described the show and we played the game. There are no skills needed or stunts. I said, 'You can be a moron and become a millionaire' and he says 'yes'."

In *Deal or No Deal*, a contestant is asked to choose one out of 26 briefcases. Each one contains a card representing an amount of money, from one cent to $1 million. After selecting a briefcase, the contestant singles out other cases to reveal their contents.

Whenever the bank calls with an offer, the contestant chooses between staying with his or her original briefcase or making a 'deal' to accept the bank's cash offer.

The producers wanted Mandel because of his diverse skills. "They were fans of my talk show and needed someone who can interview and flesh out who these people are. It's done in front of a live audience, it's kind of loose and unscripted, and so they wanted someone who can be comedic and improvisational, which uses my standup skills," he said.

"They love the drama and tension that I could create as an actor. There are moments in this game that are very tense and dramatic, and they said that I could increase that for them. They were giving me this one little vehicle where I could do everything I love to do in my career, all in one place. I said okay."

The NBC series premiered last December for five consecutive nights. Thanks to good ratings, the show returned for a full week in February, before returning each Monday. Thanks to even better ratings, this cultural phenomenon is now seen Mondays and Fridays on Global TV at 8 p.m.

Another aspect of Mandel's career are his hidden-camera stunts that sometimes appear on the *Tonight Show* or *Live with Regis and Kelly*. They led to *Hidden Howie: The Private Life of a Public Nuisance*. Mandel's sitcom/reality TV series that goes back and forth between his family life and his infamous hidden-camera bits on unsuspecting people. It airs on Bravo in Canada, Saturday nights at 11:30 p.m.

Mandel openly credits luck for his success, supports being passionate about whatever it is you do in life and acknowledges his parents for his sense of humour. "Humour was our way of life," he said. "A sense of humour for me isn't someone who can do a joke. It's finding the humour where other people don't find it, and that's why it's a sense. Usually in what other people would find as tragic or stressful moments is where I found humour."

Mandel performs as many as 200 shows a year throughout the United States and Canada.

"To this day, I'll go play a 10,000-seat auditorium, and when we finish I'll find the local comedy club and do free sets. I'm lucky enough that enough people are asking [me to perform], that I don't have to sell carpet anymore during the day.

"But if I had to sell carpet and show up to the club at night and do standup, I promise you I would be just as happy."

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

SHOLOM ALEICHEM LEGACY CELEBRATED

Ten community organizations are jointly sponsoring *Hello Sholom Aleichem!*, a show celebrating the colourful world of the great Yiddish writer **Sholom Aleichem** on his 90th yahrzeit.

Sholom Aleichem, of course, is the revered Yiddish writer whose beloved *Tevye the Dairyman* stories were the basis for the Broadway musical *Fiddler on the Roof*.

Sholom Aleichem

Headlining the event is **Rafael Goldwaser**, the acclaimed French actor and mime, presenting dramatic interpretations of some of the stories that best demonstrate the writer's wit, satirical insight and humanity.

Actor **Harvey Atkin** hosts the show, which also features Yiddish singer **Theresa Tova**, guitarist-pianist **Bryan Katz**, singer-actor **Mitch Smolkin** and the **Bialik Hebrew Day School Choir**.

This lively afternoon of theatre and music (in Yiddish and English) is free, but a voluntary contribution of $5 will be gratefully accepted at the door. Beth Tzedec Congregation, 1700 Bathurst St. Sunday, April 2, 2 p.m.

The 10 sponsors are: the Ashkenaz Foundation, Beth Tzedec Max and Beatrice Wolfe Library, Beth Tzedec Renee and Victor Topper Endowment, Beth Tzedec Reuben and Helene Dennis Museum, Committee for Yiddish of UJA Federation, Friends of Yiddish, Label Basman Fund, Miransky Fund, Winchevsky Centre and Workmen's Circle.

* * *

Book News: Toronto feminist psychotherapist **Bonnie Burstow** has written a novel, *The House on Lippincott*, about a Toronto Jewish family in the postwar era. It focuses on Miriam Himmelfarb, a feminist scholar and daughter of Holocaust survivors, as well as on her parents, sisters and a mysterious uncle.

A native Winnipegger, Burstow works at OISE and is author of *Radical Feminist Therapy*, which was recently translated into Croatian. A book launch for *The House on Lippincott* is set for OISE, 252 Bloor St. W., seventh floor, on April 6, 6 p.m. 416-538-7103

* * *

York U. Wolinsky Lecture: The Ten Commandments in Modern Jewish Culture is the theme of this year's Leonard Wolinsky lectures hosted by York University's Centre for Jewish Studies on Sunday, April 2.

Brandeis professor **Marc Brettler**, author of *How to Read the Bible*, speaks on "The Biblical Text and Its North American Afterlife" at 2 p.m. Following a reception, Princeton professor **Jenna Weissman Joselit**, author of *The Wonders of America: Reinventing Jewish Culture*, speaks on "When Moses Came Down From the Mountain: The Ten Commandments and Their Hold on the Modern Imagination" at 3:30 p.m.

York University Steeles Campus, Executive Learning Centre, Schulich School of Business, McEwen Auditorium. 416-781-6706

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Names in the News: Toronto psychologist-author **Catherine Gildiner** wrote a doctoral thesis years ago on the influence of **Darwin** on **Freud,** and recently wrote *Darwin and Freud: Fact Metamorphosed into Fiction*, which explores the relationship between the two iconic figures. That relationship was also the subject of Gildiner's recent novel *Seduction*; she's also the author of a bestselling memoir, *Too Close to the Falls*. She speaks at a wine-and-cheese book launch for *Darwin and Freud* at Montreal's Jewish Public Library, April 5, 6:30 p.m. www.jewishpubliclibrary.org

* * *

Cavalcade of Stars: Jews for Judaism is the beneficiary of Shaarei Shomayim Brotherhood's 12th annual musical evening of Jewish song, starring **The Beadles** (formerly **The Shpeelers**), consisting of **Les Aaron**, **Josh Charlat**, **Leslie Train**, **Shayne Train** and **Marty Zatzman**. With various guest performances. $18 per person, $29 per couple. 470 Glencairn Ave., Sunday, April 2, 7 p.m.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• Pianist **Anton Kuerti** performs two **Beethoven** sonatas, and works by **Mozart** and **Schubert**, to conclude Mooredale Concerts' current season. $25-$20. Willowdale United Church, 349 Kenneth Ave. (Finch-Yonge area) on Saturday, April 1, 8 p.m.; and again at Walter Hall, University of Toronto, 80 Queen's Park Cres., Sunday, April 2, 3 p.m. 416-922-3714, ext. 103. www.mooredaleconcerts.com

• The Klim School of Art offers courses for young people in animation and cartooning, art, advanced children's art, adult painting, pottery and multimedia. The Thornhill-based school's all-day, all-art Creative Works Passover Camp Program is geared to teach youngsters lots of art techniques in a variety of mediums; it runs Tuesday, April 18, to Friday, April 21. 905-882-0884. E-mail: Lindsay@klimart.com; website: www.klimschoolofart. com

• In aid of two young Ukrainian brothers who need life-saving bone marrow transplants, the Ukrainian community's Malygim Benefit Concert features **Leo Evason**, "the world's one and only bass-baritone-tenor," with a pianist and cellist. $25-$20. Runnymede United Church, 432 Runnymede Rd. Saturday, April 2, 8 p.m. 416-762-6961 or 905-731-3128

• Israel's 16th International Harp Contest takes place October 10 to 23. www.harpcontest-israel.org.il/

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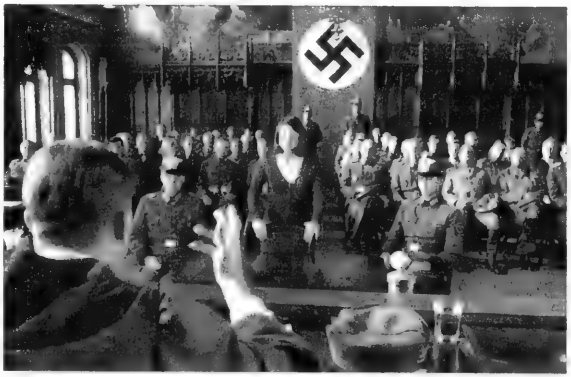
Arts & Travel

Sophie Scholl *is a cinematic profile in civil courage*

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter



Julia Jentsch portrays Sophie Scholl in a new movie about the anti-Nazi White Rose group opening in Toronto on April 7.

There is no shortage of feature films about Sophie Scholl, the legendary anti-Nazi heroine executed in February 1943.

Michael Verhoeven's *The White Rose* and Percy Adlon's *The Last Five Days* dutifully paid homage to Scholl, a bright 21-year-old student who was a beacon of light in a landscape of darkness in the dying days of Nazi Germany.

Whereas *The White Rose* culminated with Scholl's arrest and *The Last Five Days* unfolded through the eyes of Scholl's cellmate, Else Gebel, Marc Rothemund's new film, *Sophie Scholl: The Final Days*, focuses on the last six days of her captivity.

Based, in part, on the original minutes of her Gestapo interrogation, which were unearthed in the 1990s, *Sophie Scholl* is a serious film blessed with a stellar cast and an absorbing screenplay by Fred Breindersdorfer.

Not surprisingly, *Sophie Scholl*, which is scheduled to open in Toronto on April 7, was nominated for this year's Academy Award as best foreign film.

Julia Jentsch, one of Germany's finest actresses, portrays Scholl in what can only be described as a tour de force performance. Jentsch, 28, melts into her personality and character and easily convinces viewers that she is Scholl writ large.

An idealist, Scholl swam against the tide of conformism.

As a member of the White Rose resistance movement, whose impact was far greater than its actual membership, she lambasted the totalitarian nature of the Nazi regime and called for its downfall, blasted its war policies and attacked Hitler's anti-Semitic plank and practices. She did this at a time when the vast majority of Germans either supported the Nazis or cowardly retreated into silence and indifference.

As the film opens, Scholl and her older brother and mentor, a Wehrmacht veteran and medical student, are busily producing the latest series of anti-Nazi leaflets they plan to mail and distribute at a Munich university.

The very idea that they will brazenly deposit these leaflets on campus is mind-boggling. What conviction and courage it must take to carry out this selfless act of resistance.

As they leave the university building after dropping their leaflets from a balcony, a janitor stops the Scholls, and soon they are arrested.

The film, as the title suggests, turns on Sophie's interrogation, her sham trial and her execution.

The Gestapo interrogator, Robert Mohr (Alexander Held), can hardly believe that so demure and soft-spoken a creature has staked her life for what is clearly a hopeless cause.

At first, Scholl tries to convince Mohr that her arrest was a colossal mistake. She claims that she is apolitical and that she is not a White Rose member.

He seems to buy her story, and Sophie can already taste the heady whiff of freedom. But when Mohr presents her with incontrovertible evidence of her involvement, she confesses with alacrity.

Scholl's confession touches off something a debate. Mohr argues that Hitler has been good for Germany. She counters that Hitler has led Germany astray into an unwinnable war.

Undeterred by her arguments, Mohr denigrates her "false ideas" and predicts that the Nazis will reign supreme over the "new Europe."

Sophie raises questions about Nazi anti-Semitism and the extermination of European Jews. Mohr, weakly, claims that Jews have been permitted to emigrate.

Evincing sympathy for Scholl, Mohr tries to give her a way out of her predicament, but she refuses to compromise her deeply held beliefs.

At their trial, the presiding judge, Roland Freisler (Andre Hennicke), rants and raves, mercilessly attacking Scholl and her co-defendants. Much to their disgrace, their state-appointed lawyers do not raise a single objection to Freisler's crude methods.

Their fate is a foregone conclusion, and when they are guillotined, the screen goes appropriately black.

Sophie Scholl: The Final Days is a profile of civil courage in the face of incredible oppression and violence. It's a film that hammers home the point that some Germans never wavered in their absolute fealty to a noble cause.

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Arts & Travel

Susan Michaels, conducting The Renanim Youth Singers, The Miles Nadal JCC Youth Singers, UofT's Varsity Blues and York's Kol Neshama at their Passover concert, *Ashira L'Adoshem*, From Generation to Generation.

Choral festival long overdue

By CHARLES HELLER
Special to The CJN

Following the demise of Jewish Music Toronto, it has been a while since Toronto has had a Jewish choral festival.

The concert at Leah Posluns last week, organized by the indefatigable Susan Michaels, was therefore long overdue and most welcome. Five choirs, with members ranging in age from eight to 80, joined forces in a pre-Pesach program.

The Miles Nadal JCC Youth Singers presented a composition, *The Ocean*, written by the children themselves, which was a cute idea. But it was a bit of a chutzpah to present a work-in-progress to a paying audience (even the child Mozart's works had to be polished by his father before being performed in public). A few Orff instruments would have helped. (Orff instruments for children began to be developed in 1928 by K. Maendler under the direction of composer Carl Orff. They were modelled after an African instrument, a handmade wood xylophone.)

The two university choirs, Varsity Jews and Kol Neshama, projected a sense of fun, and it was also a pleasure to hear from the very assured Miles Nadal JCC Community Choir. Michaels' own Renanim Youth Singers presented some well-chosen pieces, and Mark Andrews was the very fine accompanist.

The human voice is the most beautiful instrument, and voices combined are more beautiful still. But to express this we need appropriate repertoire (especially in a children's choir), not pop tunes, and certainly not songs with a wide range (otherwise the choir will simply sing wrong notes).

There were occasional flashes of real choral sound and Mark Saltzman's *Hallelujah* provided a rousing finale – it should have been encored.

One other pet peeve: the printed program did not distinguish between the composer and the arranger. For example Srul Glick, himself a stickler for accuracy in such matters, was not the composer of the well-known *Avinu Malkeinu* and no one was credited with the arrangement of Stephen Schwartz's *When You Believe*, performed so warmly by the combined choirs.

The concert was in part a fundraiser to send the Renanim choir to Israel. We trust that the experience of working with Israel's outstanding choral educators will help establish solid roots for the rebirth of Jewish choral music in Toronto.

TOLKIEN MUSICAL OPENS: Rebecca Jackson Mendoza who plays Galadriel is pictured alongside the ensemble at the world premiere production of *The Lord of the Rings* at the Princess of Wales Theatre last week. The three-and-a-half hour show opened to reviews varying from all-out raves to pans, but most agree there is something to enjoy for everyone. *Lord of the Rings* is a presentation of Saul Zaentz and Kevin Wallace in association with Toronto's Mirvish Productions and Michael Cohl. The director is Matthew Warchus, the choreographer Peter Darling, set designer Rob Howell. Book and lyrics are by Shaun McKenna and Warchus. Tickets prices range from $56 to $125.

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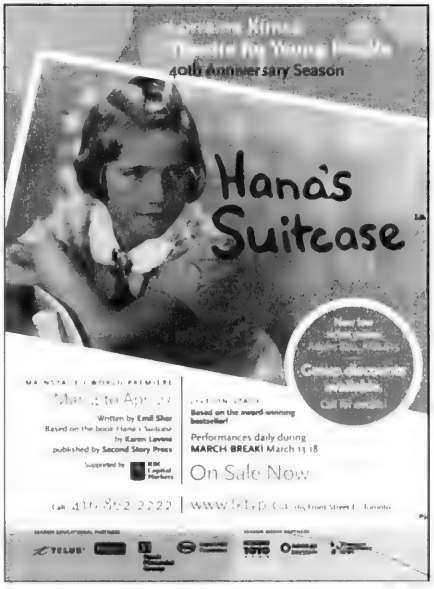

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New edition of Wiesel's *Night* not from Yiddish original

***Night* by Elie Wiesel. New translation by Marion Wiesel, Hill and Wang, 2006.**

By NORM RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

The recent rerelease of Elie Wiesel's *Night* includes two notable features – the cover sticker announcing the stamp of approval from Oprah's Book Club, and the absence, in the 39 titles listing Wiesel's published works, of his first publication, the 1956 Yiddish memoir *Un di velt hot geshvign*.

Norman Ravvin

Prior lists have also excluded this title, but in the new translation's preface, Wiesel himself refers to it as a "manuscript" written in his "mother tongue." The "manuscript" became Volume 117 in Mark Turkov's substantial Dos Poilishe Yidntum series, which included numerous *yizkor bicher*, memoirs and collections of historical documents related to World War II.

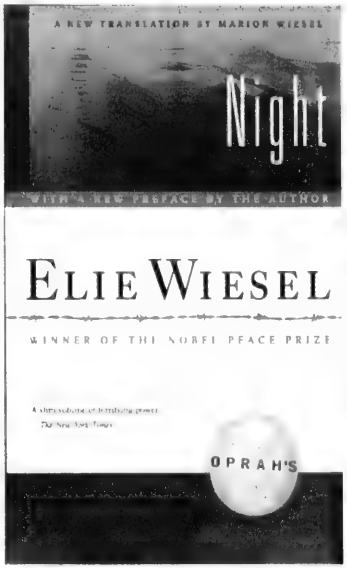
Wiesel suggests in his new preface that the "original Yiddish text" was "translated first into French, then into English." That gives the impression that *Night* (whether in French or in its English translation) and *Un di velt hot geshvign* are the same text.

The media, at the time of Oprah's announcement that *Night* would follow James Frey's now notorious *A Million Little Pieces* as her book-club pick, clearly believed this.

ABC News reported the following: "*Night* was originally published in Yiddish and first published in Buenos Aires in 1956. Two years later, a compressed, 127-page French version was published…" *USA Today* was vaguer, but equally lax in its fact checking, reporting that Wiesel "first wrote the book in the 1950s in Yiddish, then translated it into French…" CTV, citing its source as a 2002 interview Wiesel gave to the *Chicago Tribune*, repeated this description of the book's history. It was also common to read, in the mainstream and Jewish press, that Hill & Wang's 2006 edition of *Night* was a new translation from the "original Yiddish manuscript."

None of this is accurate, and as the mistakes and misrepresentations piled up in the wake of the Oprah news, it seemed that no one, not even Wiesel, recognized the confusion being created.

When *La Nuit* appeared in 1958, it was not presented as a translation of *Un di velt hot geshvign*. The French novel is roughly half the length of the Yiddish memoir, which runs to 245 pages. The two books map what historians now call the "machinery of destruction," the arrival of the German occupiers in Sighet, Transylvania; ghettoization; deportation; incarceration at Auschwitz, followed by a death march ending at Buchenwald. But the Yiddish precursor reads more straightforwardly as a memoir. It is more detailed in its portrait of actual figures and geography. It is more deeply imbued with the texture of Jewish life in prewar Transylvania, and it more readily reveals its status as a document created in the immediate postwar period.



La Nuit was dedicated to "*la memoire de mes parents et de ma petite soeur, Tzipora.*" The dedication in *Un di velt hot geshvign* can be translated as: "This book is dedicated to the everlasting memory of my mother Sarah, my father Shloime and my little sister Tzipora, who perished at the hands of the German murderers."

Wiesel's method and tone in *Un di velt hot geshvign* resembles many of the other *yizkor bicher* published by Turkov in Argentina.

Like the contributors to these memory books, Wiesel names names, recalling many inhabitants of his home and portraying important aspects of prewar European Jewish life in Sighet. The Yiddish volume, too, is more useful as a historical document.

The new translation – like its predecessor – refers to Sighet as a "little town in Transylvania." In the Yiddish memoir it is called a *shtot*, a city, and described as the most important one in the large Jewish community of Marmoresh province. Thus, Yiddish readers were able to appreciate Sighet in historical context, while French and English readers find it diminished, or at least transformed into an example of the now mythic shtetl of prewar Jewry.

This tendency is promoted in the foreword by Francois Mauriac, which has travelled with *Night* through its French and English editions. Mauriac, rather than check his facts, writes of the "martyrdom… of the Jews of the little Transylvanian town called Sighet."

Wiesel acknowledges that his "original Yiddish text" and *Night* have different endings. In his preface to the new translation of *Night*, he notes that the Yiddish text included at its end the following "gloomy mediation": "And now, scarcely 10 years after Buchenwald, I realize that the world forgets quickly. Today, Germany is a sovereign state. The German army has been resuscitated. Ilse Koch, the notorious sadistic monster of Buchenwald, was allowed to have children and live happily ever after…"

But there is much more of interest in the conclusion to the Yiddish text that did not find its way into *La Nuit* or *Night*. In particular, the iconic image of the narrator, gazing at his cadaverous face in a mirror, takes on radically different meaning. In the Yiddish text, the narrator smashes the mirror with his fist, and recognizes his desire to write a book "based on the notes" he'd taken in Buchenwald. Where *Night* concludes in existential gloom, *Un di velt hot geshvign* affirms responsibility and the power of the creative act.

What can one say about the new translation from the French by Marion Wiesel? It is more elegant and more readable than the one done by Stella Rodway at the close of the 1950s. Still, a page-by-page comparison comes up with remarkably few substantive changes. The name of the Wiesels' maid in Sighet is changed from Martha to Maria. A clarification is added in an early scene in Auschwitz, as the narrator acknowledges that he did not know, upon his arrival, that the "cruel" face overseeing selection was Dr. Josef Mengele. Britishisms – like "flat" for apartment – are removed, and German camp terms, such as *Blockaltteste* and *Appelplatz*, replace their tamer English counterparts. Nazis, in the 1960 translation, call Jews "dirty swine," while their updated epithet is changed to "dirty dog."

We have not, with this new translation, recovered the little-remembered Yiddish text. One can understand ABC and its counterparts getting the record wrong, since the author and his publisher have not managed to set it straight. It would have been satisfying to open the new edition and find an English version of the longer and angrier Yiddish book. That outcome would have had a truly provocative historical and educational impact. For now, however, we have a more elegantly rendered *Night*, along with Oprah's best wishes.

Norman Ravvin is chair of Concordia University's Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies. His books include the novel Lola by Night *and* Hidden Canada: An Intimate Travelogue.

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Oral-appliance therapy can help sleep apneics

By STACEY STEIN
Special to The CJN

Ken Gibbs used to be lucky if he managed to get two to three hours of sleep a night. Afflicted with a severe case of sleep apnea, Gibbs' breathing stopped 60 times an hour, causing him to wake up and violently shake his bed.

Night after night of restless sleep made life difficult for Gibbs, a truck driver who works 12-hour shifts.

"It really affected my day," he said. "I was exhausted most of the time. It takes a toll on your body, and mentally and physically, it burns you out."

Sleep apnea is a potentially life-threatening sleep disorder in which the airway becomes blocked during sleep, leading to an obstruction in breathing. Once a sleep apneic's blood oxygen level starts to drop, the brain realizes that the person is suffocating, causing them to wake up in order to resume breathing.

Many sleep apneics are not even aware of having had a sleep disruption. But because they continually wake up, their sleep is fragmented and of poor quality, causing them to feel tired and potentially leading to a host of other health problems.

Sleep apnea is associated with everything from depression and memory lapses to being at a higher risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Studies say sleep apneics are anywhere from four to eight times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke.

Oral-appliance therapy, a treatment for sleep apnea, has helped Gibbs. It is now being recommended by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine for patients with moderate cases of sleep apnea. Until recently, the academy had only recommended the treatment, which has been around since the late 1980s, for patients with mild cases. The degree of severity of sleep apnea is diagnosed according to the number of breathing interruptions per hour. Forty or more interruptions per hour is considered severe, 20 to 40 is considered moderate, 10 to 20 is considered mild and less than 10 is regarded as primary snoring.

Les Priemer, a North York-area dentist who has been treating sleep apneics with oral-appliance therapy for 11 years, says there is a lack of knowledge among many patients about the treatment.

"The concern that patients have is that they walk into my office and say, 'How come nobody ever told me about this before?'" said Priemer.

Relief for those with sleep apnea has traditionally come in the form of an obtrusive device called a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine. It consists of a nasal mask connected to a hose that is in turn connected to a pump. The pump provides pressure through the mask to prevent the sleeper's airway from becoming blocked.

CPAP an effective treatment

Although an effective treatment for the condition, the CPAP machine is cumbersome and slightly noisy, the mask can be uncomfortable and the contraption can be less than agreeable to the sleeper's bedmate. And while CPAP has been traditionally recommended as the only first-line treatment for moderate sleep apnea cases, the new guidelines from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine mean oral appliance therapy can now be recommended as a first-line treatment as well.

Although Gibbs had severe sleep apnea, oral-appliance therapy has worked well for him.

He has been using it for the past two years and says it's helped turn his life around, estimating his condition has improved by 75 per cent.

"When I got the appliance, it was incredible," he said. "I don't go to bed without it."

Diagnosed with sleep apnea about nine years ago, Gibbs initially used a CPAP machine to manage his condition. Although it helped him, he found the machine cumbersome to travel with and less than ideal for personal reasons.

"You definitely don't want this if you're married because you have a hose in your nose – it's not very romantic," he said.

Oral-appliance therapy consists of a mouthpiece, usually made out of acrylic, that rests on the top and bottom arches of the mouth. The top and bottom pieces are connected and there's a hinge that allows the lower jaw to be comfortably moved forward, which in turn pulls the tongue off the back of the airway and allows the person to achieve more normal breathing.

Priemer estimates that around 1.4 million Canadians suffer from sleep apnea. While in the past it has been associated with overweight males, that is not always the case.

"Just because you're a skinny woman doesn't mean you can't have it. And unfortunately that's the problem sometimes – there's a misdiagnosis because a physician might say, 'Sorry, you don't fit the profile,'" he said, adding that obesity is indeed a major factor and there tends to be higher incidence of sleep apnea among people who are obese.

Getting the condition diagnosed and treated is critical. In Ontario, physicians are obligated to inform the Ministry of Transportation if they have patients with sleep apnea and patients are at risk of losing their drivers' licences if their condition goes untreated.

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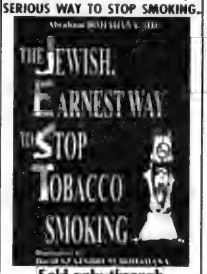

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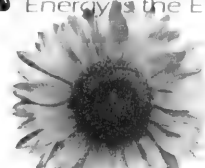
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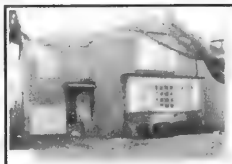

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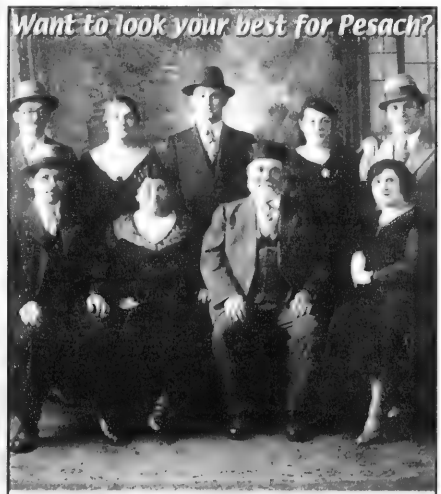

Israel & the Jewish World

Imams, rabbis meet for peace in Spain

By DANNY WOOD
JTA

SEVILLE, Spain — It's not often that the keynote speakers at a conference speak openly about the possibility that the meeting will fail.

But speakers at the second World Congress of Rabbis and Imams for Peace, held last week in Seville, Spain, made it clear that if this year's event didn't lead to a concrete plan of action, it will have to be judged a failure.

The congress was the second time that more than 150 rabbis and imams have come together in the name of peace, with the last meeting held in Brussels. The group already is taking some small steps, such as examining textbooks used by Jewish and Muslim schools in Jerusalem to ensure that educational materials don't encourage intolerance.

At the conclusion, the congress' executive committee issued a statement condemning violence in the name of religion, with words that could be seen as a repudiation of anti-Jewish agitation by Hamas and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

"We deplore any incitement against a faith or people, let alone any call for their elimination," the statement said.

The congress also called for respect for religious institutions, cemeteries, symbols and holy sites, and reaffirmed that "there is no inherent conflict between Islam and Judaism."

"One cannot exaggerate the importance of this event. Taking into account the backdrop of violence in Europe and ongoing conflict in the Holy Land, the very fact that we are meeting here is nearly a miracle," Shear Yeshuv Cohen, the chief rabbi of Haifa, said as the conference concluded March 22. "We will return to our communities to educate for peace and reconciliation, because that is what God wants from us."

Sheikh Imad al-Falouji, imam of Gaza and the senior Palestinian Authority figure at the conference, said, "Religious leaders must play a role to promote a culture of dialogue. We can impact on our political leaders to consider these values in their policy-making decisions."

The patrons of the event – the kings of Spain and Morocco – didn't attend the forum, but the Hommes de Paroles Foundation, which sponsored it, stressed that the delegates who attended carry enough weight in their communities to make a difference.

The aim of the conference is to make a positive contribution toward resolving religious conflict wherever it arises. According to the Jewish representative of Moroccan King Mohammed VI, Andre Azoulay, "the word of God has been kidnapped," and it's no longer enough for religious representatives to watch from the sidelines as religion is used by those who preach hatred.

Things got off to a strong start: Rather than wait for the workshop sessions, Israel's Ashkenazi chief rabbi, Yona Metzger, called at the opening ceremony for the formation of an international association of religious groups, a sort of United Nations of Religions.

There also were signs of mutual understanding. When Abdulaziz Othman, director general of the Islamic Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization angrily called for an international law to stop the publication of offensive material such as the cartoons of the Islamic prophet Muhammad that touched off violent riots throughout the Muslim world, Rabbi Michael Melchior, chief rabbi of Norway and a former Israeli cabinet minister, condemned disrespectful attacks on any faith.

There was a willingness on both sides to take some level of criticism. When an Israeli rabbi harangued Muslims for not standing up sufficiently to Osama bin Laden, imams in the audience listened respectfully.

But rather than presenting specific ideas for joint initiatives, many of the religious leaders still seemed to behave as if it were the first congress of this sort, proud that rabbis and imams were simply meeting and talking together.

Meanwhile, difficult and relevant questions often were swept aside.

On the issue of terrorism, the leaders condemned any act of violence in the name of religion. When pushed to comment on how this might apply to Palestinian suicide bombers, however, al-Falouji instead demanded that Israel change its policy toward the Palestinians.

When rabbis were asked to comment on the conditions that could lead to a sharing of the Holy Land, Rabbi Daniel Sperber from Bar-Ilan University in Israel, said that was an issue for politicians.

Tensions were never far from the surface, even over coffee, when al-Falouji argued with Stuart Altshuler, a rabbi from Orange County, Calif., over the status of Jerusalem and Israel's occupation of West Bank land the Palestinians claim.

Faced with difficult questions from journalists, the rabbis and imams often would respond with bromides about believing in the same god and how peace begins with dialogue.

To break down barriers, the organizers brought in a Philadelphia communications specialist. Wearing a cowboy hat and barking orders into his microphone, he encouraged the religious leaders to write down their "issues" on pieces of paper, then line up to announce them to the audience.

These "open sessions" became the focus of the conference. Rabbis and imams lined up to announce issues ranging from anti-Semitism in Iran to Islamophobia, from gender equality to Holocaust denial. The list was endless.

Rabbi Israel Singer, chairman of the World Jewish Congress' Policy Council, rejected the idea that Jewish-Muslim tensions lie at the root of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He added that "religious crusaders" like Ahmadinejad "must be exposed for what they are: impostors."

One topic that came up repeatedly was the Muhammad cartoon controversy. The hope is that in the future, the interfaith group could act to defuse such tensions before they get out of hand

Correction

In **What's New**, March 23, the telephone number published for the Jewish Heritage for the Blind cannot be reached from Canada. To order a free Haggadah, call 718-338-0500, or fax 718-339-0653. *The CJN* regrets the error.

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Hockey book aims to get boys reading

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A couple of generations ago, boys' books were all the rage. Chip Hilton, Bronc Burnett, Win Hadley, Tom Swift, and of course the classic Hardy Boys series thrilled adolescent boys with fast-paced adventures, camaraderie, sports and sleuthing.

Back then, it seems, boys enjoyed reading, whereas today, many can't seem to pull themselves away from the TV or computer monitor.

Sure, there's the *Harry Potter* series and lots of sci-fi, but if you're not interested in fantasy, then what?

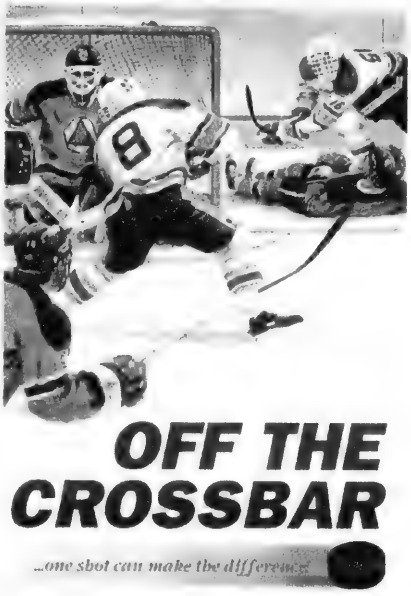
There is a crisis in reading among boys in the developmentally critical nine to 12 age range, believes author David Skuy, and it's reflected in the fact that after about age nine, girls' reading skills grow at a much faster rate than boys'. By high school, some 50 per cent of boys describe themselves as non-readers and in university, females outnumber males by a ratio of 60 to 40, he said.

Newsweek, he pointed out, recently ran a cover story describing the crisis in boys' education.

Skuy, who practises business law in Toronto, believes he can provide at least part of the solution. He recently penned *Off the Crossbar* (The Writers' Collective), an action-packed sports book aimed squarely at adolescent boys.

Set in the fictitious Canadian town of Terrence Falls, it follows the experiences of the new kid in town, Charlie Joyce, as he tries to fit in.

And fit in he does, primarily through hockey and other sports. A hockey tournament is the glue that binds the story together and carries it to its exciting conclusion. A longtime hockey player, Skuy includes lots of on-ice action, with a smattering of hockey diagrams and some practice drills and on-ice tips.



Along the way, Skuy addresses such issues as leadership, bullying, loss, fitting in at a new school, making new friends, how to deal with people who don't like you and other issues that resonate with youth.

"This is one of the few [books] explicitly aimed for boys," Skuy explained. "I tried to touch an issue that would relate to boys."

As a youngster, Skuy, 42, recalls being a voracious reader of the sports and adventure books mentioned above. He recalls it was an enriching part of his life and he feels boys who don't read much "are cheating themselves of a rich experience in life... They're losing out of what childhood could be."

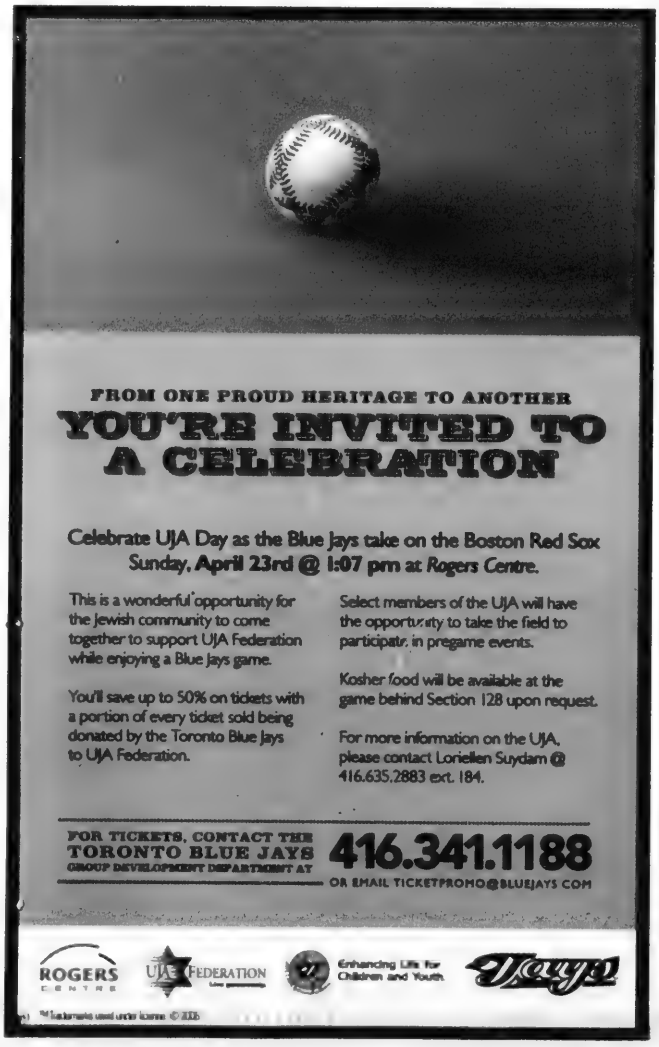
David Skuy

For the book's protagonist, Charlie, sports helps him get through a difficult period in his life. "It's a fantastic outlet for working through problems, expressing themselves, making friends and belonging to a group." Those are the kind of elements that appeal to young boys, Skuy said.

Off the Crossbar is Skuy's first foray into writing fiction. In 2003 he wrote a book on modern French history.

At first, he said, his publisher was skeptical about a boys' book – it is, after all, a relatively weak market. But Skuy believes boys will read if they're given the right kind of book. Because hockey is the quintessential Canadian sport, he thinks *Off the Crossbar* will be a book that will interest them.

Off the Crossbar is available at Book City on Bloor Street, and through the Internet at ChaptersIndigo.ca and Amazon.ca. For more information or to read an excerpt from the book, visit Skuy's Web site at www.charliejoyce.com.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Inside Back

Balancing the child-physician role

By DR. MICHAEL GORDON

The Senior Side of Life

My 94-year-old father's fall and fractured hip was a disaster waiting to happen. My sister Diane and I had taken steps after it became clear last year that he could no longer safely bathe himself and that his walking was insecure. We convinced him to accept bathing help, which with some gentle coaxing worked out well, and we bought him a walker, which, he agreed, improved his ability to get around safely in his Chicago retirement home not far from where Diane, who is his primary family care provider, lives.

One morning, the call came. "Daddy's in the emergency department with a broken left hip. He will go for surgery, either today or tomorrow," Diane said. It was a Friday. I was able to get weekend coverage and managed to get an evening flight and went straight to the hospital. He had been admitted to the orthopedic floor after a number of hours. The attending internist felt he was in good medical shape for surgery, but wanted clearance from the cardiologist who had looked after him during his previous heart attack and successful by-pass surgery.

The orthopedic surgeon explained his plan, which made good medical sense to me. It balanced the surgical options and the desire to have as short a procedure as possible with early mobilization. Having previously done a lot of geriatric medical consultations on orthopedic patients, I felt comfortable letting things unfold according to the outlined plan, and Diane and I felt confident in the surgeon.

The next morning, we arrived in good time to see our father off to surgery. Time passed and he was not taken to the operating room as scheduled. We were informed that the procedure was cancelled and eventually the orthopedic surgeon and internist explained that he was inadvertently given 10 times the stated dose for one of his cardiac medications. There was no real danger to his medical status, but it was felt that the surgery was better postponed for a day. The next morning, the procedure was done with no apparent problems. I returned home while my father was still recovering from his surgery, but was awake and could converse with me.

Since then, my challenge, along with a number of visits to Chicago, has been to balance my physician and family roles while assisting my sister with her observations without imposing my medical status on those responsible for his care.

At one point, when Diane and I felt the members of the rehabilitation team were failing to acknowledge and address substantial medical issues that were interfering with his progress, and were thinking of early discharge because he had reached a "plateau," I put on my "medical" hat.

I wrote as diplomatic a letter as possible to the head of the department outlining our concerns about some aspects of the care my father had received and I expressed concern that many of his problems could be rectified if his needs were better addressed within a geriatric patient framework. It was a gamble, but I couched the letter with acknowledgement and praise of the team's efforts, yet also pointed out areas where I felt there was potentially greater optimism for the outcome.

It seemed to work. The team's response was positive and supportive. Gradually, many of the issues were addressed. Diane and I are hopeful that our father will return to a reasonable level of functioning, but we're also realistic that he might require more daily care.

Balancing one's professional role with being a loving child can be challenging, but if done well, it can lead to a positive outcome and a responsive reaction from the treating staff.

Dr. Michael Gordon is vice-president of medical services at Bayerest and co-author with Bart Mindszenthy of Parenting Your Parents.

Apricot-Pistachio Charoset

This recipe produces a slightly dry, chunky charoset. If you prefer a more moist version, add extra wine, a tablespoon at a time, until you achieve the desired consistency.

1 cup minced dried apricots
1 cup unsalted shelled White pistachio nuts, chopped and lightly toasted
1/3 cup sweet white wine
1 tblsp. + 1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
1 tblsps. shredded fresh mint
10 threads saffron, crumbled

In large bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. Wait approximately 20 minutes before serving to allow apricots to absorb liquid.
Makes about 2 cups.
Recipe Source: Epicurious

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Epi on Education

Purim and Pesach offer adult lessons, too

Seymour Epstein

I often wonder during this period between Purim and Pesach whether the diet I'm on is some vestige of a Jewish origin for Catholic Lent. Surely, our ancestors also ate more and exercised less during the Judean winter of long ago, and then followed that with the required Purim excess, only to realize that the eating spree of Pesach was a mere four weeks away. Somewhere along the line, the early Christians must have copied what they thought was spiritual abstinence.

This period, if used for reflection, offers yet another illustration of the dangers of "pediatric Judaism" and of the great potential in an adult understanding of Jewish life. In our desire to make the holiday cycle meaningful to children, it's all too simple to reduce both Purim and Pesach to children's games that adults can reject or ignore with ease.

Purim is a complex holiday that has perplexed us as a people since we first read and commented on Megillat Esther. If, indeed, it were but a simple victory for the Jewish inhabitants of Persia, why is God missing from this biblical tale? Why do the Jews celebrate with a drinking party that is so much like those of the foolish king? Why are we taught by the rabbis to so intoxicate ourselves that we confuse the villain with the hero? There, are, of course, a variety of good answers to these questions, and they are what make Purim much more than a black-and-white children's tale.

The rote questions of the Haggadah and their printed answers are also deceivingly simple. They are part of a wonderful pageant technique in which, to better teach our children, we speak, sing, eat, gesticulate, and drink the Exodus from slavery to freedom. But, anyone who has delved deeper into the original texts of the Exodus, as well as the rabbinic commentaries and the supra-commentaries on the Haggadah, knows that there is much more beneath the surface of this holiday than what we give as answers to our young children.

We adults can use this time to do more than diet and clean our houses. We can rededicate ourselves to a mature quest for meaning in our ancient traditions.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

And Miriam drummed

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

Whoosh! The waves of the sea cascaded back. The Jewish people were free and celebrating their emancipation, led by Moses and his sister, Miriam. Moses sang. Miriam danced and drummed. The Torah states: Miriam "picked up a hand drum and all the women went out after her in dance with hand drums." (Exodus 15:20).

According to commentary, Miriam's use of dancing and drumming had such an effect on the Children of Israel (B'nai Yisrael) that the miracle did not remain an event tainted by pain and trepidation, but instead became one of jubilation.

Recently, I participated in a drumming course conducted by Torontonian Terri Segal, 27, an expressive-arts facilitator who shares the benefits of creative expression through group drumming and expressive-arts workshops.

She is a vibrant teacher who introduced me to the authority of the drum and helped me understand Miriam's decision to pound "the skins" in a bid to gather and excite the B'nai Yisrael. One evening a week for eight weeks, participants followed Terri's clear and gentle instruction. We learned the art of tapping versus pounding, and how to draw out a meaningful and hauntingly rich bass sound augmented with an echoed treble beat.

Terri taught us African drumming basics as well as aspects of the drumming culture.

The drum has been used historically for rites of passage and celebration. It is also used to calm and focus people with Alzheimer's disease, emotionally disturbed teens, children who have autism, prisoners and the homeless population.

A 1996 *Newsweek* cover story titled *Your Child's Brain* presented strong data on the brain's fundamental need for rhythm, and noted that stress is caused when we are deprived of it because we are disconnecting from our deeper selves. Shamans of indigenous cultures have used the drum for years as a tool to retrieve parts of the soul that have been mislaid.

Barry Quinn, a clinical psychologist specializing in neuro-biofeedback for stress management, said drumming for brief periods can actually change brain-wave patterns, dramatically reducing stress. He calls the results of 30 to 40 minutes of drumming on his highest-stress clients, "by far the most amazing results I've encountered thus far in my research."

Being a member of Terri's class gave me the opportunity to live out a lifelong dream… I was jamming, kicking back and rocking with other musicians. In a very basic but potent way, the group expressed the "music in me," our hands zestfully pounding on the West African djembe drum. Our eyes rolled. Our heads bopped. We brought the house down. We were rocking!

Terri is an earthy woman whose method of teaching is inviting and exciting. She has an innate ability to make participants feel like musicians, even those who were off beat and out of step. On those nights, I was a Jewish *babatunde olatunji* (Nigerian drumming master); I was a musican and my heart was beating loudly.

A fetus' heart learns to beat by pulsing to its mother's heart. The heart is the only organ with a pulse beat, setting the rhythmic relationship for all other organs. Perhaps Miriam knew this when she encouraged the B'nai Yisrael to join her in drumming, following the fusion of the sea waters. Like Miriam, Terri seemed acutely aware of the connection between the heart and the beat of the drum.

Two passionate women. Two awesome jam sessions. One 4,000 years ago in the desert, and the other two weeks ago in Toronto. Rock on!

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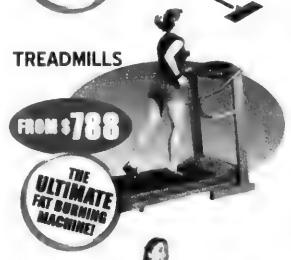

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This Week

National

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Two CHAT students win top law and business honours. *Page 19*

Arts & Travel

Kamloops, B.C., is known as the 'Tournament Capital of Canada.' *Page 61*

CJN Profile

Ex-rabbinical student stars in his own short film. *Page 65*

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ISRAELI VOTERS CHOOSE

General elections for Israel's 17th Knesset concluded last week with Ehud Olmert's Kadima party winning 29 seats, the most of any of the other parties. ***(After we sent our pages to press, the Labor party contingent decreased by one member, to 19. The United Arab List increased by one member, to four.)*** **[***Israel photo***]**
Please see pages 8, 9, 11, 50-52.

Canada halts funding to Hamas-led PA

CJN News Services

OTTAWA — Canada last week became the first donor country to cut funding and diplomatic ties to the Palestinian Authority (PA) just as the new Hamas-led government was being sworn in.

Following through on a pre-election promise to review aid to the PA and a statement to the same effect made even before Canada's Conservative-led minority government was sworn into office – federal officials cut aid over the new Hamas government's refusal to renounce the use of terror and recognize Israel.

However, the Tories say they will still channel humanitarian aid to Palestinians through the United Nations, as well as other agencies and non-governmental organizations.

"Not a red cent to Hamas," Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay said on CBC's *Inside Politics* program last Wednesday.

"This is a terrorist organization. They have to change," he said. "We cannot send any direct aid to an organization that refuses to renounce terrorist activity, refuses to renounce violence."

His certitude was repeated following a meeting with the Conservative caucus: "There will be no contact and no funds, period."

That means Canada will suspend $7.3 million in funding – almost one-third of the $25 million a year this country spends in aid in the West Bank and Gaza.

Another $10 million per year will continue to flow to the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

In October 2004, Canada said it would continue to fund UNRWA even after its head admitted that some of its employees were Hamas members.

"We do intend to continue, to the best degree possible, to directly fund the Palestinian people through humanitarian aid and that is more so under the auspices of CIDA," MacKay told reporters.

In a statement, the foreign affairs minister said the "stated platform of [the Hamas] government has not addressed the concerns raised by Canada and others concerning non-violence, the recognition of Israel, and acceptance of

Continued on page 27

Shabbat Hagadol:Tzav
Candlelighting: 7:34
Havdallah: 8:39

Greater Toronto Area

1836 today
News
week.

Hamas vows to continue struggle against the Zionists — see page 53

The News in Brief

CANADA

Choosing An 'Envoy'

MONTREAL — Students from Hillel Montreal and the University of Ottawa's Jewish Students' Association-Hillel were among 500 students at 19 schools in Russia, Ukraine, North America and South America to vote for Israel's next unofficial "ambassador" to the United States. Hillel partnered with the reality show *The Ambassador*, now in its second season in Israel, to help narrow its field of candidates from six to two. The hit show has 14 young Israelis vying to represent Israel in a series of PR and diplomacy challenges. The students voted on which hopeful made the best pro-Israel PR video. Hillel Montreal was also one of five locations to host crews that recorded students' debates and voting. The footage airs this spring.

Shoah Workshop Held

REGINA - The Regional Jewish Communities of Ontario last week presented a one-day workshop on teaching the Holocaust to student teachers at the University of Regina. The workshop was a follow-up to the March of the Living program in Poland, in which two student teachers from the school took part. The seminar, geared to high school teachers, featured two Holocaust survivors, Max Eisen and Vera Schiff, who spoke about their wartime experiences.

WORLD

Iranian Jews Visit

MOSCOW — Fifteen Iranian Jewish women from an amateur folk group were in Moscow last week after being invited to take part in the Light a Candle Jewish children's arts festival. The women, aged 14 to 30, were invited to Russia by Arkady Gaidamak, a Jewish leader and business tycoon, and came with a special permission from Iranian authorities. They performed Iranian and Kurdish folk music and were to be joined by Sarun Yashaie, head of Tehran's Jewish community, who was to attend a special reception for the group at the Moscow Choral Synagogue.

Prince Goes to Shul

SAO PAULO — Jordanian Prince Hassan Bin Talal was welcomed at Latin America's largest synagogue earlier this month. He was received by Rabbi Henry Sobel for breakfast at the 2,000-family Congregacao Israelita Paulista in Sao Paulo. Several Jewish and Muslim officials also attended. Talal and Rabbi Sobel prayed together in Hebrew and Arabic. "In Brazil we live in harmony, and it's our duty to export tolerance and mutual respect to all parts of the world," the rabbi said.

Jewish Chief of Staff

WASHINGTON — U.S. President George W. Bush named Joshua Bolten, 51, as his chief of staff last week, replacing Andrew Card, who resigned last week. Bolten, who is Jewish, had been director of the Office of Management and Budget for three years. He takes over as Bush's approval ratings have fallen to new lows.

Attacker Sentenced

MOSCOW — A Russian convicted of a stabbing spree at a Moscow shul got a 13-year prison sentence. A Moscow court jailed Alexander Koptsev last week after finding him guilty of racially motivated attempted murder. He wounded nine Jews in the Jan. 11 attack before being overpowered. Prosecutors had sought a 16-year term. A separate charge against Koptsev of stirring up ethnic hatred was dropped.

School Funding Drive

CHICAGO — Chicago's Jewish Federation has started a funding drive to raise $50 million (US) for Chicago area Jewish days schools called the Jewish Day School Guaranty Trust. To get money quickly to schools with pressing needs, trust income will be "front-loaded" – funds may come in over a decade, but interest on the sum will be paid to schools up front. The federation is borrowing up to $40 million to enable the front-loading. It's also offering a 10 per cent match on gifts through 2007. The first gift was a $1-million donation from the Hochberg and Lowenstein families, who helped start the program.

Jewish Books Distributed in Nigeria

ABUJA, Nigeria — The Philadelphia-based Jewish Publication Society is distributing almost 3,000 pounds of Jewish books to a community in Nigeria that some consider Jewish.

The shipment for the Igbo Bnei Israel arrived in February and is being distributed in five Nigerian provinces. The books include Hebrew-English Bibles, as well as English-language books on Jewish topics. The donations are part of the JPS Mitzvah Project, which sends slightly damaged Jewish books to communities around the world.

The Nigerian program was co-ordinated with Rabbi Howard Gorin of Congregation Tikvat Israel in Rockville, Md., and Kulanu, a grassroots group that helps underserved Jewish communities. The Igbo Bnei Israel's claim to Jewish status is not recognized by Israel, but it is accepted by some international Jewish groups.

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The Canadian Jewish news
Vol. XXXVI, No. 15 (1,742)*
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Israelis comprise 25% of Jews in the GTA

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

More than 50,000 immigrants from the State of Israel currently reside in the Greater Toronto Area, comprising some 25 per cent of the GTA's Jewish population, a new demographic study reveals.

Nearly 2,700 Israelis immigrated to Canada in 2004 and 2,601 arrived the year before – the two highest numbers on record – states the report, titled *The Israeli Community in the Greater Toronto Area*.

Prepared by David Gidron for the Israeli House, a component of the Israeli Consulate in Toronto, the study found that altogether, 64,859 Israelis immigrated to Canada from 1946 to 2004, with the vast majority settling in the GTA. That figure does not include children born in Canada.

Ties between Israeli immigrants and the established Jewish community remain tenuous. In the report, Gidron calls on Jewish community leadership "to find ways to strengthen the connection to this group… Some of the Jewish bodies – especially the bodies connected to Jewish education – are, in my opinion, moving too slowly and are having difficulty in finding solutions to the needs of the Israeli community. It is important that these bodies put the Israeli issues on their agenda in order to help ensure we don't lose the next generation, the children."

A copy of the report has been turned over to the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and it is now being studied. The report was prepared to assist the Israeli House in planning the kind of services it would offer Israeli expats and to provide the Israeli Canadian Forum, a new organization that will serve as an umbrella organization for Israelis, with information about their target audience. The study is based on Canadian census data, information compiled by the consulate and on material found in Citizenship and Immigration Canada reports.

Gidron believes integrating Israeli newcomers will pose a challenge to the established Jewish community on a number of fronts, but the new, relatively young population group also offers tremendous opportunities for community growth. A community-wide "very serious dialogue" is needed, he said

Posing one difficulty is the cultural divide: many Israelis perceive Canadian Jews as too formal, cool and standoffish.

Another point of separation is religious identity: Canadian Jews' connection to the community and to their Jewishness is often through synagogue affiliation. Most Israelis, however, are secular. "They look at Jewishness first from the point of nationalism and ethnic identity and less from the point of view of religion," Gidron said. "It will take years, if ever, to see Israelis migrate to shuls."

Gidron said he is concerned about Jewish continuity among youths whose parents are Israeli. "They aren't in day schools and they are not tied to Israel, the land, as they are not living there. That's a major challenge for anyone who works for the community."

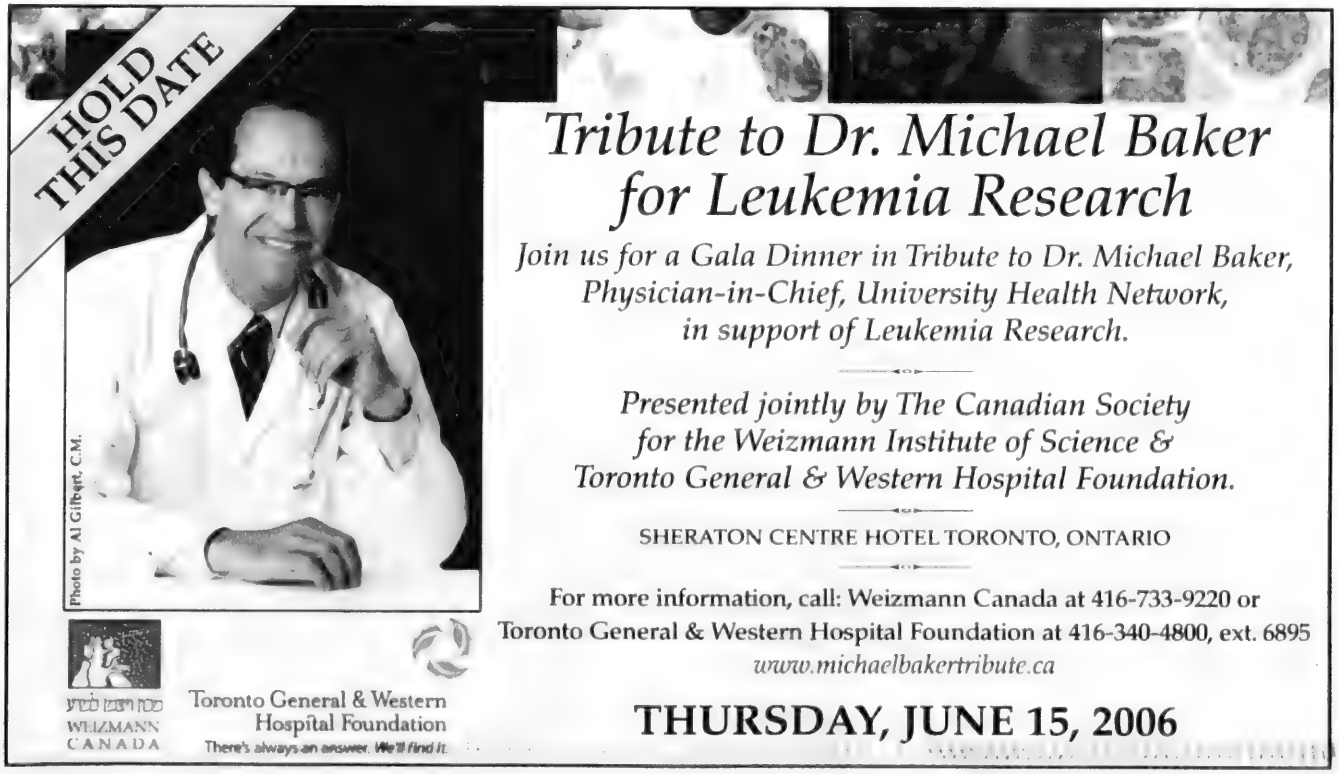
Gidron, who moved to Toronto two years ago, said Israeli immigrants are forced to address the universal Jewish dilemma of continuity – but with a twist. "In Israel, they do not deal with the question of what it is to be a Jew. They come here and for the first time, they have to give thought to that question."

Continued on page 26

Some of the report's other findings:

- The largest concentration of Israeli immigrants in the GTA is in Vaughan (2,840), a city immediately north of Toronto. Second is the area around Finch (1,150) and third the area around Lawrence (670).
- Two-thirds of the Israeli community earn less than $40,000 per year. Israeli immigrants are relatively young compared to other groups of Jews and most have arrived in the last few years, keeping their incomes low.
- Sixty-nine per cent of Israelis are salaried workers, while only 1.6 per cent receive a government pension. 7.23 per cent receive government assistance.
- 14.5 per cent live in poverty.

Please see related story, page 39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Greater Toronto Area

Zichron Yaakov literature

From the editor's desk

The history of modern Israel did not actually begin with the Palestinian intifadah of 1987, nor with the widely cheered appearance of the much-adored, keffiyah-clad, gun-toting, sunglass-hidden Yasser Arafat before the United Nations General Assembly some 13 years before that.

Indeed, for most of recorded Jewish life in the Holy Land since the start of the Common Era, Jews have lived in the four "holy cities" of Jerusalem, Hebron, Safed and Tiberius. But Jews found their way to the Holy Land much more recently, at the beginning of the last century when the eastern edge of the Mediterranean was nothing but a dusty, neglected outpost of the Ottoman Empire.

There is also more to the sights, sounds and smells of Israel than the ubiquitous images of conflict and strife and the black, smoky photos of the burning tires of Palestinian protest. Israel is an explorer's garden of limitless offerings of climatic, geographic, topographic, archeological and other delights.

But very few people outside of Israel are familiar with either its modern history or its resplendent, remarkably diverse, natural beauty.

Two books, *A Strange Death* by Hillel Halkin (Public Affairs, New York, 2005) and *Mandrakes from the Holy Land* by Aharon Megged (The Toby Press, 2005) are a remedy, or at least, a beginning of a remedy, for that lack of familiarity.

Halkin and Megged are two of Israel's most powerful and masterful writers, essayists and novelists. Both are award-winning authors, superb storytellers with uncommonly descriptive powers of observation.

Though the two works spin vastly different narratives, they both revolve around the early, quaint community of Zichron Yaakov (In Jacob's Memory), the settlement founded in 1882 by Baron Edmond de Rothschild and named after his father Jacob.

Halkin's work is a playful, thoughtful, fascinating blend of autobiography, history and narrative.

Using his own family's arrival in Zichron Yaakov in the early 1970s, the then somewhat sleepy little town on the verdant, wine-rich steppes below the Carmel mountain range just off the Tel Aviv-Haifa highway, Halkin discovers a possible murder mystery at the very heart of the town's storied history.

The famous Aaronsohn family and the fabled NILI spy ring in which at least one of the family was involved during the World War I struggle of the British against the Turks, is at the centre of the mystery.

In the best forensic fashion, Halkin uncovers and interprets clue after clue related to a certain "strange death" in the wake of the execution of two of the NILI spies and the suicide of the exotic and beautiful Sarah Aaronsohn, a member of the spy ring.

Halkin introduces us to a colourful cast of veteran Zichron Yaakov characters. He recreates conversations with a stenographer's precision, and he describes his travels and experiences in the adjacent countryside with an impressionist painter's gravitas for colour and light. He paints a captivating, richly detailed picture of life in the Holy Land for its Jews, beginning in pre-mandatory Palestine at the turn of the last century under the rule of the Turks. It is a fun, illuminating glimpse of a time not-so-long-ago past in Eretz Yisrael, before the rise of Arab (Palestinian) nationalism.

Megged's book, translated from the Hebrew by Sondra Silverston, first appeared in 1998 as *Duda'im Min Ha'aretz Hakedosha*.

It is a typical Megged tour de force. Told in the format of correspondence written in 1906, primarily by the protagonist, Beatrice Campbell-Bennett, a young English artist travelling through the country on a mission to paint its flowers, the story is a multi-layered narrative that excavates the interconnected strata of Zionist history, theology, spiritual quest, psychological dysfunction and geographic travelogue.

Campbell-Bennett befriends and becomes the guest of the Aaronsohns of Zichron Ya'akov and they serve as her social anchor. But they cannot save her from the travails that unfold. She is a complicated, troubled individual whose artistry mixes with and emerges from her ecstatic religious vulnerabilities. She focuses her artistic search on finding and painting mandrakes, the aphrodisiacal fruit mentioned in the bible. Ultimately, her emotional equilibrium destabilizes, even as the efforts of her family to "heal" her from afar intensify.

Campbell-Bennett's experiences are the pinwheel through which Megged shines a constantly changing shower of historical and geographic light. He adorns his book with openly, unself-conscious affection for the compelling beauty of the land.

These two books are excellent company for anyone wanting to learn about the history of Eretz Yisrael at the turn of the last century. –*MBD*

See JN

BIBLE SCHOLARS

Teacher Noa Gemara stands with Shaar Shalom Religious School students who tied for first in the supplementary schools division at the regional Bible contest, held March 5 at Netivot HaTorah Day School. Twenty-three students representing five supplementary schools took part. Pictured with Gemara are, top from left, Emily Halprin, Zachary Chippin and Jacob Goldstein; and bottom from left, Matthew Nayer and Noah Hamilton. The national finals will be held next month in Toronto. A team from Beth Jacob V'Anshei Drildz tied for first, while Temple Kol Ami School placed second and Beit Rayim Hebrew School finished third. Shaar Shalom Religious School recently moved to new premises at Brownridge Public School in Thornhill.

Greater Toronto Area

USDS parents angry they weren't told about mould

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Parents of children at United Synagogue Day School's Richmond Hill branch are angry that they were only notified a little more than a week ago about mould found in two classrooms last fall, and that junior and senior kindergarten kids in the affected rooms were only moved elsewhere in the building after parents learned of the problem.

As of last Wednesday, 56 parents had signed a petition circulated that morning calling for the resignation of the school's board president, Allen Gales, and head of school Lucy Cohen.

At a meeting that evening, public apologies from Gales, Cohen, and school administrator Sue Walsh – as well as a promise to repair the damage over the Passover break – did little to appease parents, who accused the three of negligence after seeing copies of a Nov. 29 report by consultants Pinchin Environmental Ltd. The report was commissioned by the school to assess water damage after heavy rains.

The written report included eight recommendations, among them to "communicate the results" to occupants and the workplace health and safety committee, to refer sensitive individuals or those with certain health problems for medical assessment, and to remove and dispose of the lower four feet of drywall, insulation and vapour barrier in two offices and two preschool classrooms.

"You did not implement one recommendation that these professionals made," said Jonathon Kahane-Rapport, who has two children at the school, neither of whom is in an affected class. "It's time to go. You're done… When it comes to the health and safety of our children, you can't take chances.

"You've got a pregnant receptionist downstairs," he added.

"You have jeopardized our children's health," shouted Jonathan Flatt, a parent who, ironically, has a business that specializes in mould removal.

The building, located at Bayview and Weldrick avenues, has been sold to a developer, and USDS will close the branch after this school year, which prompted some parents to speculate that that is the reason the repairs have not been made. The school also has branches at Beth Tikvah Synagogue and Beth Tzedec Congregation.

Last Friday, a letter from Gales and Cohen was distributed to USDS parents. It outlined the situation and said the school is "immediately embarking on changing our procedures, in consultation with parents" to prevent a recurrence. Parents and teachers were invited to contact them this week if they want to become involved.

Remediation work is scheduled for Passover and will be done in consultation with a "parent [Flatt] experienced in this field," the letter stated.

At the meeting, Gales said that, based on conversations with Pinchin representatives before the written report was received, "our understanding was that there was a minor amount of mould… and that in the spring, before Passover, we should have it reassessed."

"It was our understanding that there was no immediate issue of safety or concern," Walsh added.

"When the report came in, it wasn't viewed as seriously [as it would have been] in terms of going through page by page of the report, because we had already received a verbal on it," said Gales.

"We exercised bad judgment," he admitted.

A Pinchin representative attended the meeting and confirmed that the extent of the mould was "relatively minor we'd estimate no more than 10 to 20 square feet." It could probably be dealt with in a weekend, he added.

"Nowhere in this report do I see that it can wait four months," one angry father said at the meeting.

"My daughter has been coming home for a month with bumps all over her body, scratching," said an irate mother, standing up to address the school representatives. "I'm pumping her full of Benadryl because I don't know what the cause is. Well, guess what? Now I know!"

"I have a son with a mould allergy and another son that's had asthma all year," yelled another parent. "It's not acceptable."

School promises repairs over Passover break

Ellin Bessner, who has a son in USDS' senior kindergarten and one in Beit Rayim Synagogue's afternoon Hebrew school in the same building, said at the meeting that the Hebrew school "was never told. The principal found out from me!"

The synagogue rents space from USDS for both its congregation and its Hebrew school.

Parents demanded to know who was responsible for the decision not to relay the results of the assessment, and they did not accept Gales' initial answer of "the school."

"The three of us are taking responsibility," Cohen said.

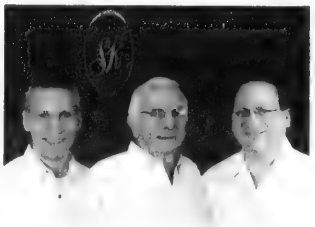
Michael Kulik, who has a six-year-old and a four-year-old at the school, told Gales, Cohen and Walsh, "I think you have a responsibility to the parents and the community in general to present a case to us about why it's reasonable that we should accept no resignations, no changing of the guard, no shifting of responsibilities."

Some parents expressed hesitation about re-enrolling their children in the school.

"This isn't over," said Bessner the day after the meeting.

She added Monday morning that, while she appreciates that the work will be done, "somebody has to be held accountable."

Good SK News!



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Toronto family's mezuzah egged by vandals

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

A weekend jaunt to Niagara Falls ended in a "sickening feeling" for Nathan and Shari Brown when they were greeted on their return by what appeared to be an anti-Semitic attack on their home.

The couple were returning with their two children to their house on Fairlawn Avenue in the Avenue Road and Lawrence Avenue area to find their front door mezuzah had been struck with several raw eggs. No other part of the house was touched.

"It was very upsetting," Shari said a day later. "We felt very violated. My son is very sensitive and he felt very sad inside."

The incident likely took place late on the evening of March 25, a Saturday, or on the morning of March 26, a Sunday. The Browns' housekeeper, Maria Santos, discovered the egging when she dropped by to feed the couple's dog on Sunday. She didn't inform the Browns so as not to disturb their outing.

"I'm not Jewish but I respect everybody's religion," Santos said. "It's sad. The egg went straight to the mezuzah."

Nathan said there were plenty of targets for a vandal to hit without aiming for the mezuzah. Whoever egged the house would have had to walk up several stairs to get close enough to hit the religious symbol, suggesting it wasn't a random act of throwing eggs from the street.

"It's just a sickening feeling," Nathan said.

Shari said the couples' nine-year-old son, Jakob, was particularly shaken. "He had this look of shock," she said. "He is very sensitive. He didn't know why anyone would do that to us… He's scared that someone did this to us."

Sgt. Lino Murarotto of 32 Division said the incident is under investigation and it's too early to determine whether it's a hate crime.

Detectives "haven't determined the motive yet. We have since discovered that other properties may have been damaged on Fairlawn Avenue," Murarotto added.

According to the Toronto Police Service's 2005 *Annual Hate/Bias Crime Statistical Report*, Jews along with blacks were the most frequently targeted group.

A total of 132 hate crimes were reported in 2005 – 19 per cent less than the year before – of which 33 involved Jews, the report stated.

B'nai Brith reported recently in its 2005 *Audit of Antisemitic Incidents* that Jews in the Greater Toronto Area were targeted in 544 incidents – a 2.6 per cent increase over 2004 – but that cases of vandalism dropped from the year before.

The discrepancy between the police and B'nai Brith statistics is due in part to the criteria for recording incidents. Police limit their reporting to cases that could be considered crimes. B'nai Brith does not limit its reporting to criminal occurrences.

The mezuzah on Nathan and Shari Brown's home was vandalized when they recently went away.
[Paul Lungen photo]

Omission

The article "Group advocates for special needs young adults" (*CJN*, March 23) did not include a phone number for further information. That number is 905-731-6606.

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UJA Federation/Jewish Foundation team up with MASA for new educational journey

By Daniel Horowitz
UJA Federation

An innovative and unprecedented opportunity for Jewish students from around the world is underway, and it promises to not only connect Jewish youth to their roots in Israel – but to a brighter future, as well.

MASA, which means "journey" in English, is a joint venture of the Government of Israel, the Jewish Agency for Israel (UJA Federation's overseas partner) and Jewish Federations across North America – and was created to connect Jewish youth with their history and with their roots.

The mandate of MASA is to bring 20,000 young Jews from around the world each year for anywhere from one semester to a year-long program of studying and volunteering in Israel. Qualifying students have more than 140 programs to choose from.

And now, thanks to the generosity and vision of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto donors, and its endowment arm, the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, as well as a new partnership with the Israeli government and JAFI, Canadian Jewish students have the opportunity to take advantage of this life-altering opportunity.

"We are excited that this year applicants will have the opportunity to benefit from this wonderful new initiative," enthuses Dani Fine of UJA Federation's Board of Jewish Education. "In essence, with the advent of this new partnership, we are collectively creating increased scholarship capacity for Canadian students. We are creating the chance for them to participate in exciting and enriching long-term Israel programs and experiences. In fact, through scholarship funds currently established with the Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto, over 200 post-secondary school scholarships are awarded to Canadian students annually. Now, with this partnership, that number will quickly increase at an impressive rate."

"Where the incredibly successful and visionary *birthright israel* initiative was our children's first love affair with Israel, MASA is the more mature, long-term commitment with her," says Julia Koschitzky, a leader of Toronto's Jewish community and the co-chair of JAFI's educational department. "Ariel Sharon was so thrilled and excited about MASA; in fact, I was with him in Israel last May when it was launched. Studies have shown that those young Jewish men and women - between the ages of 18 and 26 - who spend time in Israel are more likely to become Jewish community leaders, and many, ultimately, make aliyah. MASA will create Jewish leaders; it will connect the disconnected with their roots. This incredible project is essential because not only will it enhance our collective future as Jews, it will guarantee that future."

The Jewish Foundation of Greater Toronto and UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education offers students scholarship opportunities.

Scholarships available to study in Israel for the 2006-2007 academic year

Here's what you need to do to apply:

STEP ONE

go to www.masaisrael.org or contact
Alex Kojfman at 416.398.6931 ext. 341
or e-mail akojfman@ujafed.org

STEP TWO

If you are not eligible for a MASA Scholarship, you may apply for a scholarship through the

Morris M. Pulver Sholarship Fund of Israel & the Hushy Lipton Memorial Scholarship Fund

(open to residents of Canada) or through the

Meyer Gasner/Joe Berman Education Scholarhsip Fund

(for residents of the Greater Toronto Area)
by going to www.jewishfoundationtoronto.com
and click on Scholarships or by calling
Saleena Shareef at 416.633.7770 ext. 244

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Publisher and Proprietor
The Canadian Jewish News, a corporation without share capital
Head Office
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Harper's resolute stance

Apologists for Hamas base their defence of the terrorist organization on the fact that it was democratically elected by a majority of Palestinians to form their government. They essentially claim that the group's uncompromising, oft-repeated, religiously based commitment to Israel's obliteration is merely an inconvenient detail in an otherwise laudable, democratic outcome.

But since when, in the history of relations between and among nations, does the fact of an election outweigh in any significant respect the policies and purposes of the party winning that election?

Surely, there cannot now be even the slightest doubt regarding Hamas' self-defining purpose-above-all-other-purposes. Indeed, Foreign Minister Mahmoud Zahar last weekend conveniently reminded the world what it is. "[I] dreamed of hanging a huge map of the world on the wall at my Gaza home which does not show Israel on it," he told the China View news service. "I hope that our dream to have our independent state on all historic Palestine, including Israel, will become real one day. I'm certain of this because there is no place for the state of Israel on this land," he added.

To maintain business-as-usual with Hamas, whose policies are nothing more than openly proclaimed protocols for Israel's extinction would mean endorsing those protocols. Thus, we are proud of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's important decision last week to suspend foreign aid and diplomatic relations with the Hamas government. But pride is beside the point. The affirmation of the bedrock values of our way of life – decency, civility, non-violence and the paramount value of all living souls – is the real point. Politicide and genocide must never be countenanced as valid national policies, even if espoused by a democratically elected government. We commend and thank the government of Canada for its exemplary, principled decision.

Olmert's difficult road

Phase 1 of the Israel general elections is complete. The voters have indicated their preferences for representation in the Knesset from among the 31 parties that offered themselves to the electorate. Ehud Olmert's Kadima party won the most votes of any party, but garnered less than 25 per cent of the total. Twenty-nine members of his party will sit in the Knesset. The remaining 91 of the 120-member chamber come from 11 other party lists. No single party received a resounding endorsement for its policies or personalities, although some parties, most notably the Likud, which elected only 12 members, did suffer a resounding rebuke.

Olmert has been asked to form the government. As the road ahead for the small Jewish state is a difficult one, it is incumbent upon him to ensure that the second phase of the election – coalition-building – will be effected openly, transparently and with urgent priority given to the need to build the widest possible national consensus.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• Ben Kayfetz, national director of the Joint Community Relations Committee, identified Ernst Zundel, a Toronto commercial artist of German descent, as the source of tons of neo-Nazi material seized by West German police.

Editorials & Letters

Dry Bones
BEFORE PASSOVER HE DREAMS ABOUT MATZAH
AT THE END OF PASSOVER HE DREAMS ABOUT BREAD
HE DREAMS A LOT.
YUP.
AND IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT FOOD!

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Tajikistan synagogue destroyed

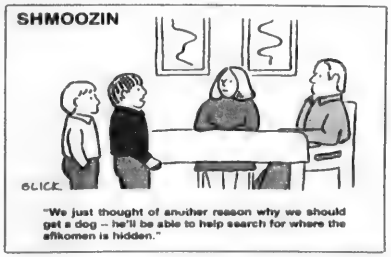
The Tajikistan government has destroyed the country's only synagogue, in the capital city, Dushanbe. This has been reported by the BBC and the Associated Press but has gone unreported in the Canadian media.

The century-old synagogue, located near the city centre, was bulldozed without warning, in February, to make way for a new presidential residence. Government officials have offered the city's 300-member Jewish community a remote parcel of land but no compensation for the demolished buildings.

Tajikistan is a secular republic of seven million people, most of them Muslim. There is no Tajikistan embassy in Ottawa. Canada, however, maintains an embassy in Kazakhstan that is also accredited to Tajikistan.

Canada provides aid to Tajikistan through the Canadian International Development Agency. We should raise our objections in this matter with the Tajikistan government.

Kolman Lovinsky
Toronto


SHMOOZIN
CLICK
"We just thought of another reason why we should get a dog – he'll be able to help search for where the afikomen is hidden."

* * *

Israeli politicians and Diaspora Jews

The letter from the Alliance of Concerned Jewish Canadians, "Group opposes Israeli government policies," was published in the *CJN* on March 9. Since my name was attached to that letter, it presumably falls on me to reply to those who have written in, though I was by no means the sole author.

The relationship between Israel and the Diaspora, which we raised in our recent statement, can be deeply troubling to Canadian Jews. It is interesting that the letters responding to our statement, from Toronto, Bracebridge, Ont., and Montreal (*CJN*, March 16 and 23) focused on our contention that Israel attempts to speak in the name of Diaspora Jews. Many Israeli politicians do think they have every right to speak and act for us. Often enough, depending on the circumstances and the zealousness of the politician concerned, this mindset turns up in their speeches. I submit the following example from a speech of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on May 22, 2005: "Our fight was the fight of Jews everywhere. That we were fighting for our sisters and brothers across the sea, as much as for… our grandchildren yet to be born. They reassured us that the entire Jewish world was an interconnected whole."

In the past, such statements were usually dismissed as harmless rhetoric, but in recent years Israel's policies in the occupied territories have aroused widespread indignation. This resentment and anger is directed against Israelis and even to Jews in the Diaspora, who unfortunately are deemed to give unconditional support to Israeli policies. But many Canadian Jews oppose the occupation, and those of us who think that way proclaim our right not to be associated with it and ask our leaders to acknowledge our legitimate dissent.

Michael Benazon
Montreal

* * *

Embarrassing Diaspora Jews

Michael Benazon and Michael Mandel, plus 30 co-signatories, would want the government of Israel to make decisions and policy for the survival of six million Israelis based on not embarrassing Jews living in comfort in Canada, United States, United Kingdom, France, South Africa, etc. ("Group opposes Israeli government policies," letter, *CJN*, March 9). Even if it may endanger Israel's very existence, the government should not rock the boat and embarrass us in the Diaspora.

Shame on all of you for not being concerned Jews and only concerned about being Canadian Jews.

Abe Zubatoff
Montreal

* * *

How can we justify the bickering?

Responses to the letter from Concerned Jewish Citizens have been unduly harsh ("Group opposes Israeli government policies," letter, *CJN*, March 9). One ("Jewish Canadian and Israeli policies", *CJN*, March 16) argued that Jewish people who do not live in Israel shouldn't have a say in Israeli foreign policy, just as Italians living outside of their country shouldn't have a say in what goes on in Italy. But it is isn't the same. Every Jew is an honorary citizen of Israel; every Jew watches Israel with bated breath, wondering when it will be taken away. Another letter calls the authors of the Concerned Jewish Citizens letter self-loathing and condemns them for uttering a word of criticism against the Israeli government ("Reply to 'Concerned Jewish Canadians,1,'" *CJN*, March 30). A third letter ("Reply to 'Concerned Jewish Canadians, 2,'" Montreal letter, *CJN*, March 30) expresses the whole situation in exclusively military terms, as though ordinary citizens should never have anything to say about government affairs.

What is happening to our native affinity for logic and enlightening exchange? It is mostly through the enduring strength and creativity of Jewish contemplation that we managed to survive centuries of horrific persecution. How can we justify this bickering, this base refusal to engage in a meaningful, diplomatic investigation of what we may be doing wrong in Israel?

Rebecca Rustin
Montreal

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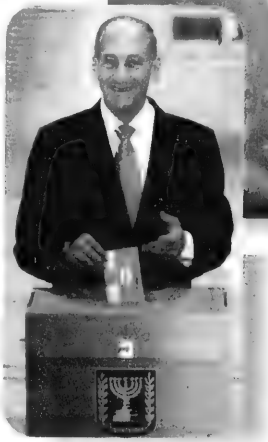
Perspectives

Election Day Scenes



Clockwise from top left: Arabs cast their vote; Ehud Olmert votes; Israelis take advantage of the holiday to barbecue and make music; Sara and Benjamin Netanyahu vote; anti-Zionists protest; and a father consoles his young daughter at the polling booth.
[Israel and Israel Sun photos]

Kadima's slim victory moves Israel to centre

By LESLIE SUSSER
JTA

A major shift in Israeli politics was cemented this week, with Ehud Olmert's centrist Kadima Party poised to form the next government.

The party didn't fare as well as expected in last Tuesday's elections, but Olmert is likely to be able to form a solid majority in the Knesset, allowing him to move ahead with his stated intention of further withdrawal from the West Bank.

The elections, the first since Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's abrupt departure from the Israeli political scene, were seen in large part as a referendum on the withdrawal proposal.

As is often the case in Israeli politics, there were surprises. The biggest were Kadima's weaker-than-expected showing; the emergence of the hard-line Yisrael Beiteinu as the fourth-largest party; and the strong showing of a newcomer, the Pensioners party, which hadn't been expected to win any seats.

The final vote has Kadima with 29 seats, the left-leaning Labor with 20 seats and the right-wing Likud party 12.

Yisrael Beiteinu, which drew significant Russian support, garnered 11 seats. Shas, an Orthodox party that appeals to Sephardi voters, got 12 seats, and United Torah Judaism, another fervently Orthodox party, won six seats. The hawkish National Union-National Religious party got nine seats.

The Pensioners, led by 79-year-old former Mossad agent Rafi Eitan, appealed to senior citizens with its focus on benefits for the elderly and won seven seats. The mostly Arab parties won nine seats.

Voter turnout was 63 per cent, by far the lowest in Israel's history.

Most significantly, the centre-left parties Kadima, Labor, the Pensioners and Meretz, which got five seats, and the Arab lists – together have 69 seats in the 120-member Knesset.

But it is possible that Shas could join an Olmert-led coalition.

So how did Kadima win?

For one, Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu's scare tactics – raising the spectre of an Iran-supported, fundamentalist, Hamas-led Palestinian entity on Israel's doorstep – backfired. Those he frightened didn't necessarily see him as the leader best equipped to deal with the threat, and many of them voted for parties further right, such as Yisrael Beiteinu.

Under the leadership of Avigdor Lieberman, who immigrated in 1978 from Moldova, Yisrael Beiteinu is a hawkish party with an immigrant-rights focus. The party backs Olmert's proposed West Bank withdrawal in order to separate Israelis and Palestinians, but also proposes redrawing Israel's border to exclude large numbers of Israeli Arabs who live close to Palestinian areas.

Many other Israeli voters moved to the centre, backing Olmert's plan for unilateral disengagement from the Palestinians as the most rational way of dealing with the threat from a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority.

Likud lost much of its traditional Sephardi working-class base to Labor, with its strong socio-economic message, but Labor lost even more of its middle-class Ashkenazi voters to Kadima and the Pensioners.

The final election results make Olmert a prime minister with wide coalition options.

He has made support for his plan to establish new borders between Israel and the Palestinians a condition for joining his coalition. That rules out the hawkish National Union-National Religious party and Likud, and makes Labor the most natural coalition partner.

Around the Kadima-Labor core, Olmert will be able to choose one or more additional coalition partners from the Pensioners, Meretz, Yisrael Beiteinu, Shas and United Torah Judaism.

Ideally, he would like to achieve a balance between left and right and between secular and religious parties. That would entail a broad-based coalition of 70-90 Knesset seats.

Whatever form the coalition eventually takes, Olmert will have a clear majority in the Knesset for his plan for separation from the Palestinians, which is likely to become the centrepiece of his new administration.

Because Olmert made his intentions crystal-clear before the elections, right-wing opponents of the plan won't be able to demand a referendum on the grounds that he misled the nation, as they did with Sharon's pullout from Gaza last year.

To a large extent, the election itself was a referendum on the withdrawal plan. It calls for a large-scale Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and the establishment of permanent borders with the Palestinians within four years, by negotiation if possible and unilaterally if not. The plan is certain to dominate the political agenda in the new Knesset's term.

The second major item in the government guidelines will be the administration's socio-economic agenda.

As the price for bringing Labor into the government, Labor leader Amir Peretz will make a number of key socio-economic demands, including raising the minimum wage from $730 (US) to $1,000 a month, providing pensions for all and increasing the basket of subsidized medicines.

The Pensioners will back him up, and Olmert will be forced to incorporate at least part of these demands in the government guidelines.

Both agendas, the political and the socio-economic, are extremely ambitious. But how realistic are they?

To set new borders unilaterally, Olmert will need international, especially American, backing. It's by no means certain that the Bush administration will see eye to eye with him on where the new lines should be drawn.

The key American document on the territorial issue is the Bush letter of April 2004. It refers to "already existing major Israeli population centres" being taken into account in setting permanent borders, but doesn't specifically mention any of the large settlement blocs Ariel, Etzion and parts of Jerusalem – that Olmert wants to keep.

Moreover, the American position is that permanent borders should be the product of negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, and it's difficult to see Washington recognizing borders that Israel sets unilaterally.

Olmert argues that with Hamas in power on the Palestinian side, Washington is likely to be more receptive to Israeli ideas on the border issue.

To implement a Peretz-style socio-economic package, Olmert will have to approve increased government spending. The trick will be to do that without impeding the impressive economic growth of the past few years – which was achieved, in large part, through fiscal austerity.

Much will depend on Olmert's diplomatic initiative on the Palestinian track. If it leads to a prolonged ceasefire, that will help Israel's growth prospects – while, possibly, postponing conflict until a future time. It also will make it easier for the government to cut the defence budget and release funds for social spending.

The bottom line: though Kadima did worse than expected, Olmert will be able to form a stable coalition and will not have to shelve any of his major policy goals. But his personal prestige has been compromised by the party's relatively poor showing, and his first order of business will be to establish his leadership credentials.

Shimon Peres, the survivor

What makes Shimon Peres run? According to Amos Oz, the Israeli writer and Peres' close friend, it is his insatiable craving for love.

Peres needs to be loved by all. When abused, as he has often been, his implied response tends to be that, even though you attack him now, if you only knew him better, you would love him.

Rabbi Dow Marmur in Toronto

What has made Peres persevere despite countless personal setbacks? The firm belief that, in the choice between being a humiliated insider and a proud outsider, it is better to opt for the former. Last November, he abandoned the Labor Party, to which he had belonged since his teens and which he had led several times, after being defeated yet again for the leadership. He went to Kadima, but the post of foreign minister, for which he is eminently suited, was given to Tzipi Livni. Peres swallowed his pride and accepted a more marginal role.

Convinced of his lovability and competence, he tends to pursue his own agenda, whether or not his portfolio entitles him to it. That is why those who have worked for him like his style and respect his iron resolve, but those who have had to work with him – including prime ministers Yitzhak Rabin and Yitzchak Shamir, and many others – disliked him intensely and suspected him of undermining them, even when they agreed with him.

When the late Abba Eban was once asked why Peres did not keep his promise to him, he replied: "Because he didn't want to set a precedent."

Peres may be a brilliant statesman – the master of the whole picture – but he is a poor politician who often failed when others would have succeeded. Though a major actor on the world stage, at home he has repeatedly lost elections, despite his monumental contribution to the State of Israel in the realm of defence, foreign policy and finance.

Even when it was assumed that the Knesset would choose him as the president of Israel, in the secret ballot, his own ostensible supporters betrayed him, and he lost to the present incumbent, Moshe Katsav.

Michael Bar-Zohar, the prolific Israeli author, has just published a biography of Peres (678 pages of text and 104 pages of notes, in Hebrew; an English version is in preparation) from which the above has been gleaned. Though the book is "authorized," it's also critical. It makes fascinating reading, and tells a slice of the history of the State of Israel.

Peres was at Ben-Gurion's side before the state was proclaimed and he is still active today. At 82, he behaves, according to the title of the last chapter of the book, as if his whole life were before him.

Things you might not know about Jews out east

In past columns, I've written about the many fun and interesting things that Halifax has to offer, but in doing so, I have failed to inform my readers about some of the more historical aspects of Halifax. Reading about long and uncomfortable plane rides, cheap beer and my unsanitary living conditions, which at times includes living with mice, are all very important subjects, but you deserve more. You deserve to learn! And when you finish reading this column, you will know more about the history of the East Coast's Jewish population than anyone else you know, unless they, too, are fortunate enough to subscribe to *The CJN*.

Matthew Pottens in Halifax

Currently, the Jewish Student Association (JSA), the Israel Action Committee (IAC), and a number of other groups are doing wonders in uniting Jewish students in Halifax and across Atlantic Canada. Their work does not go unnoticed, and their welcoming attitude and desire to bring Jews together is terrific. The mentality of being there for one another and lending a helping hand to those in need has always been the Jewish way out here on Canada's East Coast.

During World War I, Halifax Jews were always at the harbour to offer support and hospitality to new immigrants. The community also reached out to Jewish soldiers who poured in and out of Halifax at that time.

During World War II, Canada, like the United States, was unwilling to accept new immigrants and shut its doors to Jews. Only after the war did Pier 21 in Halifax became a major port of entry for Jewish refugees. Synagogue members helped them get through immigration and offered them food, housing and plenty more. *Hadassah Magazine* tells of how, on the evening of Sept. 15, 1947, a group of 10 men and women stood at the pier waiting to welcome the first 20 of 1,123 Jewish children orphaned by the Holocaust who would later find homes in Canada.

In July 1999, in recognition of the significant role Pier 21 played in Canadian history, the building was, as Pier 21's official website states, "refurbished and reopened to pay tribute to those who passed through her doors and changed the face of Canada forever." The museum is dedicated to bringing to life the experiences of thousands of immigrants and refugees who disembarked in Halifax, as well as the soldiers who shipped out from and returned to Halifax.

Most of the refugees who arrived at Pier 21 boarded trains for other parts of Canada, but some stayed in the Atlantic provinces, where the Jewish population, though small in numbers, has been steadfast and successful both in maintaining Jewish traditions and contributing to mainstream life. Today, a little more than 3,000 Jews live in the Maritimes. The largest concentration is here in Halifax, which has a Jewish population of about 1,800.

The museum's structure – with its stark, tall brick walls and high-up windows that let in thin streams of light – is just as special as the building's history. The designers have converted the old warehouse on the pier into a remarkable museum, and the structure dominates the Halifax port, just as it undoubtedly dominated so many new Canadians' first impressions of this country.

Today, Jewish groups such as the aforementioned JSA and IAC are bringing Jewish students together, uniting them with members of the Jewish community and further strengthening the Jewish community of Halifax, just as the tiny local Jewish population did after both world wars.

From March 2 to March 5, the Canadian Federation of Jewish Students held its VOICES conference in Halifax. More than 50 students from seven schools across the Atlantic region came together to learn about Israel, Judaism and community-building. The VOICES conference included lectures and workshops by such well-known figures as Mira Freeman, the lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia; Alan Baker, Israel's ambassador to Canada; and Nova Scotia Liberal MP Scott Brison.

Pier 21 played a prominent role in establishing Canada's Jewish identity, yet its importance is often unrecognized due to its eastern location. And it's also not well known that the Jews of Halifax during the wars were determined to make eastern European Jews feel comfortable in a new city, just as Jewish students and groups on and around the Dalhousie University campus hope to do today.

Welcome to the Crunch

The end of term is the most dreaded time for any university student. A time of exams and assignments, the Crunch fills a three-week period when every assignment comes due and every professor realizes they haven't covered all the material they need to. This period is characterized by delirious fits of late-night study, sensitivity to daylight and a zombie-like stumble through daytime activities that turns an entire university campus into a parody of a late-night horror movie.

Gershon Richter in Winnipeg

A common side effect of this period is the degraded state of students' rooms. Though students may at the best of times not have the cleanest rooms, during the Crunch, they care so little about anything other than their schoolwork that they become completely unable to do any sort of laundry or pick up anything off the floor. What used to be a simple desk becomes a swirling mass of paper and empty soda cans, eventually gaining enough mass to achieve a detectable gravitational field.

As the mess grows, it soon swallows the entire room, completely hiding the floor. Previously undocumented forms of life develop in the new habitat between the floor and the top of the mess. Inexplicably (at least through any sort of science), a student will be able to navigate through his or her own mess and sometimes find specific pieces of paper within it, although anyone else who attempts this will be injured.

The search for specific pieces of paper among thousands is part of a long-established tradition in exam preparation. Any student who successfully uses this method for any length of time develops the ability to remember where they've put anything they may have been holding within the last three days, regardless of how much sleep they've had or how much rubble the item is buried under.

Learning to function without sleep is very important, because during the last three weeks of school, the amount of time that can be devoted to slumber falls below five hours on the best of nights. If an assignment is due or there's an exam the next day, sleep can completely disappear, leaving students to rely only on their wits in order to remain functional.

Mornings are probably the harshest reminder of the stress of this strenuous time. You wake up feeling completely tired and realize just how overworked you are. The night has disappeared without anything to show for it, and the morning brings with it more work to do. It's at these desperate times that we turn to the chemical reinforcement of coffee.

According to many health professionals and experts, coffee is what happens when sleep is liquefied and made potable. The active ingredient, caffeine, is not only addictive, but also one of the staples of a good student's diet. During a normal schedule, students are expected to drink several cups a day. During these final weeks, coffee consumption goes through the roof. In a perfect world, all universities would have their own coffee factories, connected by pipelines to all the other structures on campus. And all sinks would have three taps: cold, hot and coffee. That way, a student would finally be able to simply fill a cup full at any time, since we live as much on coffee as we do on water, particularly at this time of year.

So as I sit here, sipping my fourth cup of coffee since lunch, having had six hours of sleep in the last two days and having spent the great majority of the rest of the time hard at work or in class, I wonder about the necessity of the Crunch.

Is this the true test of university life? Is this a trial by fire to make sure that we can handle the stress of a "real-life" job, or is it just a vicious accident that happens year after year, regardless of how many cups of coffee we drink or how clean we keep our rooms?

The only ones who can answer that are the professors.

The Kirshner File

Unilateralism is the name of Olmert's game

As the ailing Israeli prime minister, Ariel Sharon, lay comatose in a hospital, having been stricken by a massive stroke on Jan. 4 that abruptly ended his career, his hand-picked successor, Ehud Olmert, won a mandate in last week's election, however lukewarm, to govern the country. Although Olmert's centrist Kadima party fell far short of winning a sufficient number of Knesset seats to form a stable coalition government painlessly, Olmert was nevertheless poised to become Israel's 12th prime minister and carry out his ambitious plan to withdraw from wide swaths of the West Bank, delineate Israel's final border and preserve its identity as a Jewish state with a clear Jewish majority.

Sheldon Kirshner in Toronto

Contrary to forecasts, Kadima – formed by Sharon four months ago as a breakaway faction of the Likud party, which fared badly in the election and probably placed Benjamin Netanyahu's leadership in jeopardy – won 29 seats rather than the expected 35 to 40.

To cobble together a government capable of achieving his most important objective, functional separation from the Palestinians, Olmert will have to rely, first and foremost, on the support of the Labor party, which picked up 19 seats, and on parties such as Shas, Meretz and the newly created Pensioners party. Negotiations may last several weeks.

This was Israel's fifth election in a decade, and like the elections in1996, 1999, 2001 and 2003, it was basically about the ultimate status of the territories captured by Israel in the 1967 Six Day War, an iconic event that has irretrievably shaped Israeli politics.

Burning issues from poverty to social justice surfaced, too, but the March 28 election was really about the future of the West Bank, which is where some 240,000 Jews live in 121 fortified settlements. The election, therefore, was essentially a referendum turning on Olmert's strategy of unilateralism. As he put it in the immediate aftermath of the election, "We are ready to make compromises, to give up parts of the beloved land of Israel… and evacuate Jews who live there… If the Palestinians react… we will return to the negotiating table. If they don't do so, Israel will take its fate into its own hands."

In practice, unilateralism – a policy devised by Sharon and his advisers in close consultation with Olmert – means that Israel will bypass the Palestinian Authority and take bold steps to assure its security and viability as a Jewish state. Unilateralism, the first tangible expression of which was Israel's withdrawal from the Gaza Strip last summer, is underpinned by the assumption that Israel has no reliable, trustworthy Palestinian partner capable or willing to combat terrorism and honour solemn agreements.

Not surprisingly, the Palestinians are none too pleased by unilateralism, which trumps the now-dormant 2003 "road map" peace plan. On the eve of the election, Mahmoud Abbas, the PA president, described unilateralism as "very dangerous," while Ismail Haniyeh, a Hamas leader and the new PA prime minister, declared that the Palestinians would never accept borders defined by Israel.

Sharon, the godfather of the settlements in Gaza and the West Bank, launched unilateralism by boycotting Yasser Arafat, the late PA president, and isolating him in his compound in Ramallah. Under Sharon's watch, Israel broke off peace negotiations with the PA and concentrated on trying to crush the second Palestinian uprising, which erupted in September 2000.

Following a sharp upsurge of Palestinian terrorism in 2002, a period during which the intifadah was at its height in terms of Israeli casualties, Sharon took unilateralism to the next level with his momentous decision to build a barrier along and through the West Bank so as to keep out suicide bombers.

Modelled after the fence that encloses Gaza, and consisting largely of electrified fences, ditches, concrete walls and guard posts, the barrier has been a success militarily, with suicide bombings having dropped sharply in the past four years.

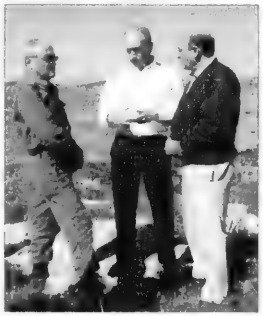
The barrier, which has gobbled up about eight per cent of the West Bank, has nonetheless been problematic. The International Court of Justice in the Hague has denounced it as illegal, while the United Nations has branded it as a breach of law. More importantly, the barrier has caused untold inconvenience and distress to the Palestinians and sowed further bitterness and resentment in their ranks.

The preservation of the settlement blocs in the West Bank, from Maaleh Adumim to Gush Etzion, constitutes the third pillar of unilateralism. The settlements in these blocs, which are near or relatively near Jerusalem, contain most of the Jewish settlers.

Olmert, the prime minister-in-waiting, is more or less faithful to Sharon's template. As he said in an interview published in the newspaper *Yediot Achronot* on the day of the election, "We must preserve the settlement blocs" and "fix the route of the… barrier beyond which we will not longer remain."

Despite these weighty pronouncements, Olmert, a former Likud hardliner who has segued into something of a pragmatist, has diverged, theoretically at least, from Sharon's mantra of refusal to enter into final status talks with the PA and his preference for long-term interim accords with the Palestinians.

On Jan. 17, in his first policy statement, Olmert expressed a willingness to reach a permanent status agreement with Abbas, who claimed recently that the Arab-Israeli conflict can be resolved within a year. During his premiership, Sharon met twice with Abbas, but the pair never discussed fundamental issues such as borders or settlements.



Ehud Olmert, centre, with Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz, right, and Chief of Staff Gen. Dan Halutz

Olmert, though having jettisoned Sharon's dogma, has said that he will not resume talks with the PA unless Abbas disarms Palestinian militias. "The key to advancing the political process is the Palestinians ending terrorism," he said. "We're tired of declarations and empty promises." But as much as Abbas wants a resumption of negotiations, he has flatly refused to take up Olmert's challenge of confronting militants.

Though Olmert may be sincere in his desire to tackle final-status issues in co-ordination with Abbas, his foreign minister and deputy minister, Tzipi Livni, has clouded matters by having labelled Abbas as "irrelevant."

Whether Olmert eventually enters into serious talks with Abbas at some point in the months ahead is completely unclear at this juncture because of the Hamas factor.

Hamas, which defeated Fatah in the PA's Jan. 25 legislative election and whose cabinet was ratified by that body as Israelis went to the polls on March 28, refuses to recognize Israel, renounce terrorism or abide by commitments signed by the PA since the 1993 Oslo peace process. But in what was apparently a conciliatory message to Israelis, Haniyeh said, "We don't want a whirlpool of blood in this region."

In all likelihood, Olmert will dismiss Haniyeh's statement as mere rhetoric and reiterate that Israel will not negotiate with the PA as long as it is dominated by Hamas, an Islamic fundamentalist organization whose charter starkly calls for Israel's destruction.

In light of Hamas' dominant position in the PA and its resistance to accepting Israel's existence and legitimacy, Olmert may choose to forego negotiations with Abbas and move forward with unilateralism within a year.

Unlike Sharon, who invariably kept his cards exceedingly close to his vest, Olmert has made no secret of his intentions. In a flurry of statements last month designed to flesh out his views, Olmert focused on a wide range of key issues.

He talked about drawing Israel's final borders by 2010 on the basis of the boundary formed by the barrier; pledged to designate the settlement of Ariel, 17 kilometres inside the West Bank, as Israeli territory; indicated that the Gush Etzion and Maaleh Adumim blocs would be an "inseparable part of Israel"; hinted that Maaleh Adumim, the largest West Bank settlement, would be physically linked to Jerusalem; promised that the Jordan Valley will be retained by Israel as a buffer zone; and voiced support for the establishment of "a modern, democratic Palestinian state." In this connection, Olmert said that Palestinian refugees can be absorbed only by a sovereign Palestinian state.

If Olmert carries out his plans, he will have no alternative but to give up the bulk of the settlements and thereby displace an estimated 80,000 Jews, a tall order by any criteria. Judging by his actions so far, he seems determined to stamp his imprimatur on Israel. He evacuated Amona, an unauthorized West Bank outpost, and presented a plan to his defence minister, Shaul Mofaz, to dismantle all illegal outposts. In defiance of settlers in Hebron, he declared the city a closed military area. He also ordered construction of the barrier to be accelerated so that it can be finished by the end of this year.

Should he succeed in implementing his vision of a smaller but more secure Israel, Olmert will leave a deep imprint on history.

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Jewish Toronto

Israeli public opinion remains hawkish, says Yossi Olmert

Panel of experts analyze election results at BJCC

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

As the results of the Israeli election came in on March 28, a panel of experts gathered in Toronto to discuss the outcome.

The panel discussion, sponsored by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, the Consulate General of Israel, the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and *Shalom Toronto*, featured Yossi Olmert, an authority on Israeli politics, and the brother of Israel's acting prime minister, Ehud Olmert; Cobie Brosh, Israel's consul-general; David Goldberg, director of research & education, Canada-Israel Committee, and Gil Tamary, an Israeli television journalist. It was moderated by Yonatan Dahoach HaLevy, managing editor of the Hebrew-language newspaper, *Shalom Toronto*.

Brosh began by saying that it will be difficult for Kadima to establish a strong and stable coalition. He also noted that parties like the Pensioners' Party, which ran on one issue, will likely raise their voice on political issues as well. According to Brosh, the success of parties like the Pensioners' reflects the fact that Israelis are fed up with politicians. "First of all, fewer people vote. Second, most people vote out of protest," said Brosh.

Golberg was impressed by the extent to which non-security issues rose to the fore in this election. "It may seem perverse that with Hamas in the territories and Iran breathing down their necks, that a party representing pensioners would get so many seats," he said. "This demonstrates an attempt to become normal."

Olmert believes that even though many voters chose Kadima over Likud, Israeli public opinion remains hawkish. "It doesn't mean it'll be easier for the prime minister to withdraw from the territories," he said. Working against Kadima, according to Olmert, was the fact that security was not an issue for many voters. "Everybody took for granted" that that any one of Kadima, Likud or Labor would act against terrorism. Olmert said that the low voter turnout seen in this election will continue. "People will vote less and less because that's what happens in prosperous Western nations."

An expert panel consisting of (L-R): Cobie Brosh, David Goldberg, Professor Yossi Olmert, Gil Tamary, and Yonatan Dahoach HaLevy analyzed the results of last month's Israeli election at the BJCC

According to Tamari, the Israeli political map has changed with this election. "One thing is for sure in this election: we have many winners, but only one clear loser: Binyamin Netanyahu." He also noted that Amir Peretz, who led Labor to win 20 seats without party stalwart Shimon Peres, had an even greater victory: he put a social agenda on the table in the election.

Hillel working with Muslim leaders at U of T

Hillel @ U of T's efforts to promote interfaith dialogue and campus harmony are being lauded at the highest level

On March 23, University of Toronto President David Naylor praised Hillel's efforts at working with leaders in the Muslim community to foster stronger relationships on campus.

"I am proud of the way that Muslim students on campus have joined forces with other groups, most notably Hillel, to challenge ethno-cultural stereotyping and actions that promote intolerance," said Naylor. "In many ways, these two communities have provided a model of bridge building for all of us to pursue further."

The remarks came during a speech to the Governing Council Secretariat addressing recent attacks on the Muslim community on the University of Toronto campus.

Nouman Ashraf, director of the anti-racism and cultural diversity office at U of T lectures Hagai Kuperman, Rev. Patrick O'Dea, Rabbi Shmuel Bowman, Carla Wittes, and Grafton Antone. (Photo by Steven Behal)

That same day, the Muslim Students' Association at the University of Toronto mentioned its joint programming with Hillel in a press release reaffirming the safety of U of T for Muslim students. The MSA release touched on recent incidents on campus, saying that their characterization as indicative of an Islamophobic trend is irresponsible

Over the past several months, Hillel has been working with U of T's Anti-Racism and Cultural Diversity office and other student groups such as the Muslim Students' association on joint programming as a means of engagement through active dialogue and discourse. "We tried to create an atmosphere where students could come explore their spirituality, learn and express their own feelings towards this issue," says Hagai Kuperman, Student President of Hillel @ U of T. "This really speaks to Hillel's message of being diverse and doing creative programming."

"These kind of activities offer a safe space for our student groups to learn from each other," said Nouman Ashraf, anti-racism and cultural diversity officer at the University of Toronto.

"Each interfaith program has brought four times as many students as the other programming on campus," says Melyssa Lantsman, one of Hillel's student coordinators. "By focusing on what we have in common, our student groups are going beyond labels to try to attain deeper understanding of one another."

Hillel, the voice of Jewish students on campus, is supported financially by UJA Federation

Beit Rayim to call Lebovic Jewish Campus home

Big changes are afoot for Beit Rayim.

The 230-family congregation – currently located on Bayview Avenue north of Highway 7 - is building a new home on the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus. The building, which will be shared with United Synagogue Day School, is scheduled for completion in September 2008.

The new synagogue building will be the realization of a long-held dream. "We have been pursuing a permanent facility in the Bathurst Street corridor for a long time," says Karen Baron, immediate past president of the synagogue. "We were always looking to fill the gap in Conservative Judaism in the northern Bathurst corridor."

The move is coming at a time of change for the synagogue, which is mourning the sudden death of Rabbi Sol Tanenzapf. "It's been a blow, but we'll keep going," says Baron.

Members of Beit Rayim enjoy Purim.

Beit Rayim, a Conservative egalitarian synagogue, currently rents space from USDS, so the two organizations already have a strong relationship. Baron anticipates that their partnership in the new building will benefit both organizations. Classrooms, for example, will be used by USDS during the day, and by Beit Rayim's large supplementary Hebrew school in the evenings twice a week.

Since most of Beit Rayim's members live in Richmond Hill or Thornhill, the location of the Lebovic campus is ideal. The $150 million campus, which is being built by UJA Federation through its Tomorrow Campaign, will be situated on 50 acres of land on Bathurst, north of Rutherford.

While existing members will be the first to benefit, Baron also believes that the synagogue will grow with the surrounding community. "As Thornhill Woods grows, there's going to be a large group that will be interested in a Conservative synagogue," she says.

Baron hopes that increased membership will allow the synagogue to expand their adult education program, hold daily minyans, and enlarge their supplementary school, which already boasts more than 200 students. As the synagogue grows, "we will be able to offer more services, more programs because of our growth," says Baron. "But we won't change our philosophy. We pride ourselves on the fact that we are egalitarian. We have a lot of participation on our bimah."

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

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Words & Deeds Leadership Award Dinner honours RBC's Gordon Nixon

UJA Federation / CIJA partnership on display at MTCC

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

The strong relationship between UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and The Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy (CIJA) was on display March 29 in front of close to 1,100 guests, including a number of high profile dignitaries.

The inaugural Words & Deeds Leadership Award Dinner, co-sponsored by UJA Federation and CIJA, honoured Gordon M. Nixon, the president & CEO of RBC Financial Group, for his contributions to humanitarian causes and to tolerance and inclusion.

CIJA, chaired by Brent Belzberg and Steven Cummings, is funded by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto and other Canadian Federations through UIA Federations Canada.

UJA Federation and CIJA recently teamed up for the inaugural Words & Leadership Award Dinner, honouring Gordon M. Nixon, president and CEO of RBC Financial Group (inset photo). Enjoying the evening's festivities are: (l -r) Steven Cummings, Lawrence Tanenbaum, Nixon, Brent Belzberg, David Engel and Richard Venn. The dinner attracted close to 1,100 guests to the Metro Toronto Convention Centre. (Photos by Caryn Silverstein)

The event, held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre (MTCC), was headed by honourary chairs Gerald Schwartz and Lawrence Tanenbaum and was co-chaired by Belzberg, Richard Venn and Charles Winograd. Ed Sonshine emceed the evening's festivities.

"It is a particular honour to receive recognition from the Jewish community – one that gives so much of themselves, not only for Canada and Israel, but to the broader community," Nixon told the crowd, which included notables such as Toronto mayor David Miller, Ontario's attorney-general Michael Bryant, Ontario's minister of education, Gerrard Kennedy, Ontario minister of community safety and correctional services, Monte Kwinter, and Israeli ambassador to Canada, Alan Baker.

"We thank you Gord, for guiding one of the country's great financial institutions with integrity and insight," said David Engel, chair of the UJA Federation Board. "And we thank you for your dedication to volunteer efforts that make your family's community and all our communities, better places to live."

"When I chaired the United Way Campaign of Greater Toronto, one of my rallying cries to our cabinet was the per capita giving of UJA Federation," said Nixon. "And many UJA supporters are also leaders in the United Way Campaign. This is a generous community that should take pride in its philanthropy – in fact, if you did a tour of our city's culture, medical and educational infrastructure, you would not believe that one per cent of Canada's population was Jewish," he said to an enthusiastic round of applause.

Nixon conveyed a sense of dismay when he spoke of ongoing cases of anti-Semitism in Canada; a Canada known for its multicultural mosaic.

"I am saddened that Canada, a country that prides itself on being a tolerant, inclusive, multicultural society, needs a CIJA or a UJA Federation to advocate for our creative and generous Jewish community and for Israel," he said. "They exist, in part, because anti-Semitism is still a reality in spite of our laws that prohibit racism. Canadian Jews are still victims of hate crimes. Friends in the Jewish community, much to my ignorance and disbelief, tell me of the subtle bias they still feel in Canada's business community and even the fear they have for their children and grandchildren, of a broad resurgence in anti-Semitism."

Nixon ended his address with an account of a trip he took to Israel with Toronto Jewish leaders almost two years ago; a trip that clearly had an affect on his words this particular evening.

"What a beautiful country and what a great experience," he said. "I marveled at how a country could have accomplished so much in such a short time under such difficult circumstances. It was a special trip and I look forward to visiting again."

PEJE conference inspires Toronto educators

Twenty-four Toronto educators and community leaders recently returned from an educational conference armed with new ideas and the inspiration to improve Jewish day school education in the city.

The 2006 Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE) Assembly for Jewish Day School Education, which took place from March 19-21 in Boston, attracted more than 1,000 day-school professionals, lay leaders, major donors, and community leaders from across the denominational spectrum.

The Torontonians—hailing from Bialik Hebrew Day School, Toronto Heschel School, Leo Baeck Day School, Associated Hebrew Schools, B'nai Akiva (Ulpanat Orot and Yeshivat Or Chaim), and Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School—joined representatives from 225 day schools in the United States, Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Australia and Israel.

"The scope of the conference, the wide variety of programs, the quality of the speakers was impressive," says Michael Davis, chair of the Board of Jewish Education's marketing committee.

PEJE was founded in 1997 by Michael Steinhardt and Rabbi Yitz Greenberg to create a vibrant and sustainable Jewish future through strengthening the Jewish day school movement in North America. PEJE makes grants, provides expertise, and advocates for the day school movement.

Two dozen Toronto educators recently took part in the PEJE conference in Boston

Shana Harris, Principal of General Studies at Bialik Hebrew Day School, who will be taking over as the school's director of education in August, was moved by how similar the challenges facing day school are, even for schools separated by distance or ideology. "There are a number of common stories," she says. "Filling Jewish day schools with Jewish children, fundraising, the challenge of providing excellence while still making education affordable, board development—I think many schools face the same challenges."

Both Davis and Harris say that meeting with their peers from other communities was a highlight. "The conference is an opportunity to really learn about the cutting-edge best practice models that are occurring across North America in areas of governance, fundraising, and marketing related to day schools," says Harris.

The real value of the conference, however, may be in its ability to inspire. "There's a real passion for how important Jewish education is to the survival of the Jewish people," says Davis. "It's motivating. It truly invigorates the professionals and the lay leaders."

Toasting the future of education

Warren and Debbie Kimel recently celebrated the beginning of construction on CHAT'S Kimel Family Education Centre at the Joseph and Wolf Lebovic Jewish Community Campus in Vaughan. Replacing CHAT'S current temporary Richmond Hill facility, the new Kimel Family Education Centre will provide an exceptional state of the art Jewish educational environment for up to 1200 students. On hand to toast the Kimels were Joe Lebovic (left) and David Engel, Chair UJA Federation Board (right). The Centre will be ready to open for the school year beginning September 2007.

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Ambassador fields questions on French anti-Semitism

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

If the questions asked of the French ambassador to Canada at a speaking engagement last week are any indication, Daniel Jouanneau still has some work to do to convince skeptics that France has a handle on its problem of anti-Semitism.

Jouanneau delivered a mostly positive message about French efforts against anti-Semitism, when he spoke at a lunchtime meeting of the Jewish Civil Rights Educational Foundation of Canada, held at the law offices of Heenan Blaikie.

However, many of the ambassador's assertions were challenged during a question and answer session that followed his address.

One challenger questioned whether the situation had improved to the extent that the ambassador had indicated, another suggested traditional anti-Semitism had been blended with modern anti-Israel views. One reminded him that the former ambassador to England had called Israel "a shitty little country" at a private dinner party, another suggested France, going back to the Six Day War in 1967, had repeatedly "vilified" Israel in international forums, and another challenged his assertion it was "social" issues that led to the rise in anti-Semitism.

In his opening remarks, Jouanneau acknowledged that French policy-makers were slow to accept that the country's Jews were experiencing a resurgence of anti-Semitism, but he said the government is taking the matter seriously and has developed "proactive" responses to the problem.

France has stiffened penalties on convictions, trained police to recognize the phenomenon, stepped up video surveillance of Jewish institutions and banned broadcasts of Hezbollah's satellite television service. In addition, Prime Minister Dominique de Villepin chairs a cabinet-level committee that studies incidents of anti-Semitism and analyses their causes.

The result of the country's tough new measures has been a 47 per cent decrease in incidents in 2005 from 2004, Jouanneau stated.

Jouanneau acknowledged that five or six years ago, the French government thought "anti-Semitism was not a real threat." The country's leadership believed manifestations of anti-Semitism, such as the Dreyfus affair in which Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish French military officer, was wrongly found guilty of treason in 1894, and the pro-Nazi Vichy government of World War II, were in the past and that anti-Semitism had more or less dissipated in France.

However, attacks on Jewish cemeteries and synagogues were among the incidents that caught the eye of senior French officials. "President [Jacques] Chirac decided to address the issue," and France adopted a "very proactive policy. We see anti-Semitism as a scourge that needs a specific answer," Jouanneau stated.

"Our policy is very simple," he continued. "Zero tolerance. All anti-Semitic acts are unacceptable to us… Any aggression against Jews is an [attack] on the republican values of the country."

The ambassador suggested there are several reasons behind recent French anti-Semitism, but the "basic roots of anti-Semitism are social" – unemployment, a loss of reference points, an identity crisis.

Referring to the five-million strong Muslim community in France, Jouanneau said there's no direct link between them and anti-Semitism.

"Anti-Semitism is not fuelled by Islam in France," he asserted.

The first person to pose a question cited a recent *New York Times* article that reported thousands of French Jews have immigrated to Israel because they feel unsafe to appear openly Jewish in France and that officials in schools feel the government has done little to address issues of anti-Semitism.

Jouanneau acknowledged that incidents of anti-Semitism do occur, but "on the other hand, we have good examples of good neighbourhoods between Jews and non-Jews." He said that "the article is probably true, [but] probably it is a part of the reality and it is not fair to generalize about the whole country."

Asked whether France's UN voting record and its siding with Palestinians against Israel contributed to a climate that promotes attacks on Jews, Jouanneau said the majority of France's Muslims are "moderate and well-integrated." He said moderate Muslims condemned the recent kidnapping, torture and murder of French Jew Ilan Halimi.

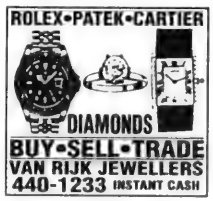
He also noted that France's position on Hamas is that it is a terrorist organization, and France will not open normal relations with a Hamas government unless it recognizes Israel, forgoes terrorism and agrees to the "road map" peace plan.

Responding to another questioner who suggested France has vilified Israel for more than 30 years, Jouanneau said, "There is absolutely no vilification of Israel in France. Not at all."

He said France takes a balanced approach to the Mideast conflict, and while "we think there should be a Palestinian state, Israel's security is essential for us."

Questioned on how France could consider itself balanced if it repeatedly voted against Israel at the United Nations, Jouanneau said France does not have a concerted anti-Israel policy at the UN.

"It may happen we disagree with Israel on certain issues," he said. France has joined a majority of UN members in voting against Israel. "We support resolutions we think are right… It's not a deliberate policy against Israel."



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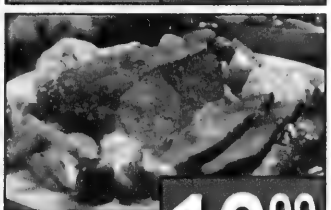

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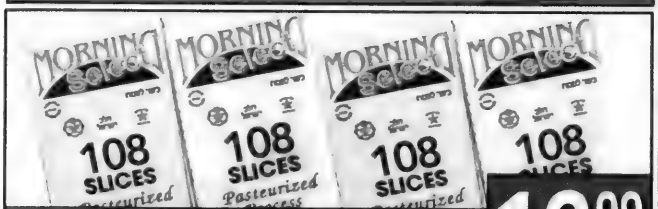

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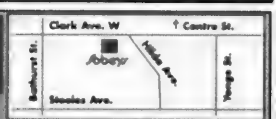

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Jewish Life

The *Jewish Chronicle* goes online

By ZE'EV GLICENSTEIN

Since this year marks the 350th anniversary of the return of the Jews to England, it seems a propitious time to mention that England's *Jewish Chronicle* newspaper came online last month, allowing researchers to search all back issues by word or phrase, over any range of years from 1841 to the present.

Based in London, the *Chronicle* is the oldest Anglo-Jewish paper in the world that is still publishing. This grande dame of Jewish newspapers has been reporting on cultural, social and historical events in the Jewish world week after week for 165 years. Now, all of its myriad birth, marriage, death and social notices are at the fingertips of genealogical researchers willing to invest in a website password. (Unless you have a subscription, however, access isn't cheap: it starts at about $55 and page downloads are extra.)

Historians and scholars will also be attracted by the paper's sweeping variety of news reports, cultural reviews, editorials, essays and articles – hundreds of which pertain to the Jews of Canada. Here, for example, is the start of the *Chronicle*'s very astute review of *Son of a Smaller Hero*, the first novel by Mordecai Richler that was worthy of serious critical attention.

"This book is fascinating reading for British Jews, if only for its apparent exposure of Jewish working-class life and values in the Canadian city of Montreal," a critic wrote in 1955. "This naked portrayal of a community shackled by a ritual without a theology is committed ruthlessly to paper in the form of a novel by the young, gifted, Canadian writer, Mordecai Richler.

"If Mr. Richler is to be believed, the Jews he writes of live in a claustrophobic ghetto of superstition, prejudice, and vulgarity, ignorant of their own great, traditional Jewish values. They are presented without charm or kindness and appear to live in loud tenements of incestuous hate. I have a feeling that the picture is distorted, verging on caricature. But caricature, spiteful and repulsive as it may be, can be compelling. Mr. Richler has the ability to make it so."

In the old days, when back issues were available only on microfilm, this review might have taken an hour to find, but the *Chronicle*'s search engine found it in less than a second. For anyone doing Anglo-Jewish research, be it genealogical, historical, or literary in nature, the JC Archives are a modern marvel. For a free demonstration, visit the website www.thejc.com and click on "JC Archives" and then "Trial Search."

It's becoming almost passé to report on the astonishing technological strides that genealogy has made as a result of the Internet. Readers of this column already know that I consider the *Toronto Star*'s "Pages of the Past" a superlative resource for Jewish genealogists in Toronto: the service has led me to literally hundreds of items pertaining to my large family tree from roughly 1915 to 2002.

We can't quit this topic without trumpeting the fact that many other newspapers have also made their historic content available electronically in recent years. Mainstream titles include the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Los Angeles Times* and the *Globe and Mail*. Once akin to seeking a needle in a haystack, the search for "BMDs" (birth, marriage and death notices) has never been easier.

* * *

This month marks the 10th anniversary of this column, and by happy coincidence, the Ontario Genealogical Society has just published a 232-page collection of the best columns that have appeared in this space. "Roots and Remembrance: Explorations in Jewish Genealogy" is available for $27 from the OGS via its website, www.ogs.on.ca or by phoning 416-489-0734.

A healthy, happy and spiritually rewarding Passover to all.

The real chillul HaShem

By RABBI YEHIEL BEN AYON

In recent months, two news items about Islam have surprised – some would even say shocked – the world. First was the reaction of Muslims to editorial cartoons depicting their prophet Muhammad that were originally published last year in a Danish newspaper. The cartoons resulted in boycotts, as well as massive and often violent demonstrations. Then there was the story of the hapless fellow in Afghanistan who converted to Christianity in the 1990s, but was arrested recently after showing up at a police station and announcing his conversion. Only after the entire western world expressed its utter revolt was he spared a death sentence.

Both these events illustrate the wide chasm that exists between two opposing points of view. What are from one point of view a matter of freedom of expression (as in the case of the cartoons) and a matter of personal freedom in one's choice of faith are from the other point of view unforgivable insults to God and religion.

Both events also illustrate what can happen when a legal system that is more than 1,000 years old, *sharia* law, is applied today.

At first, this realization caused me some concern. After all, we, too, as Jews have Torah law, a Divine system that we hope will one day be the basis for legal proceedings. How would Torah law respond to these two infractions? Would our Torah's reaction be so far out in left field, and would it also be so contrary to today's western concepts of freedom?

Certainly, Judaism shows great concern for the glory of God. We call this kiddush HaShem. The opposite of kiddush HaShem is chillul HaShem, the lowering and dishonouring of the esteem of God. This is precisely what the Islamic world claimed that the depiction of the prophet Muhammad with a missile wrapped, turban-like, around his head was a chillul HaShem. In the case of the Christian convert, apparently the chillul HaShem was even more severe, for not only did the individual dishonour his God, he preferred another god as superior.

Judaism also teaches that chillul HaShem must be avoided at all costs, even at the pain of death. However, while Jews have willingly died for kiddush HaShem, Jews don't kill others over chillul HaShem. Throughout history, there have certainly been Jews who have left their faith, who have become *meshumad*. In opting out of Judaism, their community would have relegated them to the lowest status, if not outright excommunicated them. But there is no death penalty for a *meshumad*. (Interestingly, if the same *meshumad* should compel and coerce others to leave their faith, he would then merit the death penalty.)

Similarly, there is no sanction, and certainly no death penalty, for one outside the faith who is perceived to have made a chillul HaShem. I say perceived, because the Danish cartoonists had no intent to affront Islam and in fact did not insult Islam. Rather, they were bemoaning the militant Islamic fundamentalists who falsely claim to act in the name of Islam.

I respectfully suggest to the world of Islam that the true chillul HaShem that Muslims should be concerned with has nothing to do with one person's defection from the faith or some European cartoons. The chillul HaShem they ought to be worried about is the bombing of school children, wedding parties and people in office towers, as well as the slitting of a journalist's throat for the camera and strapping oneself with explosives in order to murder civilians. May I suggest that this is where the real chillul HaShem lies?

The eternal system we call Judaism which, I might add, is much older than Islam – would fare quite well under the scrutiny of contemporary western values.

Jewish Life

Maimonides – for the general reader

***Maimonides* by Sherwin B. Nuland, Oxford University Press.**

Moses Maimonides, the Rambam (1135-1204), was the quintessential Jewish genius – a Renaissance man before there was a Renaissance. His horizons were vast: he was a masterful physician who served a sultan, as well as a dazzling scholar who wrote some of the enduring masterpieces of rabbinic literature. He is also renowned for his series of texts on logic, astronomy and medicine.

Books
Bernard Baskin

The leader of Egyptian Jewry, he was often consulted by Jews around the world on a variety of theological and ethical issues. Always an enemy of strife, he was unafraid to take unpopular communal and intellectual stances. Many of his opinions led to widespread debate and are still subject to differences of opinion. He was a Jewish leader in a Muslim world, a rationalist living in a time of superstition. Above all else, he was an icon to his people because of his unremitting dedication to their well-being and continuity.

Sherwin Nuland, a clinical professor of medicine at Yale and a well-known teacher of bioethics and medical history, is the author of several previous books including the acclaimed *How We Die*.

In the prologue to this brief biography he writes: "To understand this little volume of mine, no previous knowledge of Moses ben Maimon or of his era is required, nor of philosophy, medicine, Judaica or academic methods. It is accordingly without references that might distract the general reader; it is completely the product of the understanding to which I have come after a long voyage of study; in emphasis and interpretation, I offer my book as this Jewish doctor's study of the most extraordinary of Jewish doctors."

The author asserts that Maimonides wrote *The Guide for the Perplexed* in a complex and philosophical manner that assured its obscurity to all but a few of his readers. Why? Nuland speculates that he was deliberately preaching to a select congregation, promulgating notions that were still new and hard to accept. Better to write in ways that only the select few could interpret than to be exposed to the abuse of the many. A more straightforward style would only have been counterproductive.

In his *Commentary on the Mishnah*, Maimonides first articulated the theme that would frequently recur throughout his writings, namely that the words of Torah and Talmud are not always to be taken literally. Much of the holy writings, he said, are in the form of metaphor, with the deeper meaning only to be understood by those with the proper training and intellect.

About the idea of the Messiah, Maimonides wrote that despite popular opinion he will be like a mortal man, even if far wiser. He will restore the House of David and lead Jews toward the political independence of Palestine. Other than that, the world will remain substantially the same after the Messiah's coming, minus its hardships. The necessities of life will be more easily available in order to free men to study. In time, the Messiah will die to be succeeded by descendants who will maintain the heritage and continue the Davidic line. Surprisingly, for him the coming of the Messiah had no supernatural implications.

When he was 30, Maimonides daringly proclaimed his Thirteen Principles of the Jewish faith. Among them was this: "I believe with perfect faith that there will be a resurrection of the dead at the time when it shall please the Creator." This principle would seem to be at odds with his contention, indicated in some of his other writings, that the resurrection should not be thought of in terms of the physical body. The issue of what is in fact resurrected is somewhat ambiguous – very likely on purpose.

This is a well written, accessible and stimulating study of the life and ideas of one of Judaism's most brilliant and esteemed personalities.

Free online Haggadot, Pt. 1

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Passover is quickly approaching and that means pretty soon you'll be reaching into a familiar drawer and pulling out a stack of well-worn Haggadot. Nothing will ever replace those Haggadot and their special memories. But if you take a few minutes on the Internet, you will find many stimulating and provocative online Haggadot that could give you new insights and make you shine at this year's seders.

Most of the Haggadot below are in English, some with Hebrew sections. Please be aware that many of these Haggadot contain God's name and should be treated accordingly.

Chabad has created a wonderful section about the Haggadah. You can go through the seder with an English translation that includes step-by-step instructions. And you can download a pdf file that contains the entire Hebrew text of the Haggadah. **[http://tinyurl.com/gq9ab]**

For insights into how the seder has been observed in Sephardi homes, take a look at the Sephardi Connection site. For example, among North African Sephardim, after *Mah Nishtanah* is recited, the seder leader would leave the room and come back with a walking stick and the afikoman in a cloth on his shoulder. The children would ask: "Where are you coming from?" And he would proceed to tell the story of his exodus from Egypt. On the other hand, the Haggadah adds, "Note: stealing the afikoman is an Ashkenazi tradition." When the Sephardi seder concludes, "some take the charoset and put it in five places at the entrance of the house for good luck." **[http://tinyurl.com/osuoq]**

Several traditional Haggadot have been scanned in their entirety and can be downloaded and printed out at the Torah on the Net site. I particularly recommend the 1920 edition that is "arranged by J.D. Eisenstein" and "illustrated by LOLA." **[http://tinyurl.com/q96rx]**

There are many online Haggadot that represent a great deal of individual effort. Robert Parnes' Haggadah, a synthesis of the traditional and the modern, is set out clearly with responsive readings. **[http://tinyurl.com/g8qbb]**

Another unique version is The Anonymous Haggadah: A Synthesis of The Passover Ritual and Liturgy With The Twelve Steps of Recovery By Hershy Worch. Worch draws a parallel between the Israelites' trek to freedom and the modern-day recovery program used by people to free themselves from various addictions and dependencies. **[http://jewish.com/modules.php?name=Passover_JACS]**

Charles Finn took a decade to put together his companion to the Haggadah. Just 16 pages long, in Word format, it is mostly in English with some Hebrew text. He has illustrated his work with lovely medieval woodcuts and more contemporary artwork. **[http://tinyurl.com/zmc8s]**

A bit less traditional but a very wonderful site is Uncle Eli's Special-for-Kids Most Fun Ever Under-the-Table Passover Haggadah. Written in the style of *Dr. Seuss*, Uncle Eli retells the Haggadah in a familiar yet unique way. **[http://tinyurl.com/zxd9x]**

After visiting everyone else's Haggadah, create your own. The Open Source Haggadah allows you to skim through Hebrew and English text, commentary, songs, readings and rituals, choose the elements that appeal to you, and assemble your own Haggadah online. You can even filter texts by affiliation: "Chabad, Conservative, feminist, humorous, etc." When you're done, you can print your own Haggadah. And if you have a favourite custom or commentary you'd like to share, you are encouraged to add it to the site. Please note that this site is free but does require registration. Also, I have had some problems with the display of Hebrew characters on my PC. On my Mac, Hebrew displayed properly. **[www.opensourcehaggadah.com/]**

If you're planning to lead a seder this year and need a bit of help on your Hebrew pronunciation or want to brush up on a tune, the Virtual Cantor is at your service. The Cantor – also known as Josh Sharfman – has recorded the entire traditional Haggadah and put it online so that you can listen to it anytime. The seder has been divided into 38 parts, so that you can easily jump to any part of the Haggadah. And since all the files are in the mp3 format, you can even copy them onto your iPod or mp3 player. **[www.virtualcantor.com/haggadah.htm]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com

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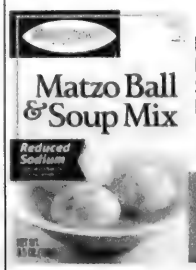

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CHAT students win law and business awards

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Despite a double curriculum of Jewish and general studies and – for some – the drive to do well in their last year before university, a group of students at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto have spent many after-school hours this year preparing for major competitions in law and business.

Their work paid off.

Jordan Hoffman, who teaches economics and business studies at CHAT's Tanenbaum campus in Downsview, says the school (both his branch and the Richmond Hill branch) "swept the awards" in this year's provincial competition run by DECA International, an association of high school and college students studying business, marketing and related courses.

CHAT, a first-time competitor, won a combined total of 35 awards.

For three months, Hoffman met with students weekly for at least two hours at a time to train for the contest, studying cases and marketing.

He is still working with six students from his campus who will travel to Dallas at the end of April to take part in the finals. Five students from Richmond Hill, who prepared for DECA with the help of teacher Ray Buchowski, will also take part in the finals. CHAT Richmond Hill's DECA team was named best new chapter.

At the Richmond Hill branch, a team of 10 of Lynne Howard's Grade 12 law students took part in the Ontario Bar Association's (OBA) Secondary School Mock Trial Tournament, as well as the York Region Judges' Cup Mock Trial Tournament, which is co-ordinated by the Newmarket courts.

The team stood in second place at the OBA event, and Grade 12 student Philip Pollack won the crown attorney award at the York Region competition.

Aaron Posluns, left, and Robbie Handelman are delighted to receive their DECA award for being among the top five pairs of students in the Hospitality Management category. [Jordan Hoffman photo]

In both law competitions, students take part in a simulated trial, using the same fictitious criminal case.

The competition is "a great opportunity for students to test the waters and see if this is a career they'd be interested in," said Howard, whose students met two to three times a week and were coached by criminal defence lawyer Sholem Altman. Among other things, it fosters teamwork, as well as leadership and communication skills, she added.

Howard said she was so proud of her students' high-level performances that she was actually moved to tears by the judge's comments. "They'll be master lawyers and judges. They can come help my other mock trial teams," she said.

"Since I was a kid I always wanted to be a lawyer," said Pollack, who also won an award at the DECA event. He "jumped at the opportunity" to take part in the OBA competition, he said.

Being in an actual courtroom for the first time and making a presentation in front of a real judge at the York Region competition was "almost like a dream" and "so much fun," he said.

For DECA, Pollack was director of operations for his school's chapter. In addition, he directed this year's school play.

Like Pollack, Melissa Grossman of CHAT's Tanenbaum campus knows what she wants to do career-wise. "I have a 10-year plan," she said. "I want to go into the music industry."

The Grade 12 DECA finalist has found her participation in DECA to be "extremely rewarding. I thought it was a great experience." Role-playing in the business law and ethics division taught her "how to act in a business environment in a way that you couldn't really learn through school."

Robert Handelman, who like Grossman is a Grade 12 Tanenbaum campus DECA finalist, hopes to study business at university next year. For the competition, he acted as a hotel manager marketing his hotel to the disabled community.

"It was exciting," he said.

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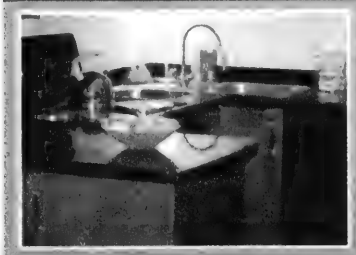
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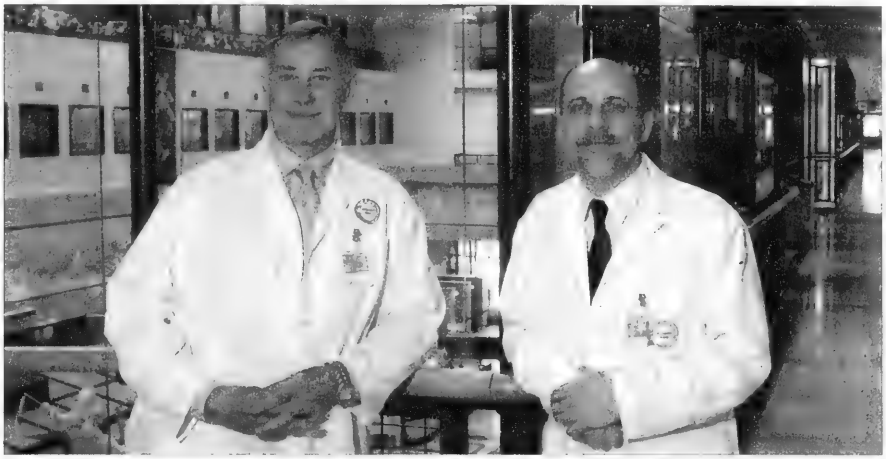

Ronald Zuker, who practises plastic and reconstructive surgery at SickKids, left, and Benjamin Meilik, this year's Medical Exchange Program fellow, confer in the atrium of SickKids. [Hospital for Sick Children photo]

Exchange program brings Israeli doctors to Toronto's SickKids

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

The Medical Exchange Program between Tel Aviv University's Sackler School of Medicine and Toronto's Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids) aims to encourage interaction between research and clinical departments at both institutions.

The program is intended to benefit both Israel and Canada, said Moshe Eizenman, a professor of biomedical engineering at the University of Toronto and a member of the executive of Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University (CFTAU) and chair of the CFTAU committee looking after the program.

The Medical Exchange Program (MEP) started in July 2003, he said, largely due to the efforts of Toronto philanthropist Marty Goldberg. At the moment, four disciplines are involved: oncology, immunodeficiency, maternal and fetal toxicology, and plastic surgery and microsurgery.

To date, CFTAU has distributed $650,000 among the four programs.

Ronald Zuker practises plastic and reconstructive surgery at SickKids, specializing in facial paralysis, cleft lip and palate, and microsurgery. He is also co-director of the Facial Paralysis Clinic and a professor in the department of surgery at the University of Toronto.

Zuker said the MEP has three goals. First, he said, it aims to train research fellows at SickKids, who would return to Israel and bring their new outlook and expertise to Ichilov Hospital, the hospital associated with the Sackler School of Medicine.

The second goal of the MEP, Zuker said, includes doing scientific research, to be reported in reputable medical journals.

The program's third goal is to organize conferences to facilitate the exchange of information. There has already been one, and another will be held at the end of April.

Congenital problems, especially cleft lip and palate, occur in one in 600 children, in all races and all groups of people, Zuker said. This aspect of plastic surgery is one of the major training areas, he said.

Benjamin Meilik is this year's MEP fellow. He has been in Toronto since last summer, after a vacation in London, which coincided with the subway bombings.

"My wife and children and I were having breakfast in our hotel, when we heard the blast from the subway next door. Everyone was evacuated into the street. Since I had experience in dealing with emergencies like this, I went down into the tunnel to help," he said.

Stories of his heroism were widely reported, to his acute embarrassment.

Meilik spent several years as a fighter pilot in the Israel Air Force, including a stint in the 1982 Lebanon war. After seven years, he resigned. "That wasn't what I wanted to do all my life," he said.

Meilik attended medical school at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and interned at Haifa's Rambam Hospital, finishing his residency at Ichilov, where he worked under plastic surgeon Eyal Gur. Gur had worked with Zuker, and was involved with the MEP.

"When I was finishing my residency, I was offered this fellowship. It was like a dream – I grabbed the offer," Meilik said.

He is still in the reserves, and now is a flight instructor. His experiences in the Israel Defence Forces have given him a unique perspective.

"I believe that you can improve the outcomes [of both military missions and surgical procedures] just by changing the state of mind of the person doing the job, examining what you are going to do and what you did. This reduces human error to close to zero," he said.

Meilik designed a project at SickKids that would "consider each operation like a pilot considers a mission."

This involves preparing the case with a checklist, as pilots do before taking off, he said, and afterward having a debriefing. "That way we learn from our mistakes and our strengths."

The surgical team – the attending physician, the fellow and the resident – set the goals of each operation, work out what happens if plans have to be changed and discuss the operation afterward.

Meilik hopes to bring the state-of-the- art expertise he will have achieved in Toronto to Israel, where, he said, he treats both Israelis and Palestinian children – the Palestinian ones for free.

At Sick Kids, Meilik will spend one year doing general pediatric plastic surgery and the second year specializing in cranio-facial plastic surgery.

For more information about the program, call the Canadian Friends of Tel Aviv University , 416-787-9930, or e-mail CFTAU@interlog.com.

For more health news, please see page 57.

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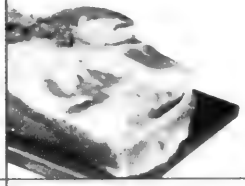

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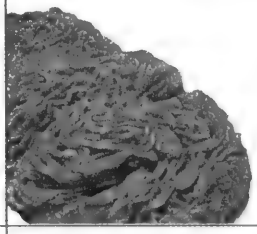

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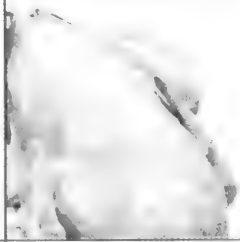

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Lawyer explains how civil suits help fight terror

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

In a quiet voice, Nitsana Darshan-Leitner, director of Shurat HaDin, the Israel Law Center, talks about the first terror-related lawsuit that her organization filed in Israeli court.

Recalling a case that garnered worldwide attention, Darshan-Leitner said that in October 2000, two young Israeli soldiers missed the entrance to their military base and mistakenly drove into Ramallah.

"This was the mistake of their life. They were taken to the police station and beaten to death. Afterward, the police threw the body of one soldier into a mob outside, and the mob tore the body to shreds."

Speaking last week at a downtown luncheon meeting sponsored by UJA Federation's lawyers and accountants division, Darshan-Leitner, 30, said that as a result of that attack, she filed a civil suit in Jerusalem against the Palestinian Authority on behalf of the family of one of the soldiers.

In 2002, the family won a landmark legal victory. The court ruled that a $13 million (US) lien be placed against PA assets held by Israel.

The centre is currently trying to persuade the Israeli government to release the funds to the victim's family.

The centre, a non-political and independent body, is dedicated to providing legal representation and resources for courtroom battles being waged in Israeli, American and European courts on behalf of Israeli terror victims.

Among its activities, it assists hundreds of terror victims in filing civil suits against Palestinian terror groups and their financial patrons. It also seeks to influence government policy and secures legal precedents, as well as track the funding and material support for terror groups in Syria, Iran, Iraq and the European Union; provides emergency legal assistance to Arabs accused of working undercover for Israel against the Palestinian Authority; and organizes educational seminars and missions for professionals to train them to be better informed and effective advocates for Israel.

She told the group, assembled at the law offices of Torys LLP, that her office has a paper trail to prove that an Arab bank in Jordan with $30 billion in assets is funding Hamas.

"In public ads, [Hamas] offered $25,000 to families of suicide bombers. These families received a letter from Hamas instructing them to go to a bank and get their reward."

She took the Arab bank, which has a branch in New York, to court and filed a $5 billion (US) suit on behalf of terror victims, she said.

Nitsana Darshan-Leitner

"The lawsuit had an affect on the Arab banking world. A lot of banks would not transfer money to Hamas, and if the banks stop the flow of money to [terrorist groups], we can stop the flow of terrorism."

Recently, she said, her office began hunting down assets in Europe because it discovered that a national oil company in Iran has $600 million (US) in a Roman bank.

"We filed a motion to seize it in an Italian court, and we had 30 lawyers screaming at the judge not to let us put a lien on the money," she said.

"Unfortunately, the judge refused us the lien, and [shortly after that] the money was transferred to the Far East. The Italian government let the money get away."

Their next step, she added, is to go to Thailand to see if the centre can recover money there.

The Palestinians have assets in different banks across the United States, said Darshan-Leitner, "and we're trying to prove these funds are Palestinian."

Her office is flooded with calls from victims who don't want to be victims, and "we want to help them.

"We can win cases. Recently, we won a judgement of $160 million in a U.S. court on behalf of two young orphans. The case was in the United States because [one parent] was an American citizen.

"We got a judgement against [the Palestinian Authority], and they appealed and lost."

The orphans will not get their parents back, but by winning the suit, "they will get some light in their future," Darshan-Leitner said.

The law centre will continue on with its work, "because we are sick and tired of identifying children by dental records and of seeing children saying *Kaddish* for their parents, or parents saying *Kaddish* for their children," she said.

"We are fighting for our national survival. The Torah says not to stand by your brother's blood. Israel cannot afford to do it, and you cannot afford to do it."

The centre is trying to raise funds, she said, "because we don't want to let families down."

Several times a year, the centre sponsors missions to Israel that include briefings by officers in the Israel Defence Forces intelligence and operations branches; observing the trial of Hamas terrorists in an IDF military court; and discussions with Israel's Arab agents who infiltrate terror groups to provide intelligence.

For information on the next mission, set for June 5 to 12, call the Israel Law Center at 212-591-0073, or e-mail mission@israellawcenter.org.

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Hamas may yet negotiate with Israel: ex-general

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

The newly installed Hamas government in the Palestinian autonomous areas may yet negotiate directly with Israel, says a former high-ranking Israeli army intelligence officer.

Shlomo Brom, the director of strategic planning for the Israel Defence Forces from 1996 to 1998, said last week that such negotiations, while not imminent, could eventually occur.

Shlomo Brom

In a speech at Temple Sinai under the auspices of Canadian Friends of Peace Now and ARZA Canada, Brom, a retired brigadier general who was also former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak's deputy national security advisor during his premiership from 1999 to 2001, urged Israel to give Hamas time to moderate its virulently anti-Israel program.

But Brom, presently a guest scholar in residence at the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C., cautioned that years may elapse before Hamas alters its philosophy.

"For now, it's hard to imagine a dialogue between Hamas and Israel," he said.

Brom, who participated in peace talks with the Palestinians, Syria and Jordan in the 1990s, said Hamas would lose its credibility in the eyes of its supporters if it recognized Israel immediately.

But Hamas may yet alter its position on Israel because of its concern for the welfare of the Palestinians and its utter dependence on foreign aid from the United States, the European Union and Canada, said Brom, who until recently was a research associate at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

Iran, which has promised to fund the new Hamas regime, can't possibly provide the same level of aid as the current donor states, Brom added.

Despite its refusal to recognize Israel, Hamas must now honour existing Palestinian agreements with Israel and the current ceasefire, he said.

Hamas' call for a long-term truce with Israel under certain conditions is a reflection of its attempt to reconcile its ideology with hard realities on the ground, he noted.

In an analysis of last week's election in Israel, Brom said that voters had a clear choice.

Kadima, led by Ehud Olmert, the incoming prime minister, promoted a unilateral disengagement from parts of the West Bank. The Labor party and Meretz supported a negotiated agreement with the Palestinians, while Likud was satisfied with the status quo.

Brom argued that a unilateral withdrawal from the West Bank will not serve Israel's interests.

"It's an illusion, a mirage."

He warned that Israelis living in and around Tel Aviv and Jerusalem should gird themselves for Qassam rocket attacks should Israel withdraw unilaterally from the West Bank.

In a unilateral pullout, Israel would continue to maintain a military presence in the West Bank, with its system of checkpoints, and thus invite a barrage of Qassams.

By contrast, Israel's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip made sense because of its distance from the Israeli heartland.

The Qassams currently being fired from Gaza at Israeli kibbutzim and the town of Sderot are a "nuisance," but they do not pose a "real threat" to Israel, he said.

Brom suggested that most Israelis support Olmert's unilateral orientation for two major reasons.

They are skeptical that Israel can reach an agreement with the Palestinians, whom they mistrust and not do regard as a reliable negotiating partner.

They are convinced that disengagement would preserve Israel's character as a Jewish state.

Similarly, most Palestinians do not have faith in the possibility of a negotiated agreement with Israel, he noted.

Brom warned that scenarios calling for Israeli Arab villages near the West Bank to be transferred to a future Palestinian state in an attempt to reduce Israel's Arab population are little more than an illusion.

At best, only 200,000 Israeli Arabs out of more than one million could be moved, and in demographic and political terms, this would be a meaningless development and worsen Israel's relations with its Arab minority.

Turning to Iran's ambitions to be an atomic power, Brom said that there is "a good chance" that Israel will attack Iran's nuclear facilities should international diplomacy fail to deter Tehran's efforts to produce nuclear weapons.

FROM CANADA WITH LOVE: A Ve'ahavta volunteer medical team recently to travelled by canoe to remotes village in the rainforests of Guyana. Partnering with the Lions Club of Guyana since 1997, Ve'ahavta, the Canadian Jewish Humanitarian & Relief Committee, sends teams of doctors and nurses annually to Guyana. In addition to donated medical supplies, this year the Ve'ahavta team also carried beautiful hand puppets and encouraging messages from children at Thornhill's Temple Kol Ami School. Standing from left are students Lily Chapnik, David Bernstein and Zacharee Veltri; seated in middle row are Benjamin Kowal, Grade 6 teacher Bina Erdman, Miriam Shendroff and Danielle Zimmer; and sitting in front are Melanie Burman, Daniel Adams and Danielle Frisz.

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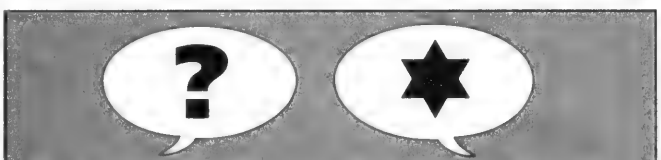

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Better media coverage can help Israel, watchdog says

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Pressuring Canadian media to provide fair and accurate coverage of Israel and the Middle East is important to improve the perceptions Canadians have about Israel, says Dov Smith.

During a lecture at Adath Israel Congregation earlier this month, Smith, executive director of Honest Reporting Canada, a media monitoring service, provided many examples of the way mainstream Canadian media sometime fail to paint a balanced, unbiased picture of the Mideast conflict.

Dov Smith

Nearly 30 Jewish singles in their 20s and 30s attended the lecture organized by Judith Weinroth, a volunteer with Adath Israel Young Business and Professionals Network.

She said the event was one of many intended to get young Jewish single professionals to meet, socialize and network, and she noted that she's creating a website called Jewish Singles World for singles who want to be informed about Jewish events.

In his talk, Smith explained that Honest Reporting monitors coverage of Israel and then responds "in a way that causes the Canadian media to become more sensitive to Israel's predicament and how to cover it fairly and accurately."

After showing a map that depicted the size of Israel in relation to the 22 Arab countries that surround it, he suggested Israel is in the midst of an existential crisis that most Canadians don't grasp.

He said that while Canada is in a dispute with the United States over softwood lumber, "Israel is sitting next to a Hamas government in the West Bank and Gaza that is dedicated to Israel's destruction."

Smith said one of the reasons the media tends to side with the Palestinians is because they are winning the public relations war.

"Unfortunately, or fortunately depending on your perspective, Palestinians and Arabs in general have been more effective than Israelis in [getting their message across.]"

He referred to the so-called Jenin massacre in 2002 and showed a clip in which chief Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat appeared on CNN and told millions of viewers that 500 people were "massacred" by the Israeli army, when the true number of those killed was later tallied at less than 60 – and most of those were armed Palestinians.

Despite the fact CNN later challenged Erekat about his exaggerated figures and forced him to backtrack, Smith said that if you search the Internet about what happened in Jenin, most sources in the Arab world and even Europe will say Israel massacred 500 Palestinians.

He said one reason why it's easier for reporters to give more negative coverage to Israel than to Arab countries is because many of them are intimidated from doing stories that might shed a negative light on Palestinians and Arabs.

"It is one of the big PR challenges that Israel struggles against, because Israel is a free society, where even the Israeli media attack the government all the time and expose all the terrible things that happen.

"It is much harder to report what is going on in the rest of the Arab world, because they are generally closed societies," he said.

Smith said the effect of the intimidation has leaked onto Canadian campuses, and he used the violent demonstration at Concordia University in Montreal in 2003, when pro-Palestinian groups prevented former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu from speaking on campus, as an example.

"If you speak to the students there, they told me they don't feel that Israel gets a fair hearing on campus because other students just don't understand.

"Students hosted a table on Israel Day and when they asked people, 'How big is Israel?' they said, 'I don't know, the size of China?'" Smith said.

In reality, Israel is roughly the size of Vancouver Island, he noted.

"Our organization thinks one of the most important issue is how media coverage here in Canada influences Canadian foreign policy toward Israel."

He said that when prime minister Jean Chrétien was in power, Canada voted against Israel on more than 100 United Nations resolutions.

Earlier this month, Canada sided with the United States and vetoed a UN motion that would call on Israel to allow Palestinian refugees the right to return to Israel proper.

"Canada has a reputation as a middle power, as a peacekeeper, that the U.S. doesn't have today," Smith said.

"So when Canada changes a vote on something like the refugee question for Palestinians, it actually makes a difference. That is why we are trying to change media coverage, so we can change attitudes and hopefully get Canada to give a bit more leeway to the Israelis when they have to."

He said the best way to get involved in influencing the media to portray Israel in a fair an accurate manner is to become educated about what's happening in the Middle East.

He suggested that when readers find something offensive or inaccurate, they should contact the offending newspaper editor and write concise, specific letters that refrain from ad hominem attacks.

For more information, visit www.honestreporting.com.

CBC covers Israeli election with depth, nuance

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

While most of the Canadian media reported on the March 28 Israeli elections, the CBC provided special in-depth coverage. The network sent several radio and TV crews to Israel, including *The National* anchor Peter Mansbridge, producing three days of programming that gave Canadians a clear view into the hearts and minds of average Israelis.

The CBC began its coverage on Sunday, March 26, with feature interviews from Jerusalem and Ramallah by Michael Enright of the radio show *Sunday Edition*. This included a high-level panel discussion about the significance of the elections with academic and pollster Asher Arian, *Jerusalem Post* journalist Amotz Asa-El, and political scientist Galia Golan. In Ramallah, Enright interviewed Daoud Kuttab, a well-known Palestinian journalist and media studies professor.

Enright cited the polls predicting substantial victory for Kadima, but thought that things might not go according to plan. After all, he said, "Israeli politics is layered like a Bermuda onion. It is a crazy quilt of raucous coalitions, delicate alliances, marriages and flags of convenience, a thing of contradictions, of contrasts and conflicts."

On March 27, CBC TV Mideast correspondent Adrienne Arsenault provided an overview of the Israeli social and political scene on the eve of the election and followed it with a profile of Russian Israeli voters and their candidate of choice, Avigdor Lieberman, leader of Yisrael Beiteinu.

Mansbridge interviewed a Palestinian family in Ramallah, who maintained that the secular beliefs of people like them will help moderate the Hamas government.

He also conducted sit-down interviews with Aziz Dweik, the Hamas speaker of the Palestinian Legislative Council, and with former Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres, who left the Labor Party after a longtime affiliation to run as a candidate for Kadima under Ehud Olmert.

The following night there was a story from Arsenault as she revisited the Hilbergs, a family whom she had profiled during last August's Gaza disengagement, to see how they had fared over the past several months.

The same night, Mansbridge aired interviews he had conducted the previous Friday afternoon with Israelis shopping and working at Jerusalem's Machane Yehuda market. He explained the market had been "the target of two suicide attacks, the first in 1997, a double explosion that killed 16 people and wounded 157. Memories of that day haunt the stalls." He also spoke about another suicide bombing in the market in 2002, his last visit. Images of the carnage reminded viewers of what Israelis had to contend with during those years.

One shopkeeper described the feelings of most Israelis: "They don't want war all the time and to be afraid of the street. They want peace."

In their quest for freedom from fear, Israelis see the security barrier as necessary protection from further attacks. Mansbridge interviewed a young Israeli software programmer, who remarked: "I think [the security fence] is a necessary evil. I think it's very unfortunate. I don't think anybody in this country really wanted it. I think they wanted a negotiation, an agreement where we could reach mutually agreed borders and a peace agreement [with the Palestinians]; but I don't see that as possible, and it's better to have a border with a wall or fence than people dying."

Mansbridge replied: "That's the way many Israelis see the choice. There may be limits to what disengagement can achieve."

An Israeli doctoral student expanded on this theme: "I don't think [disengagement] is a peace agreement; I don't think it's going to bring peace. But I think it... may bring some more quiet and calm to the region in the short term, and I think we should go on with our lives and [the Palestinians] should go on with their lives where one interferes less with another's life."

In capturing these moderate, centrist views, the CBC provided Canadians with a nuanced understanding of the concerns, frustrations and hopes of the majority in Israel – the sort of complex presentation that many people complain is too often lacking in media reports.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

HELPING THE HOMELESS: More than 50 people, including parents and children, from Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am's b'nai mitzvah program and its Kadima group for children in grades 6 to 8 recently visited Ve'ahavta: the Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee to put together Passover bags for the homeless that included items such as towels and toothpaste. Pictured, from left, are Marni Gelkopf, Dalia Muskat-Brown and Samara Bernstein-Hendry. [Michael Ferman photo]

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IT'S MATZAH TIME

Natalie Hayman, left, and Meagan Kohn don the baker's hat and prepare to roll the dough for matzah at the Chabad matzah factory.

Out-migration now seen as normal

Continued from page 3

Israeli parents are confiding in him that their children are "marrying out and they are not sure what they did wrong."

Gidron suggested Hebrew supplementary schools might provide a means of bringing young Israelis into the community, but they would have to focus on Israeli history, geography – "for them, Israel the land is pragmatic, it's not a dream," he said – and written Hebrew. Tanach could be taught as in Israel, from a historical and cultural perspective, he offered.

Gidron attributed the rise in Israeli emigration to a number of factors. Israelis meet Canadian immigration criteria and so have little difficulty in obtaining visas. Canada is likely the second most popular destination for Israelis, after the United States, he said.

While "we'd be happy if the Israeli community packed up tomorrow and went back home," he said out-migration is now seen as a normal development in a mature country.

As to Israelis' integration into the wider community, Gidron is guardedly optimistic. It will depend on "whether the community is open enough to take in a brother that is a little different, and bring them in as an equal. The community here puts people in 'boxes.' Is the community open enough to make a new box? [If so] Israelis will respond if there is a box built in their way."

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JWIC campaign targets domestic violence in community

"There is a Jewish woman you know being abused" is the message of a communications campaign being launched this month by Jewish Women International Canada.

The campaign is designed to challenge the misconception that domestic abuse is not common in the Jewish community.

Three 10-by-20 foot billboards, with the message that domestic violence exists in the community and an image of a distraught woman with a black eye, have been strategically placed along the densely Jewish Bathurst corridor. As well, commercial establishments in the area stretching from Eglinton Avenue to Centre Street have been asked to partner with Jewish Women International Canada (JWIC), which is dedicated to ending violence against women, and place poster-size versions of the billboard in their windows. Synagogues are also being urged to include copies of the billboard in their correspondence with members.

Statistics Canada reports that one in four women will experience abuse at some time in her life. "The time has come for the Jewish community to take responsibility and not sweep this problem under the carpet," said JWIC executive director Penny Krowitz. "All reports show the prevalence of abuse in this community is equal to what exists in the broader one. Contrary to many stereotypes, the rate of abuse is the same regardless of socio-economic level, whether they're religious or secular, or of Sephardi or Ashkenazi origin."

The campaign has been strategically launched in time for Passover, which celebrates Jewish freedom. But JWIC hopes the campaign will also serve as a model for other ethnic groups to take this generally taboo subject into a public forum.

"Minority groups often do not acknowledge woman abuse in their community for fear it may create a negative image with the public," said Krowitz. "The problem is by not 'airing our dirty laundry' we put women at a greater risk."

Studies indicate that a Jewish woman may stay in an abusive relationship five to seven times longer than her non-Jewish counterpart. This is attributed to several factors, including the cultural importance of maintaining a peaceful home and preserving the family unit.

"It is a myth that abuse is only physical," Krowitz added. "Abuse is about control, whether sexual, financial, psychological, verbal or physical. This is one of the reasons the woman featured in the campaign looks as emotionally distressed as physically hurt."

For more information on JWIC, visit www.jwicanada.com.

Appreciation for government's principled stand

Continued from page 1

previous agreements and obligations, including the road map for peace."

Because of Hamas' unbending policies, "Canada will have no contact with the members of the Hamas cabinet and is suspending assistance to the Palestinian Authority," he said, adding that the PA must make a "clear commitment" to peace before Canada will end the diplomatic freeze.

Canada blacklisted Hamas as a terrorist group in 2002, so funding it would violate Ottawa's own Anti-Terrorism Act.

MacKay made the announcement minutes after the Palestinian Legislative Council approved the formation of a Hamas-led government. Hamas won a surprise victory in the Jan. 25 Palestinian elections.

Earlier last month, MacKay was criticized for waffling on the issue when he said that "some Canadian aid will continue" to the Palestinian Territories. He later clarified that the government was reviewing its aid programs.

In the same statement last week, International Co-operation Minister Josée Verner said Canada distinguishes between aid to the Palestinian Authority and to individuals.

"Working with our partners and through the United Nations, its agencies and other organizations, Canada will continue to support and respond to the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people," Verner said. "Canada will also continue to work with the voices of moderation within Palestinian society."

Israel's embassy in Ottawa said it "appreciates" Canada's move. "It is inconceivable that a terrorist organization whose raison d'être is to destroy its neighbour, Israel, would be given international aid," the embassy said in a statement.

In a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, Marc Gold, national chair of the Canada-Israel Committee, expressed "appreciation for the government's principled stand regarding the newly formed Hamas-led government."

Gold applauded the government's "decision to continue looking for legitimate opportunities to extend humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people," but cautioned that "the mechanisms (NGOs, UNRWA, etc.) by which Canada delivers its aid have proven problematic in the past and there is scant evidence to believe that matters have improved significantly."

Ottawa's decision "is a courageous breath of fresh air," said the Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies.

B'nai Brith Canada also commended the move. "Canada has stood true to its principles by refusing to do business with a terrorist entity whose avowed aim continues to be the destruction of the Jewish state," B'nai Brith said in a statement.

By cutting aid, Canada is demonstrating "global leadership," remarked the Canadian Coalition for Democracies.

But Canadians, the group added, "need to ask if our tax dollars have helped Palestinians to become less dependent on foreign aid and if our influence has diminished the inculcation of hatred in Palestinian education and media."

Canadian Friends of Peace Now said that while it is "tempting" to impose sanctions on the PA, a "better approach" would be for Israel to transfer taxes to the Palestinians and for Canada to maintain aid "in return for Hamas' continued adherence to its ceasefire with Israel."

The Canadian Islamic Congress called Ottawa's decision "a resounding slap in the face to Canadian values," adding that "Prime Minister Harper and his government are saying loudly and clearly that Canada no longer cares about the plight of Palestine and Palestinians... [this] is a shameful devaluation of Canada's international reputation for fair-minded, ethical and constructive diplomacy."

The group further condemned the government for "blindly following the lead of Washington and of the influential pro-Israel Jewish lobby in both [the United States and Canada]."

Since 1993, Canada has transferred more than $330 million to the Palestinians.

The Conservatives' cuts will mean that the following projects are being suspended:

- $6.3 million for a housing rehabilitation and policy development project overseen by Canada Mortgage and Housing and the PA's public works, housing ministry and finance ministries;
- $400,000 for the refurbishment and management of the Ramallah Municipal Industrial Park, a project of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities in co-operation with the City of Ramallah;
- $600,000 from Canada's justice ministry to support an annual dialogue between justice ministers from the PA, Israel, Jordan and Egypt.

Both the New Democrats and the Liberals responded by saying that the $7.3 million in cuts should be redirected in humanitarian assistance in the Palestinian territories.

"The government should, right away, commit itself to maintaining the $52-million in help," Stéphane Dion, the Liberal foreign affairs critic, said.

The Bloc Quebecois called Canada's decision "rushed and cavalier. The Bloc said it doesn't understand how the Harper government can be so certain about the failure to respect commitments when the Hamas government was only sworn in today [March 29]."

Hamas officials expressed dismay with Canada's move.

"We regret this decision. We consider that it has been taken in haste and contrary to the democratic norms and the principles of human rights which are the basis for relations between states," new information minister Yussef Rizqa commented.

"The Canadian government would have been better off meeting with the government that Hamas has formed to discuss and study its program and listen to its point of view," he added.

• • •

Harper issued the following statement after a telephone call with Ehud Olmert, whose Kadima party scored a minority win in Israel's March 28 election.

"I spoke... with Ehud Olmert to offer my congratulations on the victory of his Kadima party in [the] elections in Israel. I told Mr. Olmert that Israel would continue to benefit from the strong leadership he has demonstrated over the past few months.

"Canada and Israel enjoy solid bilateral relations and Mr. Olmert and I agreed to work together at expanding them even more.

"Canada remains a staunch supporter of peace in the Middle East and we will continue to work with Mr. Olmert and [PA] President Mahmoud Abbas to reach that goal."

Marc Gold, national chair of the Canada-Israel Committee, also congratulated Olmert.

"The results demonstrate the dynamism and diversity of Israel's democratic process," Gold said in a statement. "The election signals the Israeli desire for a stable and pragmatic approach to security, and a focus on domestic social policy issues such as health care and education.

"We wish Mr. Olmert every success as he embarks on his first task of putting together a governing coalition."

SINGLES EVENTS

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All resumes must be received by May 1, 2006. Only those candidates selected for an interview will be contacted. Hillel of Greater Toronto is a beneficiary agency of UJA Federation of Greater Toronto

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Pro-Israel Muslim speaks out against radicalism

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

During a lecture titled "Why I Support the State of Israel," Nonie Darwish, an Egyptian-born Muslim, spoke out against Islamic radicalism and terrorism at York University last week.

"Being pro-Israel does not mean you have to be anti-Arab. I love my religion. I love my culture," said Darwish, a writer, public speaker and the founder of a website called Arabs for Israel. She was forced to defend herself during the question-and-answer period when a few members of the audience booed her, called her a racist and repeatedly yelled "shame on you."

Nonie Darwish

"The problem is we are going through a difficult period and in order to solve this problem, we need to admit what is wrong with our culture," Darwish said. "I am not here to bash Islam the religion, but call for reformation."

Darwish, who has been speaking out against terrorism since the World Trade Center in New York was destroyed by Islamic terrorist on September 11, 2001, was invited by the Speakers Action Group and Hillel at York to address about 50 people March 29.

"After 9/11 and the London and Madrid bombing, I thought to myself, as an Arab child, was I taught peace? The answer is no. We learned just the opposite," Darwish began.

She was born in Cairo, Egypt, and moved to Gaza when her father, Mustafa Hafez, was sent by the Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nassar to head their military intelligence in Gaza and Sinai in the 1950s.

Darwish's father later started the Egyptian *fedayeen* movement, the armed resistance, which is responsible for raids that killed more than 400 Israelis between 1951 and 1956.

She told a story about how Israeli soldiers came to her home one night to find her father, but when they discovered that he wasn't home, the soldiers left her, her siblings and her mother unharmed.

"I was very grateful that they didn't kill us, especially because the *fedayeen* did kill Israeli civilians."

Eventually, her father was killed in what was the Israel Defence Forces' first targeted assassination in 1956. In Egypt, Darwish recalled, Nassar hailed him as a national hero and a martyr.

She said when she was just eight years old, she and her siblings were asked by top Egyptian officials, "Which one of you kids will avenge your father's blood by killing Jews?"

"It created a kind of conflict in my mind that if I don't want to kill Jews that I must not love my father," she said.

As an elementary-school student, Darwish said that the brainwashing continued and she was taught to hate Jews, encouraged to seek vengeance, denounce peace and read jihadist poetry in class.

"They would say things like, 'I wish I could be a martyr and die in jihad.' They filled our hearts with fear of Jews, which made hatred come very easily and made terrorism acceptable," she said.

Darwish said it is convenient for Arab countries to perpetuate the myth that Israelis are to blame for their problems, rather than be accountable, create jobs, and build factories, schools and hospitals.

"They shamed, blamed, and abused Palestinians to fight Israel and never accept peace with Israel. It is in the best interest of the 22 oil-rich Arab countries to keep this conflict going."

She said that when the West Bank and Gaza were ruled by Egypt and Jordan, respectively, the two regions "were neglected and used as launching grounds for war, terror and the destruction of Israel.

"It has now become very convenient to blame worldwide Islamic terror on the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. But what about the terrorism against Israel that I had witnessed as a child before the 1967 war and before the occupation?"

During her lecture, Darwish referred to the riots spawned by the Danish cartoons that portrayed the Muslim prophet Muhammad, and said that the Muslim response "is just a symptom of a culture that advocates hatred and violence. These actions are far more offensive to the Muslim culture than a cartoon."

She also referred to the "barbaric beheading" of Daniel Pearl, a Jewish journalist who was kidnapped and murdered in 2002 while investigating a story in Pakistan.

"Terrorism is giving Islam a bad name. Mohammed Atta [who led the 9/11 attack] is the one giving Islam a bad name, not me. Not the others who are speaking out like me. Muslims who really love their religion should be on the front lines of the fight on terror."

Darwish ended her lecture with a plea for Muslims to "extend our hands to five million Jews in a sea of 1.2 billion Muslims.

"We always list the things that Israel has to do to change, but we never ask ourselves what can we do to bring peace to the Middle East. It is time to ask ourselves what can we do to bring an end to terror."

During the question-and-answer period, a Saudi Arabian-born student challenged Darwish's views on Arab culture and countered her point about Daniel Pearl's murder. She said she met Pearl's father when he spoke at York last year.

"He was saying the same obnoxious thing, that he was killed because he was a Jew. I think it's untrue because [Pearl's] wife said that... he was not killed because he was a Jew, he was killed because he was a journalist and a foreigner."

Ahmed Habib, the vice-president of equity and services for the York Federation of Students, called Darwish a "rabid racist" and accused her of violating Canadian hate laws by speaking against Islamic fundamentalism.

When a student, coincidentally named Mohammed Atta, asked Darwish whether she thought that the war on terror, a term coined by U.S. President George W. Bush, was terrorism itself, she responded with a question.

"If you knew that there were some people who were going to fly airplanes into buildings and you have a choice to shoot them before they kill 3,000 people or let them do their dirty job – "

"I refuse to answer that question," Atta said, cutting her off.

"See, that's the problem. All you want to do is shame us and the Arab culture is all about shame and pride. They want to shame us, but they don't want to discuss the issues."

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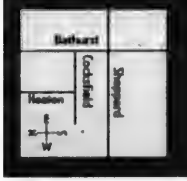

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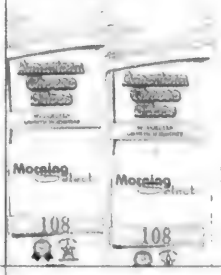

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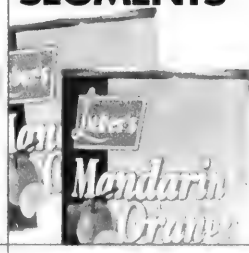

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Only paid Mazel tov announcements can be guaranteed to appear in a specific issue, when received by deadline, 10 days prior to publication date. All other items will appear on a first come - first served basis as space allows.

Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Please keep all announcements to 25 words maximum. Send your photos to:

The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., #205 North York, ON. M3B 3K4
or email them to:
cblackman@cjnews.com

Mazel tov to Ruth Lederman on her 96th birthday. Love, Larry, Patricia, Elly & Paul. Grandchildren Randy & Jack, Mark, Tracy & Michael, great-grandchildren Jessica and Adam.

Melanie & Adam Seigel announce the arrival of Jaime Summer on March 4. Grandparents are Honey & Jerry Mahl, Susan Seigel, and great-grandparents Harry Miller and Anne Seigel.

Adolf & Alice Schmid, congratulations on your 60th wedding anniversary Omy & Opy! Lots of love, Jordana, Amanda, Monique, Danny and Jonathan.

Happy seventh birthday to Adam. With love from Mom, Dad, Andrew, Michael and Trinity!

Mazel tov Lauren & Brian Lewis on the birth of Jayden. Grandparents, Sylvia & Lou Kirshner, Adele & Melvyn Lewis. Great-grandparents Ruth Kirshner, Esther & John Blumenow.

Lisa, Dan and Amanda Belzowski welcome Joshua, born Feb. 18. Proud grandparents, Betsy & Lou Fruitman, Mona & Ed Belzowski and great-grandparents Mary & David Dale.

Dr. Elka Eisen & Leonard Rosenblum welcome Alex , born Jan. 14 in Tucson. Grandparents are Marcelle Eisen of Thornhill and Stan & Judy Rosenblum of Long Island.

Proud parents Kristi & Jon Hacohen are pleased to announce the birth of their first child, Jeremiah Raymond Hacohen, born Dec. 24, 2005.

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What's New deadlines: Monday, April 24, is the deadline for the May 4 issue and Monday, May 1, is the deadline for the May 11 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, April 6

JEWS IN CANADA

Join the Yiddish Club at 12:15 p.m. as **Bess Shockett** presents "The History of Jews in Canada," a paper recently given at the International Conference of Yiddish Speaking Clubs. Free Times Café, 320 College St.

Saturday, April 8

LIBERATION CELEBRATION

Congregation Shir Libeynu holds a Shabbat Hagadol "Celebration of Liberation," a participatory Torah service that will include readings, prayers and songs on the theme of liberation. 10 a.m. in the chapel at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre. Followed by a potluck kiddush luncheon. Bring dairy or pareve food. 416-465-5488 or e-mail shirlibeynu@yahoo.ca

DRASHAH

Rabbi Moshe Stern delivers his Shabbat Hagadol drashah on "What's Bothering You: Why is Mashiach Delayed?" 6:15 p.m. at Shaarei Tefillah Congregation.

Sunday, April 9

SINGLES 50+ GROUP

Join Walk and Talk Etc. and explore the Avenue Rd./St. Clair neighbourhood. Meet in the parking lot of De La Salle College, 131 Farnham Ave. at 9:30 a.m. For information and registration, e-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

INTERFAITH WORKSHOP

Solel Congregation of Mississauga holds an interfaith workshop on the seder. 2-4 p.m. Register at 905-820-5915.

SEDER FOR THE FAMILY

Beth Tikvah's Friendship Group screens *A Passover Seder for the Family*, moderated by **Elie Weisel**, at 2 p.m. $5. Refreshments served. 416-221-3434

Other news

PASSOVER FOOD DRIVE

Help more than 10,000 people celebrate Passover this year. Donate kosher-for-Passover food at grocery stores, day schools and Council House for the National Council of Jewish Women Food Drive by April 6 and volunteer to make deliveries on Sunday, April 9, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Call 416-633-5100 or e-mail pfd@ncjwc-ts.org. Monetary donation also welcome.

HAGGADAH FOR THE BLIND

If you have guests at your seder who are seniors or visually impaired, you may obtain a braille or large-print haggadah free of charge from Jewish Heritage For The Blind at 718-0500, fax 718-388-0653 or e-mail jhb.ny@verizon.net.

ROOM AT YOUR SEDER?

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services Toronto is looking for host families to invite recent immigrants to one of their Pesach seders. Call 416-630-6481, ext 30.

SECOND SEDERS

The Terraces of Baycrest holds an early and late seder on Wednesday, April 12, and on Thursday, April 13. Each seder costs $47.98 for adults and $37.78 for children. Information and registration at Wagman service desk or by calling 416-785-2500, ext. 2267.

The Beach Synagogue's second seder takes place Thursday, April 13. Adults $40, children 12 and under $15. Bring your own wine. To reserve, call 416-694-7942.

Shaarei Tefillah Congregation and **Rabbi Moshe Stern** host a second seder Thursday, April 13. For information, call 416-787-1631.

Temple Israel of London hosts a seder on Thursday, April 13. For information, call 519-858-4400.

Continued on page 33

Beth Tikvah Synagogue
invites you to step into spring with our

Tuesday Afternoon Spring Lunch and Learn Series

May 2nd *Lawyer* **Leo Adler** *will discuss "The Resurgence of Anti Semitism in Europe with Implications for Canada" Mr Adler is a criminal lawyer in Toronto. Also, he is Director of National Affairs, Simon Wiesenthal Center for Holocaust Studies, Canada*

May 9th *Baseball player* **Hank Greenberg's** *life as a Jewish sports hero in the bitter anti-Semitic thirties, will be depicted in a movie with "Yiddish Jam" and further highlighted with a short short lecture presented by Gerald Ziedenberg, Chair, Beth Tikvah Jewish Education Centre*

May 16th **Murray Armel** *will discuss the life of* **Abba Eban** *his rise to fame and prominence, his standing in the world and in the United Nations, and, at his peak, his vast contribution to the the founding and early development of the State of Israel*

May 23rd **Rabbi Avraham Feder**, *Rabbi Emeritus of Beth Tikvah Synagogue, will discuss* **"The Plot Against America"**, *a novel by Philip Roth. Seen through the eyes of a little boy, the anti-Semitism of Henry K. Ford, Father Charles Coughlin and Gerald K. Smith, among others, evolves into pogroms in America!*

May 30th **Heather Kassel** *will review the Israeli film* **"Walk on Water"** *Conflicting opinion amongst a Mossad agent, a contrite German and an aging Mossad official collide over the desire to bring to justice an aging and dying Nazi war criminal. Film will be screened at 12:30 p.m.*

June 6th *Author* **Vivian Kaplan** *will review her novel* **"Green Bottles"** *– the epic story of a Jewish family fleeing the Holocaust in Vienna and making their way to Shanghai*

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What's New

Continued from page 32

MUSICAL SHABBAT

Congregation Darchei Noam celebrates chol hamoed Pesach with a Musical Shabbat featuring scholar-in-residence **Cantor Jonathan Comisar**. Friday, April 14, at 8 p.m. a "joyous Kabalat Shabbat service"; Saturday, April 15, Shabbat service, at 10 a.m and *Havdalah* and concert of Jewish music at 8 p.m. 15 Hove St. 416-638-4783

CALLING ALL TEENS!

Join Jewish teens from across the GTA for "T2-Tikkun Toronto: Jewish Youth Repairing the World One Day at a Time," an afternoon of hands-on community service sponsored by BBYO, Bnei Akiva, Tzofim, Habonim Dror, USY and Young Judaea and earn four community-service hours. 12-5:30 p.m. 4700 Bathurst St. Register online at www.bbyo.on.ca or call 416-398-2004, ext. 221.

SPRING LECTURE SERIES

The Adult Education Committee of Temple Emanu-El is continuing a lecture series Mondays 2-4 p.m. April 17, "China: Challenges and Opportunities" with **Bernie Wolfe** of Schulich School of Business; April 24, "Carmen: Femme Fatale or Liberated Woman? The History of a Stereotype" with **Linda Hutcheon**, professor of English and comparative literature, University of Toronto; May 1, "Times Have Changed: What's New in Estate Planning" with **Cindy Pinkus**, lawyer; and May 8, "The Jazz Singers: Crosby, Holiday, Vaughan, Fitzgerald, etc." with **Mike Daley**, department of music, York University. $30. For registration and information, call 416-449-3880.

FAMILY-IN-ISRAEL DINNER

Emunah Women of Toronto honour **Edie Kalb** at their Family-in-Israel Dinner on Tuesday, May 9, at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. The evening is dedicated to the memory of **Sharon Rosenblum Leff**, a long-time member and volunteer. For tickets, call Janice at 416-636-0036.

ISRAEL INK PROJECT

Bring your used inkjet cartridges to Toronto synagogues, day schools, Jewish organizations, BJCC, Miles Nadal JCC and Israel's Bookstores, who are working together to recycle used inkjet cartridges and help a struggling kibbutz. For information, call 416-221-6263 or visit www.israel-ink.com.

REGISTER NOW FOR 2006-07

Shaar Shalom Religious School is now accepting registration for the 2006-07 school year. The school is located in Brownridge Public School, behind the Promenade Mall. For a visit or to book an appointment, call **Hava Greenberg** at 905-889-4975.

JVS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Jewish Vocational Services Toronto is looking for volunteer mentors for a new program, PATH 2 WORK, an employment program that helps persons with developmental disabilities move into paid employment. Volunteer mentors connect with clients once a week for four months to offer support and problem-solving ideas to barriers clients may be facing. If you are interested, contact the JVS Toronto's volunteer co-ordinator at 416-787-1151, ext 259.

SINGLES GROUP 50+

Single Jewish men and women 50+ who are interested in joining a new group that will enjoy cultural outings and house parties: call 905-731-9705.

VENDORS WANTED

Sunday, June 4, is Israel Day Festival 2006. Vendors interested in participating should contact **Barbara Peters** at 416-633-3988 or e-mail czf(a)jazo.org.il.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Adult Children Losing A Parent: A six-session group for those who have recently lost a parent. Topics include coping with grief, loss and legacy and resolving unfinished business. Tuesday, April 25, 7:30-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Today's Woman: A six-session discussion group for women who want to make a change in their lives. Topics include time and stress management, building self-esteem, assertiveness and improving communication skills. Begins Wednesday, April 26, 7-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Effective Parenting: A four-session group to help parents learn what they can do to raise a happy, motivated and well-behaved child. For parents of children ages 3 to 11. Wednesday, April 26, 7-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Happiest Baby On The Block: Join a workshop for parents of newborns and infants and learn about an extraordinary approach to calm your baby. Based on the principles of **Dr. Harvey Karp**. Wednesday, April 26, 7-9:30 p.m. at the Family Resource Centre at the Promenade Mall. Registration required and fee includes a parent kit.

Infant Massage: A six-session group for parents, grandparents or caregivers and their babies who want to learn infant-massage techniques to help relax and stimulate baby. Begins Thursday, April 27, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. at the Family Resource Centre.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 27

FOR SENIORS

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. Call 416-630-9444.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday dance, April 16; Casino Rama, Wednesday, April 26; Casino Niagara, Wednesday, May 24. Call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club closed for Passover April 6 and 14.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

"Who's Tory Now? Can Canada Survive Its Political Parties?" April 11 and 18 at 10 a.m. with **Hugh Innes**.

Seniors Open Computer Lab: Wednesdays, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., and Fridays 1:30 p.m.-4 p.m. $1.50/hour or $10/10 hours.

Trip to Tulip Festival in Ottawa, May 16-17. $200/$250 includes bus, hotel, tours and casino.

No classes April 12-14, 19-20.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Annual Pesach tea and cantorial concert with **Shlomo Sufferin**, Tuesday, April 18 at 1:30 p.m. Free. Register in advance at the service desk or call ext 2267.

Registration has begun for the next fitness session, which begins Monday, April 24, and continues through August.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Women's Passover seder, Sunday, April 16, 2-5 p.m. Members $20, non-members $30. Reserve at ext. 0.

Jewish meditation, every Sunday 4:30-5:30 p.m. Connecting the practice of meditation to our tradition. $15 per drop-in session.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880, or www.bjcc.ca.

Central registration is now starting for all fitness and recreation programs. Call ext. 235 or register at BJCC.

Family Sing-along Concert Series featuring Sing-along Randi, Sunday, April 9, at 2 p.m. For tickets, call ext. 235.

"Boogie Babies and Jammin' Tots" Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. in the Jewish Discovery Museum. Drop-in fee $10 for music class and free play in the Jewish Discovery Museum.

Centre Camp Passover Camp, Monday, April 10-Friday, April 21. Call ext. 378.

Lunch 'n' Learn with **Rabbi Moshe Stern**, Friday, April 7, 12-1 p.m. No charge.

Shalom Singers performing choir looking for new members. Rehearsals every Thursday, 10-11:30 a.m.

BJCC seniors online computer lab workshop and mini-course event, "Buying a Computer: How and What?" Friday, April 21, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Register at ext. 235.

New mah-jong classes start Wednesday, April 26, 1-3 p.m. For information, call **Janet**, ext. 259.

"Blue Republic: Nostalgia for the Present" at the Koffler Gallery through April 30.

Luncheon with entertainer **Rhonda Silver**, Tuesday May 9. Tickets on sale at the reception desk or call ext. 235.

Casino Niagara, Wednesday, May 17. Tickets on sale at the reception desk or call ext. 235.

Bathurst JCC has a block of tickets to *Golda's Balcony* with **Valerie Harper** on Thursday, May 25, at 8 p.m. Proceeds will help send disadvantaged children to Centre Camp at the Bathurst JCC. For tickets, call ext. 271.

FUN AND LAUGHS FOR REENA: The Grade 11 students of Ulpanat Orot High School wrote and performed a play spoofing fairy-tale characters at a recent fundraising evening that raised more than $2000 for the Reena Foundation. Above is Leah Rosenberg as Rapunzel.

[Rebecca Ansel photo]

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Salem, Ethel	Mar 18/06	Private
Kogan, Lisa	Mar 19/06	Private
Trembetzky, Morris	Mar 18/06	Private
Abramson, Abe Bernard	Mar 19/06	1925 Steeles Ave E
Greenbaum, Gladys	Mar 20/06	Private
Wagman, Hyman	Mar 22/06	4266 Bathurst St

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Arthur Arshawsky	Mar 20/06	83 Elmsthorpe Ave
Mike Agay	Mar 19/06	245 The Donway W
Linda Covent	Mar 20/06	114 Holly Dr
Sadie Diament-Collis	Mar 21/06	1121 Steeles Ave W
Zelda Barlin	Mar 24/06	18 Lower Village Gt
Marcia Wargon	Mar 23/06	21 Portee Cr
Myrna Libnach	Mar 23/06	109 Cherry Hills Rd

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The outpouring of donations in Brian's memory was overwhelming and have touched our hearts deeply.

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Vandals attack in Montreal

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Just a couple of days after B'nai Brith Canada released its finding that anti-Semitic incidents had decreased significantly in Montreal during 2005, the exterior of a synagogue and community centre was defaced with multiple spray-painted swastikas, "SS" symbols and a Star of David with a line through it.

The Chai Centre on de Courtrai Avenue at the corner of Westbury Avenue was vandalized overnight on March 24-25. The shocking discovery was made by worshippers coming for Shabbat services.

Rabbi Yossi Kessler said it was the first such problem the centre has had since it opened 13 years ago. Located in a mainly industrial area, the Lubavitch-sponsored centre attracts between 175 to 200 people for services, but many more for its programs for teens and Russian immigrants and its food bank.

Leah Berger, B'nai Brith's co-ordinator of government and community relations, said it would be "tantamount to blaming the victim" to conclude that the incident was linked to coverage of B'nai Brith's announcement to the media of its annual audit of anti-Semitism.

> ***'The only way to sensitize and educate the public is to document anti-Semitism and put out a report and get people talking'***

"The only way to sensitize and educate the public is to document anti-Semitism and put out a report and get people talking," she said.

In any event, another synagogue, several blocks south of the Chai Centre on Westbury, Congregation Zichron Kedoshim, was hit with similar graffiti earlier in the week. A swastika was also daubed on a utility pole of the Ben Weider Jewish Community Centre, on Westbury, too, apparently on the previous weekend.

An anonymous businessman, described as a non-Jewish francophone, has offered a $3,000 reward through the Sun Youth Organization for information leading to the arrest of the perpetrators.

Police are investigating the incidents, and Berger said B'nai Brith is satisfied the police are taking the matter seriously.

"These incidents bear striking similarities," said Allan Adel, national chair of B'nai Brith's League for Human Rights. "All occurred within the span of one week and in close proximity to each other, in a neighbourhood which is densely populated by elderly Jews. They all featured Nazi graffiti designed to invoke fear in victims."

B'nai Brith is urging anyone witnessing incidents to call its round-the-clock Anti-Hate Hotline at 1-800-892-2624. This information may help police detect patterns they were not aware of, he said.

In 2005 the B'nai Brith audit documented 133 reported case of anti-Semitism in Quebec, including vandalism, harassment and violence, with 127 occurring in Montreal. Although the numbers are down from 2004, B'nai Brith said the incidents have increased by over 60 per cent since 2001, when 78 were reported.

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Coast to Coast

Acceptance rate for Israeli refugee claimants spikes in 2005

151 successfully argued they should be allowed to stay

By RON CSILLAG
Staff Reporter

Canada's acceptance rate for refugee claimants from Israel in 2005 was the highest in a dozen years.

Ottawa's acceptance rate last year of Israeli citizens claiming persecution and refugee status was 31 per cent, the highest level since 1994, when it was half of all claimants.

After years of single-digit acceptance rates from Israel, the figures from 2005 hark back to the days when Canada routinely ignored appeals from Israel that it does not produce asylum-seekers.

Figures released to *The CJN* last week show that in 2005, Canada accepted 151 Israeli citizens who successfully argued they had a "well-founded fear of persecution" should they be returned to Israel.

The Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB) finalized 491 cases from Israel, rejecting 269 claims. The rest were either abandoned or withdrawn.

The IRB does not track the reasons, whether political, religious or personal, for granting asylum. Neither does it keep records of the birthplace of claimants.

But Israel has long maintained that for the most part, they are Jews who left former Soviet republics and came to Israel under the Law of Return, which grants them immediate citizenship.

Many stayed a few years and then decided to springboard to other countries as Israel citizens.

Typically, the asylum-seekers allege that while in the Jewish state, they were denied jobs and housing, threatened, ostracized and harassed because of mixed marriages or questionable status as Jews.

Israel has always said that as a democratic, multicultural nation, it does not produces refugees. The Israeli argument has always been that claimants' stories of persecution are spurious and designed to gain sympathy in the West.

Canada's acceptance of refugees from Israel has been a sore point between the two countries since the gates opened for Soviet Jews in 1989. Ever since, Israel has been trying to persuade Canada that ex-Soviets are taking advantage of the Law of Return to come here.

To qualify as refugees here, they must prove they have a credible fear of persecution should they be returned to Israel.

Canada's acceptance rate of Israeli refugees peaked in 1990 at 69 per cent of all claims. The lowest acceptance rate was two per cent, in 1998.

In years past, most of the successful claims in Canada were made in Montreal.

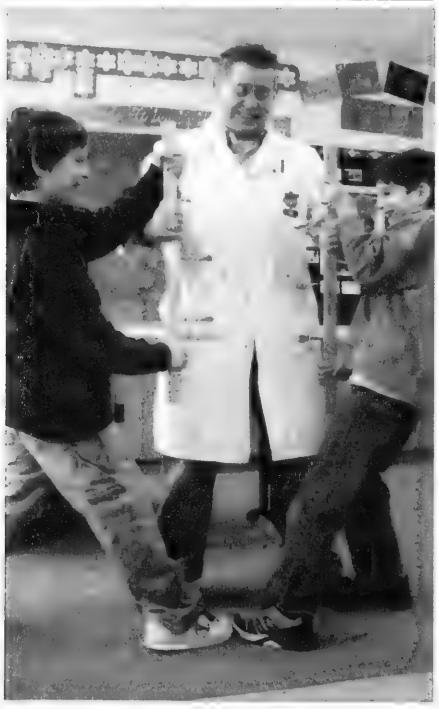
A study released a year ago in Israel showed that some 74,000 immigrants from the former Soviet Union left the country between 1990 and 2000. About 40,000 of those went west.

Israel's absorption ministry reported last year that nearly nine per cent of immigrants from former Soviet republics leave Israel, with Canada being a favourite destination.

The Israeli embassy in Ottawa said it would not comment on last year's figures until it had studied and analyzed them.

A year ago, when the 2004 numbers were released, embassy spokesperson Ofir Gendelman said it was "unfortunate" that some Israeli citizens were "deliberately misleading" Canadian immigration authorities.

Gendelman noted at the time that "in more than few cases," refugee claimants have used fake Israeli passports to enter Canada illegally, and asked for asylum only when they were in danger of being deported.



MEDIEVAL SCIENTISTS: As part of a unit on the Middle Ages at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School, Grade 4 students Zachary Leranbaum, left, and Noah Freedman demonstrate the power of pulleys and gears during a visit by Mad Science instructor Mat Man.

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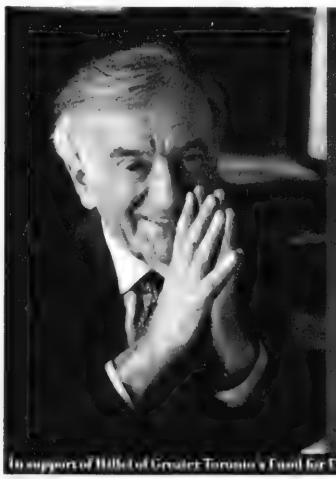

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Passover Food Ideas

Cousins carry on Rhodes Pesach food traditions

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Cousins Myriam Brenner and Rachel Cadranel, whose grandparents are from Turkey and Rhodes Island, Greece, have come to Canada via Zaire and South Africa.

"And like all Jews, food is the centre of our holidays. What you eat determines where you come from," Brenner says.

Although many Sephardi Jews from Rhodes eat rice during Passover, they do not, says Brenner, who left Zaire at age seven. "At one time, there was a famine in Rhodes, and the rabbi allowed them to eat rice. They have carried on the tradition."

In South Africa, they say, their family seders were huge. "We never left anyone out. We opened our door to anyone who needed a place. Then, we didn't realize it was a Sephardi tradition. The thought was the same as opening the door for Eliyahu," says Cadranel, who lived in Zaire until she was 18.

They conducted the seder in English, French and Ladino. "Whose ever turn it was to read did it in the language they were most comfortable with, so in that way strangers were always welcome."

Lamb was a mainstay during Passover, "and believe it or not, my mother always served chicken soup with kneidlach. I don't know how she found the recipe. Certainly no one in Rhodes ate kneidlach," says Brenner.

Rachel Cadranel, Alexandra Brenner and Miriam Brenner

A typical charoset was made of dates, raisins, apples, nuts and wine, and the seder eggs were a bit unusual.

"Our eggs were distinctive. Instead of eggs in salt water, we would boil brown eggs with onion peels. If we wanted them even browner in colour, we would add a tea bag to the water. Even the yolk had a brown edge," says Cadranel.

The eggs represent life, and they would never leave a peeled egg uncut, because that signifies mourning, Brenner says.

Their cooking was time-consuming, they say, because everything was made from scratch.

Continued on page 47

Memories and customs

The CJN shares with our readers the memories and customs of individuals we spoke to, who have come to Canada from other parts of the Jewish world.

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Lamb eaten throughout Passover in Tunisia

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Almost 30 years after leaving Tunisia, Sarah Carlen has clear memories of the lamb her family would buy every year right after Purim.

"I remember growing attached to him and then waking up one morning knowing that this is the day he would be slaughtered. I would cry."

They ate that lamb throughout Passover, she says. "We would have lamb roasts, lamb chops, lamb stew. I still order lamb from the butcher so we can have it for the seder.

"It wasn't just our family. In the weeks between Purim and Passover, we would hear lambs all over the neighbourhood."

She also recalls that they took their mattresses to the beach every year just before Passover to wash and dry them on the sand. "Then someone would come along and restuff them. It was a time for everyone to go to the beach and have fun," says Carlen, who teaches a course about Sephardi culture at York University.

One of her fondest memories, she says, is of the women in her extended family coming to her home to prepare for the seder. "The men went to the market, and the women cooked and cooked. My mother never viewed it as work. She saw it as quality time with her family. I always heard them laughing and having fun. She said she wouldn't change the week for anything."

The seder table was set with a long, embroidered cloth, Carlen said, but the service was held in a different room, which was decorated like a tent with sheets hanging from the ceiling.

"The seder plate – it was actually a wicker basket because Moses was found in a basket – would be set on a low bench and we would sit on the floor or on soft cushions. The men would sit on the side of the wall so they could lean back, and the basket was passed over everyone's head to signify God's protection in the desert."

A traditional Tunisian seder dish is msoki, said Carlen. "They would cook spinach with herbs, coriander, parsley and fresh fava, and either keep it vegetarian or add lamb stew.

"We also had lots of salads – carrot, beets, zucchini or eggplant. For dessert there was fruit, fruit and fruit, and a favourite treat in my home was fried matzah soaked in egg and orange juice, and then eaten with honey. My kids still love it."

When Passover ended and there was time to bake bread, Mimouna began, said Carlen. "We would put up lettuce leaves – they weren't taken down until they dried and fell – to signify a green and prosperous year, and set our tables with bowls of flour, olive oil and fresh fish. We would serve bread and cookies, and anything else we didn't eat during Passover. Everyone left their door open, and neighbours and relatives would visit from house to house.

Then, she said, the women continued cooking, because the day after Passover, the whole community went on a picnic. "We had celebrations from before Passover until after Passover."

MSOKI

¾ lb. lamb or beef
2 lb. spinach
2 lb. fresh fava
1 lb. fresh green peas
2 artichokes, leaves removed
1 small cabbage
2 onions
2 leeks
1 fennel
8 garlic cloves
3 turnips
2 broccoli
3 celery stalks
1 zucchini
3 potatoes
1 bunch coriander
1 bunch dill
1 cup oil
1 cinnamon stick
mint
salt, pepper, nutmeg to taste

Clean vegetables, cut in chunks and put in pot with water to cover and 1 cup oil. Cook on high heat until boiling. Add herbs, salt, pepper, cinnamon and nutmeg and stir. After 15 minutes, add meat and mint. Cover, turn down heat and cook for ¼ to 1 hour.

Memories and customs

The CJN *shares with our readers the memories and customs of individuals we spoke to, who have come to Canada from other parts of the Jewish world*

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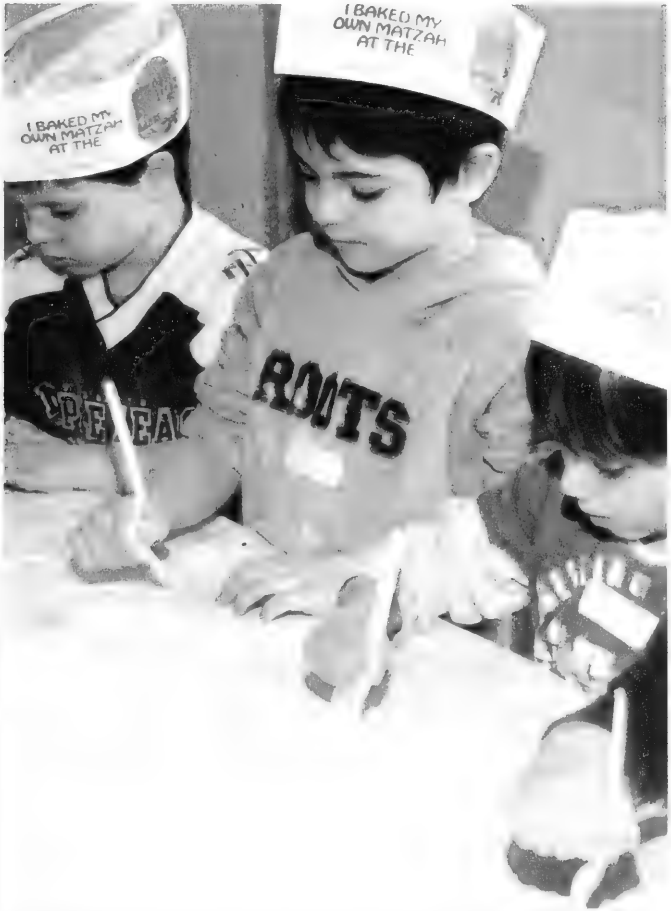

MAKING MATZAH: So that's how they do it! After learning how to prevent matzah from bubbling, preschoolers from Netivot HaTorah Day School apply their skills during their recent visit to Chabad-Lubavitch's Matzah Factory. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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Recipe Correction

In the article "Keep Passover cooking stress-free" (*CJN*, March 23), the Confetti Vegetable Kugel recipe should have included 4 eggs plus 2 egg whites, or 6 eggs. We regret the error.

Check out our internet edition at www.cjnews.com

The Canadian Jewish News

Passover Food Ideas

Eggplant stacks as seen in *Divine Kosher Cuisine*

New cookbook addresses all aspects of cooking kosher

By NORENE GILLETZ
Special to The CJN

I have a huge collection of nearly 2,000 cookbooks on my bookshelves and scattered throughout every room of my house. My collection continues to grow because of the many books that cross my desk for review. For the past several months, I had been anxiously awaiting the arrival of *Divine Kosher Cuisine* by Barbara Wasser and Risé Routenberg as I wanted to review the book for my Passover column. I was totally blown away when I finally received the proofs. What a labour of love!

Divine Kosher Cuisine is due off the presses momentarily and will hopefully be available for your Passover pleasure. It sells for $32.95 (US) plus shipping. For information on ordering, call 518-344-1190 or visit the website at www.divinekosher.com. Don't hesitate to order a copy (or more) as this book will sell out very quickly.

Companion software will be available for $9.95 so that you can scale recipes up or down, create menus or shopping lists and even add your own notes

Divine Kosher Cuisine is a fundraising project of Congregation Agudat Achim in Niskayuna, N.Y. It took Wasser and Routenberg and their committee of 150 volunteers nearly two years to test, perfect and compile this collection of over 400 recipes. Wasser and Routenberg operated the shul's catering division, As You Like It Catering, the premier kosher caterer in the region. They have even prepared dinners for the New York State Legislature and the governor's mansion.

The hard-covered book is beautifully designed, with a special layflat binding for easy use. There are over 200 colour photographs that leap right off the pages… and onto your plate (don't you wish)! The fabulous photos, which were taken by congregant Harvey Mendelson and styled by Wasser and Routenberg, are extremely professional. *Divine Kosher Cuisine* addresses all aspects of cooking kosher, confronts a variety of culinary and dietary challenges and provides solutions with a flair and confidence that will be appreciated by both novice and gourmet cooks. The authors have paid meticulous attention to every detail to create an outstanding visual and culinary work of art. In fact, the tapestry that hangs in the shul's lobby graces the cover as well as every page of the book to provide a visual feast for the eyes as well as the palate.

Divine Kosher Cuisine brings kosher cooking to the 21st century, with recipes ranging from traditional to trendy, plus many creative new spins on old favourites for everyday, holidays or entertaining. Since both Wasser and Routenberg have children who are vegetarians, they've included a complete chapter of vegetarian recipes and also offer many non-dairy substitutions throughout the book. There are recipes from around the world, as well as a signature dessert section, with elegant endings for special occasions. You'll find helpful hints, wine suggestions, table settings, menu planning, a chapter on catering… in short, something for everyone! There are two full menu choices for each Jewish holiday, with alternatives. Every recipe has a pareve, dairy, meat and/or Passover designation. There are 130 recipes suitable for Passover, and 70 of them are for non-*gebrochts* dishes which are identified by the key "Non-G." (This refers to some traditions that prohibit foods that mix matzah or matzah by-products with water, known as *gebrocht* foods.)

Dr. Ruth's favourite Passover nut torte as seen in *Divine Kosher Cuisine*

Continued on page 44

Recipes range from traditional to trendy

Continued from page 43

The "best of the best" include Greek Charoset, Signature Whitefish, Apple Brie Soup, Potato Cheese Lasagna, Grilled Chicken Breast with Tomato Salsa, Layered Sweet Potatoes and Apples and Signature Almond Horns. Here are some Passover dishes recommended by Wasser and Routenberg for your enjoyment. Chag Pesach samayach!

BAKED EGGPLANT STACK
(Non-*gebrochts*)

Versatile in every way, this dish may be served with any entree, and used for Passover. Prepare in advance and freeze, baked or unbaked.

Eggplant
2½ lb. eggplant, zebra stripe and cut into ½-in. slices
salt
olive oil for brushing

Preheat oven to 375. Grease cookie sheets. Salt eggplant lightly and place in colander. Press plate over eggplant slices and weight down with cans. Drain 30 minutes. Rinse and pat dry with paper towels. Place eggplant slices on sheet, brush with oil and roast until tender but firm.

Sauce
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 cups drained canned tomatoes, chopped

Heat oil in medium saucepan and sauté garlic until soft. Add tomatoes and simmer 20 minutes.

Topping
2 tbsp. olive oil
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 large onion, chopped
1¼ cups drained canned tomatoes, chopped
½ cup drained pitted black olives, chopped
2 tbsp. finely chopped fresh parsley, divided
¼ tsp. dried thyme
1 tbsp. lemon juice
salt and pepper to taste

Heat oil in medium saucepan and sauté garlic and onions until soft. Add tomatoes and olives; reduce heat and simmer uncovered, 15 minutes.

Add 4 teaspoons parsley, thyme, lemon juice, salt and pepper.

Assembly

Reduce oven temperature to 350. Grease cookie sheet.

Spoon 2 tbsp. sauce in 6 puddles on sheet. Divide and layer eggplant onto sauce. Cover with topping and remaining sauce. Bake 15 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining parsley before serving. Makes 6 servings.

FRUITED QUINOA PRIMAVERA
(Non-*gebrochts*)

This "spring style" Italian dish combines the classic primavera veggies with apricots and cranberries mixed with quinoa (pronounced "keenwa"), a creamy white grain. This South American product has a light texture and delicate flavour.

2 cups vegetable broth
1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup quinoa
3 tbsp. olive oil, divided
1 small zucchini, thinly sliced
1 small yellow squash, thinly sliced
½ cup sliced mushrooms
1 small red onion, thinly sliced
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 tbsp. lemon juice
¼ cup dried apricots, diced
¼ cup dried cranberries
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
¼ cup chopped fresh dill
salt and pepper to taste

Bring broth, bay leaf and salt to boil in soup pot. Add quinoa and return to boil, cover, reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes or until quinoa absorbs liquid. Remove from heat, discard bay leaf and cool

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in large skillet and saute vegetables until lightly browned. Add to quinoa. Drizzle remaining oil and lemon juice over mixture. Stir in dried fruit, herbs, salt and pepper. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

QUINOA STUFFED ACORN SQUASH

2 large acorn squash, halved and seeded
¼ cup olive oil

Preheat oven to 350. Grease 9 x 13-in. pan. Prepare Fruited Quinoa Primavera.

Cut ½-in. off bottoms of squash. Brush inside with oil. Stuff each half generously with quinoa mixture and place in pan. Cover and bake 45 minutes or until squash is tender. Yield: 4 servings

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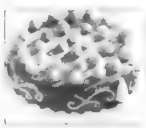

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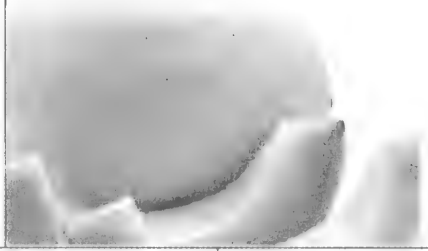

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The Canadian Jewish News
regrets an error in the Passover Food section of the **March 30, 2006** issue.

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Passover Food Ideas

Bonnie Stern and Rabbi Elyse Goldstein's 'Kitchen Conversations'

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

Forget whipping, coddling, folding, substituting or buying expensive desserts. For author, teacher and gourmet tour guide Bonnie Stern, Passover baking is nothing to dread. Just mix up a few pure, simple ingredients and everybody leaves your table happy.

At "Kitchen Conversations," held at Kolel recently, Stern and Rabbi Elyse Goldstein made the perfect Pesach-planning duo with Rabbi Goldstein's focus on Jewish custom and Halachah the perfect counterpoint to Stern's coyly offbeat commentary on cooking, kosher, life and love. "Elyse is the only person who talks as much as I do," Stern joked.

If the evening had the feeling of a reunion, it's because Rabbi Goldstein and Stern held a similar session last year, and also co-led the Food for Thought culinary tour to Israel last February. They're planning a second tour this October. Stern said of many culinary tours, her Israel experience with Rabbi Goldstein was the most delicious – but also "so meaningful."

Their lively banter wove through brief baking demonstrations, covering ingredients, customs and personal stories, while answering audience questions about everything from last year's matzah (don't use it, said Rabbi Goldstein) to artificial sweeteners (don't use them, said Stern).

Well, not quite. Some may need these products, Stern said, but too many people are afraid of rich ingredients, treating artificially sweetened products as "free food… and eat as much as they want," instead of genuinely nutritious foods. "I'm not telling you to eat a lot of sugar or butter," she said. "But I'd rather eat a very small piece of something made with natural ingredients."

For Rabbi Goldstein, kosher for Passover includes ecology. "Consider buying free-range eggs," she said. She also offered vegan alternatives to seder-plate classics: an avocado pit instead of an egg, and a roasted beet for the zroah (shankbone).

Both touched briefly on organic ingredients, which, Rabbi Goldstein said, fulfil the Jewish imperatives to care for our bodies and for the earth. "This is something we should be taking seriously."

Stern offered four Passover desserts: Gwen's Almond Haystacks (recipe below), Passover Lemon Pavlova Roll, Caramel Matzo Crunch and Moroccan Sliced Oranges with Dried Fruit, from her latest book, *The Best of Heart Smart Cooking*.

All four are astonishingly simple: it's hard to believe just a few basic ingredients could wow your guests, but audience reactions to samples revealed that these are tasty magic indeed.

The four-ingredient Caramel Matzo Crunch recipe is available at her website (www.BonnieStern.com) and the Lemon Pavlova roll is a variation on a non-Passover recipe from her book, *Bonnie Stern's Essentials of Home Cooking* (the original features corn starch, while her Passover recipe uses potato starch).

Stern's Moroccan Sliced Oranges is not so much a recipe as a citrus showcase. "Use every different kind of orange or grapefruit you can find," said Stern. Delicate slices of blood oranges and Cara Cara, a reddish Californian navel orange prized for its low acid and slight cherry flavour, and grapefruit are topped with bits of dried figs, Medjool dates, apricots, pistachios and pomegranate seeds, and drizzled with fresh citrus juice. Though slightly preparation-intensive, it can be made a day ahead and refrigerated.

As for the Almond Haystacks, they're "so easy, you almost can't believe it's this easy," Stern said. Delicate and macaroon-like cookies, they're tasty and quick – no whipping egg whites! and freeze beautifully to always have on hand: a taste of freedom in three simple steps.

GWEN'S ALMOND HAYSTACKS

This cookie, from my friend in Montreal, Gwen Berkowitz, is perfect – really delicious, low in fat, rich with almonds, good for Passover and any time at all.

2 egg whites
½ cup sugar
½ tsp. vanilla extract (optional)
3 cups sliced almonds

In a large bowl, mix (do not whip) egg whites with sugar. Add vanilla if using. Stir in almonds. With a teaspoon, make small mounds of mixture on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake at 350 for about 20 minutes or until golden brown. Turn off oven and leave cookies in with the door open for 10 additional minutes. Makes about 30.

From *The Best of Heart Smart Cooking*, by Bonnie Stern (March 2006, Random House).

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Nutty Spinach salad as seen in *The Healthy Jewish Cookbook* by Michael van Straten, Frog Ltd.

Sephardi traditions important

Continued from page 40

"We did a Mediterranean style of cooking lots of pickled vegetables. A typical Passover lunch would be fried fish, olives and pickled cucumbers," Brenner says.

"Other Passover favourites were 'matzah' French toast, and fried potato fritters made with Parmesan cheese and dipped in honey."

Their traditions are very strong, the cousins say, and they hold on to them to this day.

"It is a very important part of our lives. My kids don't learn Sephardi traditions at school, so it is up to me to teach them the traditions," says Brenner, whose husband is Ashkenazi.

KYEFTES DE PRASA
Leek fritters

2 bunches leeks (8 medium sized)
3 potatoes
2-3 eggs, well beaten
1 tsp. salt
freshly ground black pepper
celery or parsley, chopped
oil to fry

Remove course outer leaves of leeks. Cut in half lengthwise and across, and wash carefully. Simmer with potatoes until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain well and squeeze excess water from leeks. Mince leeks and potatoes. Add remaining ingredients, except oil, and mix well. Shape into patties about 6 cm in diameter. Shallow fry in hot oil. If oil is not hot enough, the fritters will be greasy. Fry a few at a time to keep the oil temperature high. Drain on absorbent paper. Serve hot or cold. Makes 25.

FONGOS
Spinach and potato bake

2 bunches spinach
4 eggs, well beaten
4 large potatoes cooked and mashed
2 cups grated cheese
salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 tbsp. oil
2 tsp. butter

Wash spinach. Remove stalks and shred leaves finely. Dry on absorbent paper. Place in a large bowl. Add 3 well-beaten eggs, a quarter of the mashed potato, 1 cup of the cheese mixture and seasonings. Place oil in ovenproof dish. Heat in oven for 5 minutes at 180c. Pour spinach mixture into dish. Form 12 mounds of potato-cheese mixture and place on spinach. Dot with knobs of butter. Bake at 180 for 30 minutes. Serve hot or cold as a vegetable, cut into squares. Traditionally served with brown hard boiled eggs. Serves 8

GWÉVOS ENJAMINADOS
Brown hard-boiled eggs

6 eggs
1 tbsp. oil
1 tsp. salt
1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
onion peel (dry, brown outer layers)

Place eggs in pot and cover with water. Add oil, seasoning and onion peel. Bring to a boil, lower heat and simmer for 1 hour for the best flavour. They are always served hot.

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Kosher for Passover baby food

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to The CJN

Last Passover, we had a newborn who was still nursing. This year, with a one-year-old, things won't be nearly so easy. I wouldn't call her picky as much as determined to eat the things she loves and to avoid everything else. Okay, picky.

But we may be in luck. In December 2005, Beech-Nut baby foods arrived in Canada. All but a few of its Canadian products are kosher, and 16 are actually kosher for Passover, bearing the supervision of the Orthodox Union (OU).

"This is a very exciting time for us, launching up there," says Beech-Nut product manager Anne Drozda, who has been coming to Toronto from Missouri to help kick-start the products here.

Beech-Nut isn't the only kosher baby food in Canada. But Heinz dropped much of its kosher baby food line three years ago, and the selection has been sparse.

Some Toronto retailers that carry kosher foods have been importing Beech-Nut from the United States for years, but they cost about twice as much as Canadian brands. Earth's Best organic baby foods and several of Heinz's organic line products bear kosher supervision, but also come with a premium price tag.

Beech-Nut has made baby food affordable again, but you can't get it everywhere. Drozda says that for now, Beech-Nut products will be available exclusively through the Loblaw family of stores: Loblaws, Superstore, Fortino's, No Frills, Zehrs and others.

Kosher has long been "part of our culture," she says. Recently purchased by Swiss food group Hero, Beech-Nut started out over 100 years ago selling "anything that could be put into a can." But for 75 years, it's stuck with baby food exclusively, she adds.

Today, the only non-kosher Canadian products are those with meat. The others are all pareve, with the exception of a dairy vanilla custard pudding which is sweetened only with apple juice.

Keeping kosher and non-kosher separate, says Drozda, starts "right from the growing process."

The OU checks out all pre-processed ingredients, she explains. "If somebody has pureed a product for us, we have to make sure they have koshered all their lines, too."

A supervising rabbi helps plan every stage of production at the company's Canajoharie, N.Y., plant. Because he's participating, the products are considered "bishul Yisrael" (cooked by a Jew), a necessity in some communities.

The rabbi lives an hour away, Drozda says, "so when he comes down, he actually sleeps in the plant… we have a cot for him; he's there pretty much all the time [during kosher production]. Once we're done with the kosher run, we go into the remainder of the products."

Drozda says the company will be cautious about planning any expansion here. In the United States, Beech-Nut offers 124 kosher items, including cookies, crackers and chunky toddler foods; 33 are kosher for Passover. In Canada, there are still only 34 kosher items total.

My baby's favourites? Probably Pears & Rice Cereal, along with Corn Casserole, though I'm not sure why it's called a casserole; it's a jar like all the others. Neither is kosher for Passover, however, so we may still run into food issues this Pesach.

The Passover varieties are mostly pure fruit, so we're going to have to find other ways of offering veggies and carbs. Luckily, she's recently discovered that perennial Pesach treat – the potato. When they're seasoned and baked, we've convinced her they're french fries. Between those and a few dozen jars of butternut squash, we just may make it.

Passover breakfast suggestions

By EILEEN GOLTZ
Special to The CJN

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and during Pesach it doesn't have to be matzah and butter every day. The following recipes are easy and fast, and will kick start your early morning energy level and keep you going until lunch.

POACHED PEARS WITH ALMONDS

Make this recipe ahead of time and serve it all week.

4 to 6 red-skinned pears (may be under ripe)
½ cup sugar
orange juice to cover
2 tbsp. lemon juice
2 tsp. grated lemon rind
½ tsp. ground ginger
¼ cup sliced almonds
whipped cream

Peel pears and scoop out core from blossom end with a melon baller. Don't remove the stem. In saucepan, mix sugar, orange juice, lemon juice, lemon rind and ginger. Bring to a boil. Place pears in syrup. Bring to a second boil. Cover and simmer 10 to 15 minutes, depending on ripeness of pears, until barely fork tender. Remove pears from syrup, cover both with plastic wrap and refrigerate. Serve one pear with sauce and garnish with a bit of flavoured whipped cream and sliced almonds or any tasty fruit sauce.

PESACH BREAKFAST COOKIES

1 cup ground almonds
2 cups ground walnuts
¼ cup raisins
1 cup sugar
2 whole eggs
1 egg white
1 tsp. vanilla
1½ tsp. cinnamon
pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 350. In a bowl, combine all the ingredients and mix well. Let the mixture rest for 20 minutes. Drop by large teaspoonfuls on a parchment-lined cookie sheet. Bake for 10 minutes until lightly browned. Let cool a bit before removing to a baking rack. Makes 2 dozen.

BANANA PANCAKES

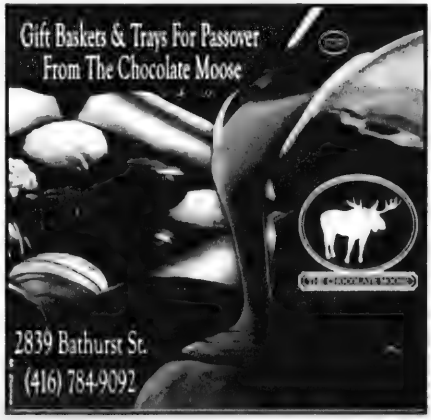
3 large eggs
½ cup matzah meal
2 tbsp. matzah cake meal
2 tbsp. sugar
¼ cup sour cream (can be low fat)
¼ cup cottage cheese, small curd (can be low fat)
dash salt
1 ripe banana, mashed

In a bowl combine the eggs, matzah meal, matzah cake meal, sugar, sour cream, cottage cheese and salt. Mix well. Add the banana and mix well. Heat oil in a skillet and spoon the batter into the pan 3 pancakes at a time (the batter will spread). Turn when sides are cooked and the middle is bubbly. Serve with syrup. Serves 3 to 4.

MIXED FRUIT SMOOTHIE

½ cup orange juice (or grapefruit or apple juice)
1 large banana
1 cup peaches, drained
1 cup whole frozen strawberries
½ cup canned pineapple, drained

Combine all the ingredients in a blender and process until smooth. Makes two big servings. You can add your own variations, such as fresh peaches, papaya or coconut for a tropical taste. Just make sure you keep the banana, the whole frozen strawberries and the juice.



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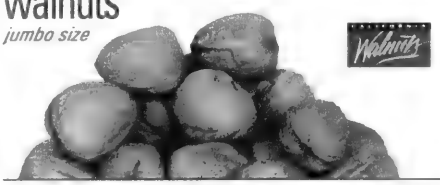

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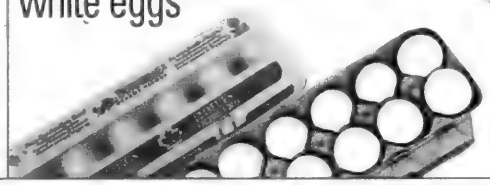

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3.39 2lt jar

chai kosher, cor218 fresh, boneless
chicken breast
6.99 lb 15.41/kg

chai kosher, cor218 canada grade A
frozen turkeys
2.69 lb 5.93/kg

product of mexico, fresh
leeks
1.49 bunch

ceres, 100% pure
fruit juice blend
assorted varieties
1.99 1lt tetra

schmerling's
chocolate bars
assorted varieties
2.49 100g pkg

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cucumbers
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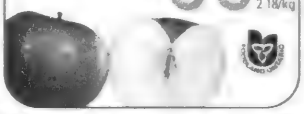
99¢ 540ml tin

product of ontario extra fancy fresh
spy apples
99¢ lb 2.18/kg



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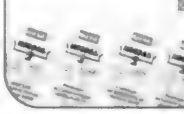

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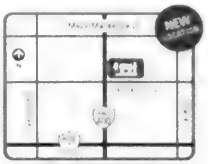

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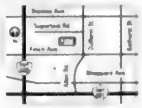

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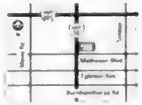

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How they voted

These are the final results of the 2006 Israeli election

Kadima	**29 seats**
Labor	**20 seats**
Shas	**12 seats**
Likud	**12 seats**
Yisrael Beitenu	**11 seats**
National Union / NRP	**9 seats**
Gil (Pensioners)	**7 seats**
United Torah Judaism	**6 seats**
Meretz	**5 seats**
United Arab List	**3 seats**
Balad	**3 seats**
Hadash	**3 seats**

Members elected to the 17th Knesset

Kadima (29)

1. Ehud Olmert
2. Shimon Peres
3. Tzipi Livni
4. Meir Sheetrit
5. Avi Dichter
6. Marina Solodkin
7. Haim Ramon
8. Shaul Mofaz
9. Tzahi Hanegbi
10. Avraham Hirschson
11. Uriel Reichman
12. Gideon Ezra
13. Roni Bar-On
14. Dalia Itzik
15. Ze'ev Boim
16. Ya'akov Edri
17. Ze'ev Elkin
18. Majalhe Whbee
19. Ruhama Avraham
20. Michael Ben-Sasson
21. Shlomo Brazanich
22. Eli Aflalo
23. David Tal
24. Avigdor Yitzhaki
25. Ronit Tirosh
26. Michael Nudelman
27. Otniel Shneller
28. Amira Dotan
29. Yoel Hassan

Labor (20)

1. Amir Peretz
2. Isaac Herzog
3. Ophir Paz-Pines
4. Avishai Braverman
5. Yuli Tamir
6. Ami Ayalon
7. Eitan Cabel
8. Benjamin Ben-Eliezer
9. Shelly Yacimovich
10. Michael Melchior
11. Matan Vilna'i
12. Collette Avital
13. Efraim Sneh
14. Danny Yatom
15. Nadia Hilu
16. Shalom Simhon
17. Orit Noked
18. Yoram Marciano
19. Ghaleb Majadle
20. Shakeef Shanan

Shas (12)

1. Eli Yishai
2. Yitzhak Cohen
3. Amnon Cohen
4. Meshulam Nahari
5. Ariel Atiyas
6. Shlomo Benizri
7. David Azoulay
8. Yitzhak Vaknin
9. Nissim Ze'ev
10. Ya'akov Margi
11. Chaim Amsalam
12. Avraham Michaeli

Likud (12)

1. Benjamin Netanyahu
2. Silvan Shalom
3. Moshe Kahlon
4. Gilad Erdan
5. Gideon Sa'ar
6. Michael Eitan
7. Reuven Rivlin
8. Dan Naveh
9. Yuval Steinitz
10. Limor Livnat
11. Natan Sharansky
12. Israel Katz

Yisrael Beitenu (11)

1. Avigdor Lieberman
2. Yuri Shtern
3. Yisrael Hason
4. Yosef Hagall
5. Estherina Tartman
6. Stas Misezhnikoff
7. Sofa Landver
8. Yitzhak Ahronovich
9. Robert Iltov
10. Alex Miller
11. Leah Shemtov

Gil - Pensioners (7)

1. Rafi Eitan
2. Ya'akov Ben-Izri
3. Moshe Sharoni
4. Yitzhak Ziv
5. Yitzhak Galanti
6. Elhanan Glazer
7. Sarah Marom

National Union/NRP (9)

1. Benny Eilon
2. Zevulun Orlev
3. Zvi Hendel
4. Effi Eitam
5. Nissan Slomansky
6. Yitzhak Levy
7. Eli Gabai
8. Arye Eldad
9. Uri Ariel

United Torah Judaism (6)

1. Ya'acov Litzman
2. Avraham Ravitz
3. Meir Porush
4. Moshe Gafni
5. Shmuel Halpert
6. Yisrael Eichler

Meretz (5)

1. Yossi Beilin
2. Haim Oron
3. Ran Cohen
4. Zehava Gal-On
5. Avshalom Vilan

United Arab List (3)

1. Ibrahim Sarsour
2. Ahmed Tibi
3. Taleb a-Sanaa

Balad (3)

1. Azmi Bishara
2. G'emal Zehalkah
3. Wasal Taha

Hadash (3)

1. Muhammad Barakei
2. Hanna Sweid
3. Dov Hanin

Kadima leader Ehud Olmert celebrates results on election night. [Isranet photo]

Israel Election 2006

Labor launches surprise bid to form coalition

By GIL HOFFMAN
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Labor Party leaders decided late Sunday not to hold meetings with representatives of right-wing parties in an effort to convince them to ask Israeli President Moshe Katsav to call on Labor head Amir Peretz to form the next government.

Peretz's attempt to form a coalition with right-wing parties turned the political scene upside down on Sunday and put into question the assumption that the next government would be formed by acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert, whose Kadima party gained the most seats – 29 versus Labor's 19 – in last month's election.

Both parties met with Katsav Sunday and both nominated their leaders as the next prime minister. Coalition talks could not begin until Katsav had made his choice.

Israel's Basic Law does not obligate the president to appoint the leader of the largest party to form a coalition. He could choose another party head whom he believes could form the most stable government.

In a late-night meeting Sunday called by the Labor chairman, Labor heads agreed that they would not keep other parties from asking the president to nominate Peretz, but that those parties would be doing so of their own volition.

The decision came following a Likud Party demand that Labor formally request support for a Peretz premiership if it wanted the Likud to consider it.

In an unexpected political turnabout, when the National Union-National Religious Party and Meretz were to visit Katsav on Monday, the rightist NU-NRP said that it would recommend that Katsav ask Peretz to form a "socioeconomic emergency government," while the leftist Meretz is expected to recommend an Olmert-led coalition.

The NU-NRP faction based its decision on the assumption that Peretz would preserve the status quo on diplomatic issues and refrain from implementing Olmert's plan to withdraw unilaterally from most of the West Bank. Meretz leader Yossi Beilin vowed not to sit in a government with the right and expressed anger at Peretz for considering the idea.

Kadima officials noted that during the election campaign, Peretz was quoted as ruling out forming a government with the right because "such a cynical move would harm my credibility and ideology."

Olmert's associates said they hoped that Peretz would "stop acting childish, come to his senses, realize his mistake, give up his attempts to form a coalition and accept Olmert's offer to meet with him." They warned that Olmert could decide to avenge Peretz's behaviour by forming a coalition without Labor.

"There is no chance that a government without Kadima can be formed," Kadima MK-elect Shimon Peres said. "Purim lasts only one day. Eventually you have to take off the costume and decide with whom you want to sit and with whom you don't."

The Gil Pensioners Party decided Sunday to recommend that Olmert form the coalition, but Shas and the Likud delayed their scheduled meetings with Katsav until Tuesday to see how other parties act, and Israel Beiteinu officials, who recommended no candidate to Katsav on Sunday, said they would convene on Monday to reconsider their decision. The delays are expected to force Katsav to hold another round of meetings with faction heads before deciding who should form the government.

A prospective Peretz-led coalition would have included the 70 MKs of Labor, Shas, United Torah Judaism, Meretz, the Likud, NU-NRP and Gil.

Labor secretary-general Eitan Cabel, who led the Labor delegation to speak Sunday with Katsav, had said that Peretz was serious about the move and confident that he would be the next prime minister.

"In this election the public did not unequivocally determine the largest party," Cabel said. "This is the first time that the leading party has won less than 30 seats. Our figures show that there is more than one government option. There's a possibility for a socioeconomic emergency government."

Labor leader Amir Peretz, above, thanks his supporters, one of whom, left, is very happy.
[Israel and Israel Sun photos]

But other Labor MKs scoffed at the idea, calling it "empty posturing to drive Kadima's bargaining price down."

The Likud faction deliberated whether to recommend that Peretz form the government or to endorse no candidate. Likud chairman Benjamin Netanyahu, who would be a senior minister in a Peretz-led government, is said to favour the first option.

"I feel more comfortable with Peretz's policies that call for negotiations with the Palestinians than with Olmert's plans to withdraw unilaterally," Netanyahu confidant MK Yuval Steinitz said.

But MK Reuven Rivlin criticized the idea, saying it was not worth the risk of harming Likud's credibility. "I think we are playing a dangerous game, and we cannot go with Labor unless it makes serious concessions to us so we will not have so little in common," he said. "The nation decided it wanted the Likud in the opposition, and that's where we should be."

Following in the footsteps of a charismatic leader

Comment

By SHLOMO AVINERI
Jerusalem Post

Ehud Olmert is no Ariel Sharon. He lacks Sharon's military experience, his charismatic presence, his brutality and his frightening cunning. And Olmert's reputation as a sharp-tongued polemicist and wheeler-dealer has not exactly endeared him to the Israeli public.

Yet he has managed to step, albeit gingerly, into Sharon's shoes in the three months since the latter became incapacitated. Except for boasting, once, that the campaign had already been won – a statement that must have cost Kadima dearly – he did not make any mistakes during his difficult pre-election stewardship as acting prime minister. More than that, he went out on a limb and courageously delineated his credo for further Israeli unilateral steps vis-a-vis the Palestinians.

Few people, in Israel or abroad, have been thrown into such a cauldron. But Olmert won the election, though less resoundingly than he and his new party had expected, and he is now his own man.

He will have to stitch together a government coalition under less favourable conditions than the inflated public opinion polls suggested. And the comparison with Sharon will continue to haunt him.

Yet one can recall interesting cases in recent history of apparently grey, run-of-the-mill politicians who succeeded charismatic giants and won their place in the hearts of their people and in the pages of history.

In Israel, for example, the lacklustre Levi Eshkol became prime minister after David Ben-Gurion's angry second and final withdrawal from power. The quintessential compromiser, whose favourite drink was said to be "half-coffee, half-tea," became one of Israel's greatest prime ministers.

With little military experience but with a wisdom partly innate and partly gained by experience, he was responsible, as head of the government and minister of defence, for preparing the Israel Defence Forces for what turned out to be its most crucial and finest hour: its victory in the 1967 Six Day War. At the same time, he succeeded – despite some visible slips in orchestrating crucial U.S. support for Israel's decision to pre-emptively go to war.

In the United States, there are two examples of post-charismatic leaders who excelled in their roles: Harry S. Truman and Lyndon B. Johnson.

When the charismatic and popular Franklin Delano Roosevelt died in April 1945, just before the end of World War II, few people had ever heard of his vice-president, Harry S. Truman. And among those who had, many held a low opinion of his abilities. A party hack, a machine politician from the Midwest saddled with some shady political deals, a failed businessman – he lacked all of the the revered Roosevelt's apparent qualities: an aristocratic demeanour and polish, wealth and culture, a lofty and at the same time popular, rhetorical style, and an obvious love of the nation.

Yet Truman was the American president who stabilized the post-1945 world. He made the wrenching decision to use the atomic bomb against Japan; imposed a tough occupation regime on defeated Germany and Japan, which helped them with their successful democratic development; rescued Europe's shattered economies through the Marshall Plan; and stood up to Stalin and Soviet communism.

Few people who saw him at his first international conference in Potsdam, where he appeared almost hapless, thought he was of the stuff of which great statesmen are made. And yet, he went on to become one of the 20th century's greatest American presidents.

In a similar fashion, the plebeian Texan, Lyndon Johnson, succeeded the suave and charismatic John F. Kennedy in one of America's darkest moments. Yet he was able to ensure continuity. And while today he is remembered for the Vietnam debacle, few recall that it was Kennedy – the prince of Camelot who first dragged the United States into that Southeast Asian quagmire.

Johnson's greatness lay even more in that he was a southerner who pushed through the major transformation of American domestic politics that finally gave American blacks their civil rights as equal citizens of the republic.

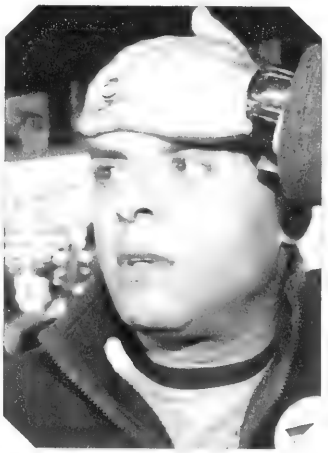
Civil rights were never at the centre of Kennedy's agenda. For all JFK's appeal to the liberal, educated upper middle class, it was Johnson, a somewhat shady wheeler-dealer, who assured African Americans their place in the sun. He combined vision and earthiness with the political muscle needed to achieve a resounding victory for equality and human decency.

There is no guarantee that Olmert will develop in the mould of Eshkol, Truman and Johnson. On the other hand, for those who find it difficult to wean themselves from larger-than-life charismatic leaders, these examples carry a clear message: some of the most significant achievements in modern democracies have been gained under the stewardship of non-charismatic leaders who were able to combine their wisdom and judgment with the ability to pursue successfully the responsibilities with which they found themselves saddled by the inscrutable developments of history.

Shlomo Avineri is professor of political science at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Likud to investigate election failure

By GIL HOFFMAN
Jerusalem Post



Likud supporters show their disappointment with the election results last Tuesday **[Israel Sun photos]**

TEL AVIV — The Likud party decided unanimously on Sunday to adopt MK Michael Eitan's proposal to form a commission of inquiry to investigate its fall from 40 seats to 12 in last week's election.

Eitan will present a list of committee members, none of whom will be current MKs, to the faction in upcoming days. Likud chairman Benjamin Netanyahu came under fire after the meeting from MKs who were upset that the issue of the party's electoral failure was limited to the last five minutes of a two-hour meeting.

"It's a bad joke that after such a colossal loss they are pretending like it's no big deal," said one participant in the meeting at the Likud's Tel Aviv headquarters. "[Netanyahu] is trying to brush off the inquiry as if it's an annoying obligation. We didn't discuss who the commission members will be, their mandate or timetable. They can sit for three years."

Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin said he favoured the commission of inquiry because he wanted to know whether the party's downfall was connected to the disengagement plan, Netanyahu's economic policies or another reason.

"After every failure you have to see what brought us to this disaster so we can learn our lessons," Rivlin said. "Were people punishing us or deserting us? I think the people of Israel will return, but we have to find out why they deserted us."

The long awaited clash between Netanyahu and his number two, MK Silvan Shalom, did not happen in the meeting. Shalom decided not to say anything about the election, because so little time was allocated to the topic after two hours of deliberations about whom the Likud should support to form the next government.

Unlike Friday's Likud faction meeting, the MKs refrained from attacking each other. Participants said they learned their lessons from headlines after Friday's meeting in which MK Dan Naveh called MK Gilad Erdan a "little pisher" and Shalom requested that Netanyahu's spokesperson Ophir Akunis be removed from the room because he attacked Likud MKs on the radio while continuing to receive a salary from the party.

The soul-searching and name-calling were all a result of the big bang set off by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon when he bolted Likud to form the Kadima party.

The move flattened a party that had governed Israel until this fall, but earned only 12 seats in the election and very nearly lost its position as the country's leading right-wing party.

Sources close to Shalom said after the election that Netanyahu had destroyed the party and could no longer remain its chairman. Shalom himself boycotted a late-night Likud faction meeting at party headquarters in Tel Aviv after the results were in, opting instead to stay at his Ramat Gan home to plan his next move.

Yet Netanyahu vowed to stay on as leader, despite speculation he would resign if he failed to win at least 15 seats.

"I am committed to continuing in the way that we started to ensure that the movement will be rehabilitated," he declared just after 11 p.m. on election night, describing the initial results as a "hard hit" after the "first blow" when Sharon left the party.

"We will unite our powers and stick to our path and return the Likud to leading the state," he maintained. "We will see better days."

The crowd, which had earlier expressed shock and despair over early returns, broke into cheers at his announcement. Several party stalwarts also backed his decision to stay at the top, though no one said it would be easy.

"As a leader he should stay and rebuild the party," said MK Gideon Sa'ar, who headed the party's public relations team. "I don't think it's the right thing to do right now, to start another series of internal conflicts within the Likud."

Many Likud MKs cited the major internal division – between Sharon and his Kadima backers and those who remained in the Likud – as being responsible for Tuesday's poor showing.

Eitan went further, saying, "We are all responsible."

Eitan, MK Uzi Landau and other senior Likud members ruled out participation in a Kadima-led coalition.

But some candidates did express criticism of Netanyahu, and many suggested the party will have to take stock and change tack.

Ahead of the vote, Rivlin told the *Jerusalem Post* that while Netanyahu had attracted those who "worship him and appreciate him," there were "others [who] hate his guts."

Many blamed him for the economic hardships caused them by his policies when he was the finance minister in the last government. "He became one of the symbols that brought misery to many people," Rivlin said. "We have lost many people who believed that the Likud championed the poor people."

Danny Danon, who was too far down on the Likud list to hope to enter the Knesset, said it was up to the next generation of voters to turn the party around.

"We as the young leadership of the Likud need to check [within ourselves] what we need to do to improve our movement," he said. He predicted that "the next elections will be sooner than we think."

With files from Tovah Lazaroff, Hilary Leila Krieger and Ravit Cohen

Fewer women elected to 17th Knesset

By GREER FAY CASHMAN
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — While women have gained greater prominence in legal circles and as company directors, they have made no headway as legislators.

In fact, there will be fewer women in the 17th Knesset than there were in the 16th. Several women who were among the 18 in the previous Knesset failed to gain re-election, and the women who are among the new faces in the Knesset failed by one to make up the difference.

In the 16th Knesset, Likud boasted the largest female representation with seven women MKs prior to the defection of Tzipi Livni and Ruhama Avraham to Kadima.

Labor was second with four women MKs until Dalia Itzik moved over to Kadima. Shinui started out with three women MKs, but was reduced to two following the death of Yehudit Naot. Meretz, the National Religious party, Am Ehad and Yisrael B'Aliya had one woman each.

Gila Finkelstein of the National Religious party was not returned to office, nor was Ilana Cohen of Am Ehad, which was Amir Peretz's party before he returned to Labor. Marina Solodkin, who was elected on a Yisrael B'Aliya ticket moved over to Kadima, while Meretz MK Zahava Gal-On managed to win another term despite her party's loss of mandates.

Likud MK Naomi Blumenthal, who has been sentenced to eight months imprisonment for bribery and obstruction of justice, refused Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu's request to take her name off the list for the 17th Knesset, but given the results of the elections, she would have been out even if she had not been convicted.

Kadima, with six females, has the largest number of women in the 17th Knesset. Headed by Livni, the list includes Solodkin, Itzik, Abraham, Ronit Tirosh and Amira Dotan. Labor has five women: Yuli Tamir, Sheli Yacimovich, Colette Avital, Nadia Hilo and Orit Noked. There are three women on the Yisrael Beiteinu list – Esterina Tartman, Sofa Landver and Lia Shemtov. Limor Livnat remains the sole woman on the Likud list and Gal-On is the only woman on Meretz's.

One of the new faces in the Knesset is that of Sarah Merom-Shalev, of the Pensioners party.

Of the new female MKs worth watching is Labor's Nadia Hilo, a third-time-lucky candidate, after two previous failures to get into the Knesset.

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Hamas takes over, pledges 'battle'

By KHALED ABU TOAMEH
Jerusalem Post

GAZA CITY — The day the Hamas cabinet took office in the Palestinian terrorities, Khaled Mashaal, the Damascus-based Hamas leader, promised the Palestinians "a dignified and proud life behind the resistance in defence of their honour, their land and their pride."

He told Al-Jazeera: "Our battle is only against the Zionist occupation."

Hamas ministers entered office on March 28, after ceremonies at which the outgoing ministers wished them success and promised to help them carry out their duties.

"Today, Hamas took control of all the ministries," said Minister of State Atef Udwan. "The new ministers will start implementing their policies immediately."

Foreign Minister Mahmoud Zahar chose to begin his new career by launching a scathing attack on the United States. "The U.S. is biased toward Israel, guilty of crimes against the Muslim and Arab world and is widening the rift between the American people and those of the Middle East," he said

Zahar, who replaced Nasser al-Kidwa, a nephew of former Palestinian Authority president Yasser Arafat, said Hamas would not cave in to international pressure to change its ways and that it had no plans to negotiate with Israel.

Referring to a statement by U.S. President George W. Bush that Washington would provide no aid to a PA government headed by Hamas unless it changes its extremist policies, Zahar said the comments were in line with American support for Israel in the United Nations and its massive aid to Israel.

"America is committing big crimes against the Arab and Islamic countries," he told the Associated Press. "This new decision will intensify the gap between the American people, American interests and the Middle East in general. America is giving $3 billion annually to expand settlements and to confiscate our rights and our land."

He also condemned as "immoral" Canada's decision to cut off aid to the new Hamas government.

"Is the Canadian state willing to starve the Palestinian people while the Israelis are committing major crimes against Palestinian industry, Palestinian society, the Palestinian economy, occupying their land?" he asked. "Is this is a moral principle according to which Israel should be blessed and supported by the Canadian government and people?"

Zahar said Hamas would seek new international alliances beyond its traditional Arab friends. "The new channels will be Africa, Asian countries, including China, and the South American continent, for assistance politically and also financially," he said.

Salah Bardawil, spokesperson for Hamas in the Palestinian Legislative Council, also attacked the U.S. decision to ban contact with the Hamas cabinet. He said the decision would not contribute to stability in the region because it sided with Israel.

"This is an unjust decision that would deprive the U.S. of the possibility of acting as a neutral party," he said.

Hamas spokesperson Sami Abu Zuhri urged the Canadian government to reconsider its decision, saying all the funds from the international community would be spent for the welfare of the Palestinians. "Despite this decision, Hamas is interested in establishing relations with Canadian officials," he said. "Canada can't ignore the results of the democratic elections."

Taysir Umran, a senior Hamas official in Nablus, described the U.S. position on the Hamas cabinet as a "fatal blow to the 'road map' [peace plan] and the Quartet." (The Quartet is made up of the United States, Russia, United Nations and European Union.) This position does not serve the cause of stability in the Middle East, he said.

Chief PA negotiator Saeb Erekat expressed fear that the West would boycott the Hamas cabinet in the same way it boycotted Arafat in 2002

"Unfortunately, this would take us back to the period when the U.S. and the EU decided to cut off their ties with Arafat and isolate him," he said, urging the international community to continue financial aid.

"What is important is that the donor countries continue their aid to the Palestinian people," he said.

Former cabinet minister and Fatah legislator Muhammad Dahlan also condemned the Canadian decision, saying it was "a form of collective punishment against the Palestinians because of their democratic choice."

The smooth transition of power was marred by statements made by outgoing interior minister Nasser Youssef, who announced that most of the PA security forces would report to PA President Mahmoud Abbas and not the new interior minister, Said Siam.

Youssef's announcement drew sharp criticism from Hamas leaders, who said that Abbas did not have any jurisdiction over the security forces. According to Youssef, the new interior minister would have control only over the civil police, civil defence and the Preventive Security Service. The other security forces, such as Force 17, military intelligence and general intelligence, as well as the National Security Forces, would remain under the control of the PA chairman.

Siam reiterated that the cabinet would not arrest gunmen or dismantle militias

"We will not put our sons in prison for political membership or resisting occupation, because occupation is the reason for the problem," he told reporters. "At the same time, we will reach an understanding with all strugglers to take into consideration the national interest, on the basis that resistance is a legitimate right."

The new cabinet's first challenge will be to pay the salaries of more than 140,000 civil servants. Finance Minister Omar Abdel-Razeq said last Thursday that he saw no problem with March salaries being paid but gave no time frame. His predecessor, Jihad al-Wazir, said employees should be paid by mid-April

Five die in heavy rains, floods

Unseasonable heavy rains across Israel on Sunday caused flash flooding and chaos on many roads. In one weather-related accident in the Jordan Valley, three people were killed after a driver lost control of his car and collided with another vehicle. In Wadi Ara, above, near the town of Umm al-Fahem, a 23-year old Arab-Israeli woman was killed when her car was swept away in a deluge of mud and water. A Palestinian man, 26, from the West Bank village of Beit Anan was also killed when his car was swept away near the village of Bil'lin. In the busy Megiddo Junction, near Hadera, police and rescue workers had to help scores of motorists from their cars when they became caught in the torrent. Overall, more than 11 centimetres of rain fell in Jerusalem and 7 cm fell in Tel Aviv. The Sea of Galilee also reportedly rose 1.5 cm in a span of 24 hours. More heavy rain was forecast for the next few days.
[Isranet photos]

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Deadline announced for slave labour compensation

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany announced last week that under German law, Sept. 30 is the last day that payments from the German Foundation, "Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future," will be made to eligible Holocaust survivors and heirs of survivors who have applied to the Conference's program for former slave and forced labourers.

No new applications for payments from the German Foundation can be made. Only claims filed before the deadline that remain open are being processed.

You must contact the Claims Conference if you are a Holocaust survivor, or heir of a survivor, who submitted a timely application to the program for former slave and forced labourers and:

- have been approved for payment, but have not received the full payment; or
- have not received notification about the status of the claim; or
- have received an heir application packet and have not yet returned the required forms.

If a person eligible for payment dies, the person's heirs must notify the Claims Conference within six months of the death of the eligible person or by Sept. 30, whichever is sooner, in order to receive payment.

All time limits related to appeals and to heirs that have not expired as of Sept. 30 terminate on that date.

All communications to the Claims Conference described above (other than regarding appeals or heir deadline notification) must be postmarked by May 15 and must arrive at the Claims Conference no later than June 1.

These deadlines also apply to the German Foundation fund for medical experiments and other personal injuries.

The U.S. court supervising the Swiss Banks Settlement Slave Labour Class I has adopted the administrative deadlines of the German Foundation.

In cases where the result of a timely appeal for a payment was negative but documentary proof of eligibility was located by the applicant subsequent to the appeal decision, it may become possible to review the earlier decision. Applicants must contact the Claims Conference appeals office in communication postmarked by May 15, and that communication must arrive at the Claims Conference Appeals Office no later than June 1. Applicants are asked to keep written proof of the date of mailing, fax or e-mail communication.

Canadians can obtain more information by contacting, Claims Conference, 15 East 26 St., Room 906, New York, NY, 10010, USA. They can also call 1-646-536-9100, fax 1-212-679-2126, or e-mail info@claimscon.org.

Additional information can be found at www.claimscon.org.

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Israel Briefs

'Quartet' warns Hamas

The "Quartet" working for Mideast peace warned the new Palestinian government to recognize Israel and renounce terrorism if it wants financial aid. The statement by the diplomatic body composed of the United States, European Union, Russia and United Nations came one day after a Hamas-led government was sworn in by the Palestinian Authority. The new PA foreign minister, Mahmoud Zahar, has said Hamas has no plans to change its policies on these issues. The European Union currently gives the Palestinians $600 million (US) a year. Zahar also accused the United States of crimes against Muslims around the world.

Bush warns Palestinians

Palestinians must choose if they want a government that wants to destroy Israel, U.S. President George W. Bush said. "The Palestinians must make a choice as to whether or not it makes sense for them to have a government that says they want to destroy their neighbor," Bush said last week. "I don't think it does." Bush fielded questions at Freedom House, a Washington group that assesses democratization throughout the world. A woman who identified herself as a Palestinian refugee asked Bush, "Why is the United States punishing us and cutting funds for people who chose fair and free elections?" The United States is cutting funding to the PA after the terror group Hamas assumed power following PA elections in January. Bush replied, "I think that aid should go to suffering Palestinians," but not to a government that "has expressed its desire to destroy its neighbour."

Gaza rocket fired at Israel

For the first time, Palestinian terrorists fired a Katyusha rocket at Israel from Gaza. The factory-made rocket, described in Israeli media as a Russian-made Katyusha, landed near Ashkelon last week but caused no casualties. Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility for the launch, but declined to elaborate on how the rocket got to the Gaza Strip. According to Israeli security sources, the rocket, which has a maximum range of 15 miles, fell short due to a faulty launcher.

IDF targets Katyusha terror

Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz ordered the army to increase its pressure on terror groups, specifically Islamic Jihad, which claimed responsibility for last week's Katyusha rocket attack from Gaza. "The launching of the Katyusha is very grave and severe, and it demands decisive and unequivocal actions to dismantle this terrorist infrastructure," Mofaz said. The defence minister ordered the security forces to do all they could to "get their hands" on those behind the attacks. He stressed the need to target those who planned the attacks, those who launched the rockets and those in possession of the weapons.

Suicide attack kills four

Four Israelis were killed last Thursday night after a suicide bomber blew up inside an Israeli car near the gas station at the entrance to the settlement of Kedumim in the northern West Bank. According to Kedumim Regional Council head Daniella Weiss, the four Israelis killed included an elderly couple from the settlement, another Kedumim resident later discovered in the vehicle, and a girl from the centre of the country. The army said it appeared Israelis travelling in the car picked up a Palestinian hitchhiker with an explosive belt who blew himself up as the car travelled near Kedumim. The Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades took responsibility for the attack, saying the bomber was Ahmad Mashrake, 24.

Saudi lauds Osirak attack

Israel's 1981 attack on Iraq's nuclear reactor was "probably" fortunate, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Washington said. Asked last week whether the Saudis now welcomed the 1981 attack on Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor, given Iraq's subsequent aggression against Kuwait, Turki al-Faisal answered, "Probably, yes." Faisal appeared caught off guard by the question, which came when he called on Israel to disarm to create a nuclear-free Middle East. "We all know that Israel has atomic weapons and that's why removing these threats from the Middle East on a uniform basis would serve Israel's purpose as well as the rest of the countries in the area," he said. Israel's attack on Iraq was widely condemned at the time.

JTA and Jerusalem Post

Jewish refugee campaign goes to the EU

By JOEL CLARK
JTA

BRUSSELS — Jews who fled Arab countries following the creation of the State of Israel have taken their demands for restitution to the European Union.

More than 20 delegates from Jewish communities in seven countries gathered in Brussels recently under the auspices of the International Rights and Redress Campaign, meeting members of the European Parliament to discuss their demands.

The global campaign aims to raise international awareness of the heritage of Jewish refugees from Arab countries and to document human rights violations and loss of assets.

The campaign's official launch had been due to take place during Passover, but the sudden incapacitation of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in January and Israeli elections delayed the launch until November.

Organizers hope to bring worldwide attention to the issue in November through the media, political lobbying and education.

The campaign was launched by the U.S.-based Justice for Jews from Arab Countries, in conjunction with the World Organization of Jews from Arab Countries.

"We want to underscore the fact that Jews were also victims of the Arab-Israeli conflict and should be recognized as such," said Stanley Urman, the campaign's director. "It's an injustice to recognize one victim population but not another."

At least 850,000 Jews lived in Arab countries in 1948, but fewer than 8,000 remained by 2001. Two-thirds were absorbed into Israel, while some moved elsewhere.

Most fled or were forced to leave their homes after the creation of the State of Israel in 1948, receiving little or no compensation from Arab governments for their considerable assets.

The campaign seeks to register all these refugees and to preserve their testimony at a special unit of Israel's Justice Ministry.

Organizers are targeting the United States, Russia, United Nations and European Union – the four members of the diplomatic Quartet working for Israeli-Palestinian peace – to put the issue on the international agenda before the campaign is officially launched.

> ***Campaign focusing for now on securing international recognition that there were Jewish refugees from the Arab world***

Frederique Ries, a member of the European Parliament, met delegates in Brussels and said she would work to put the issue on the EU agenda.

"Although this was not a new issue to me, most" Parliament members "will be unaware that there were in fact more Jewish refugees than Palestinian refugees," Ries said. "This is a question of justice, and I welcome the representations that have been made to put this on the agenda."

Urman said the campaign was focusing for now on securing international recognition that there were Jewish refugees from the Arab world, and that human rights violations took place.

Next month, a bipartisan resolution will be proposed to both houses of Congress requiring all U.S. officials to make references to Jewish refugees alongside Palestinian refugees whenever the issue is raised in an international setting.

Organizers have held preliminary talks with Russia and are hoping to meet Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov in the near future.

Nessim Hamaoui, who was forced to leave Egypt in 1958, travelled to Brussels from his home in Sao Paulo.

"I'm here not just for myself, but for the one million other Jews who were expelled from their homelands after 1948," Hamaoui told JTA. "We had our homes, our hopes and our dreams there. All that vanished, and it's time to bring justice to the refugees."

The International Rights and Redress Campaign is supported by Jewish communities in 33 countries.

Julien Klener, president of the Consistoire, an umbrella organization for religious Belgian Jews, welcomed the meeting in Brussels.

"Somehow the existence and history of Jewish refugees has been forgotten over time, and the Palestinian issue has been overstressed," he said.

Advertising Feature

5 THE DAILY NEWSPAPER Thursday, March [illegible], 2006

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– BY GADY ILANOV

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The above account is a true story related at the recent Meir Panim Carlebach Concert by Ayala Hagage, principal of a school in Israel. Name has been changed to protect child's privacy.

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TAU expert working on early-warning system for bird flu

By MATTHEW KALMAN
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — In a nondescript corner of an anonymous administration building on the campus of Tel Aviv University (TAU), Yossi Leshem has been using the latest satellite technology to track the movements of a couple code-named Princess and Jonas.

For nearly a year, Israeli experts were able to track the pair as they left their adopted home in Germany and set out on their travels. Jonas traversed Europe to southern Spain, where he spent several months before rejoining his partner back in Germany. Princess journeyed east across Turkey and Lebanon, passing through Israel, the Palestinian territories and Egypt before making a long stopover in Sudan. She then continued on to South Africa, returning to rendezvous with Jonas in Germany 235 days later.

For more than five years, Leshem has been tracking the travels of Princess and Jonas and dozens like them. He worries that their apparently benign wanderings could inflict death and devastation across the world, at a cost of untold numbers of human lives.

Princess and Jonas are white storks, the long-legged waterfowl that nest in Europe during the summer and migrate south for the winter. Princess is among an estimated half a billion fowl that fly over Israel twice a year on their way to and from their nesting grounds.

Until now, the spectacular arrival of vast flocks of birds in the Hula Valley in northern Israel had been regarded as a nuisance for the farmers, whose seed they feed on – and a beautiful twice-yearly attraction for thousands of bird-watchers from around the world who flock to Israel to see the storks, pelicans, vultures, and even eagles.

But with outbreaks of deadly avian flu in East and Southeast Asia, Africa and Europe, and closer countries such as Turkey and Egypt, Leshem says the fascinating journeys of birds such as Princess and Jonas could be the key to understanding how avian flu might spread around the globe. Every autumn, birds from northern Europe and northeast Asia fly south, soaring past the eastern Mediterranean region before fanning out across Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, then fly the same route in reverse every spring. The resulting crush creates an avian air-traffic jam above Israel twice a year.

"Birds infected with avian flu originating in the Far East are funnelled through the Israeli 'bottleneck' as the birds migrate, and the virus can be passed through the air," said Leshem, an air force colonel. "If a flock of migrating geese land near a chicken farm, the virus can spread like fire."

"The biggest threat is a mutation of the virus and its transfer to people," said Leshem. "We know that birds are disease carriers. It could be a worldwide disaster."

To date, the H5N1 flu virus has killed 95 people out of 175 confirmed human cases worldwide. Those deaths have occurred in a swath from China to Turkey, according to the World Health Organization.

Perched on a hillside near the Latrun junction, about 800 feet above sea level in the foothills of the West Bank, Gen. Leonid Dinevich recalls the days when he commanded 40 Soviet air bases, 500 warplanes and silos containing thousands of ballistic missiles.

Back then, he occupied a spacious office at the top of a 14-story tower at a base in Kishinev in what is now Moldova. Today, Dinevich, 64, spends nine hours a day in an MMR-5 radar station, a camouflaged hut on wheels with a 15-foot antenna circling slowly in a huge sphere mounted on the roof. The cramped interior is alive with blinking lights, computer screens and buzzing equipment.

"Once a general, always a general," said Dinevich. "Today, I am the general of millions of birds, defending against the new enemy of avian flu."

Dinevich and Leshem established the Latrun radar to track migration patterns and warn aircraft of birds in their flight path to avoid collisions. Now they hope that the data collected at Latrun will be developed into an early-warning system to help halt the spread of disease.

"We want to create a network with radar stations here in Israel, in Russia, in Bulgaria, in Turkey, in Jordan – and many more," said Dinevich. "We have to unify them into a single system. On the screen you can see millions of birds on their way to Turkey. We can warn our friends in Turkey that tomorrow the birds will reach there, and they must cover up their poultry and other domestic birds. Then Turkey needs to warn Russia, and so on."

In keeping with the international nature of the threat, the Israeli experts have been working closely with regional colleagues.

Imad Atrash, director of the Palestine Wildlife Society, said the avian flu threat has brought together Israeli and Palestinian officials at a time when co-operation between the two governments on many other issues has come almost to a standstill.

"There is full co-operation," said Atrash. "We are all aware that the disease will make no distinction between Israeli, Palestinian, Christian, Muslim or Jew. We all face the same problem. It will affect everyone. Disease knows no boundaries."

Three weeks after its discovery in the country, Israeli and international health authorities are being cautiously optimistic about their progress in combating bird flu in the region, despite the fact that they are still unable to predict its spread, according to Israeli and Jordanian Health Ministry representatives.

The nature of the disease still makes it "almost impossible" to predict where it will appear next, according to Yair Amikam, deputy director-general for information and international relations at the Health Ministry. "So far, we still don't have any accurate reason we can put our finger on regarding the spread of the virus," he said, adding that health authorities have as yet been unable to narrow down the list of potential carriers, which could include anyone who had been close to the point of contact.

But Amikam said that Israel had been anticipating the arrival of bird flu for more than a year, and had high praise for the way the plans have been followed so far. He pointed out that some hiccups have been reported, including problems with the proper method for the disposal of dead birds, but "generally, we acted fully by the rules we wrote and distributed to the farmers," he said. More than one million birds have been culled, but there is still no way to predict how long the threat will last, he added.

Meanwhile, bird flu was discovered Friday in a kibbutz near the Israeli-Egyptian border. The government quarantined Kibbutz Kerem Shalom and parts of the surrounding area, and will begin culling some 20,000 turkeys there, *Ha'aretz* reported. The discovery brings the number of Israeli communities infected to eight.

With files from Aaron Wenner, JTA, and Ha'artez.

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Arab press more anti-Semitic than ever

By HILARY LEILA KRIEGER
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — The Muhammad cartoon controversy greatly increased the amount of anti-Semitic material in Arab and Muslim newspapers, according to a report issued by the Anti-Defamation League last weekend.

The report highlighted cartoons and opinion pieces that demonized Jews, Israel and the Holocaust in media across the Arab world and in Iran.

The publications cited depicted Jews in "outrageous and deeply anti-Semitic caricatures and themes, including anti-Semitic conspiracy theories of Jews plotting to control U.S. foreign policy and dominate the world," the report said.

For example, in the government daily *Al-Ittihad* from the United Arab Emirates, a cartoon of a Jew holding the world at bay with a gun labelled "the Holocaust" was published on Jan. 24. And, in an apparent reference to the Muhammad cartoons, on Feb. 16 the Bahraini *Akhbar al-Khalij* ran a picture of an ink pot marked with a Star of David accompanied by a pen writing "cartoons harming Allah's messenger."

While anti-Semitic tropes have long filled the Arab media, ADL Israel office spokesperson Arieh O'Sullivan said the intensity of such material "skyrocketed" when Muslim rage exploded over the controversial Muhammad depictions carried in the Danish press and elsewhere.

"Suddenly it caught on like wildfire and every newspaper started to print content that was anti-Semitic or Holocaust related," O'Sullivan said. He added that the worst of the conflagration seemed to be over, as the Muhammad cartoon uproar has died down.

The report also included content from newspapers published before the Danish cartoon controversy erupted at the end of January – though the Muhammad cartoons were published in early fall.

The turning point came when an Iranian newspaper aped the Danish newspaper's Muhammad contest by sponsoring a competition for Holocaust cartoons, according to the ADL.

ADL national director Abraham Foxman said that Muslim and Arab leaders have a "blind spot" and a "level of tolerance" for "blatant anti-Semitism" in the media.

"While the Muslim world acts out violently in response to the Muhammad cartoons and suggests that western freedom of speech has gone too far, the plain fact is newspapers in the Muslim and Arab world continue to engage in vicious stereotyping of Jews."

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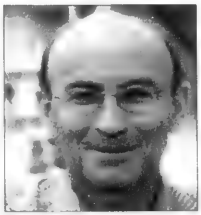
New treatment for prostate cancer undergoing trials

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

An effective, non-invasive treatment for prostate cancer that has few if any side effects and can be administered on an out-patient basis is undergoing clinical trials in Toronto, Montreal, London, Ont., Israel, Britain and France.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men, and the second cause of cancer death.

The drug, Tookad (Hebrew for "warmth of light") was developed by Avigdor Scherz, a professor in the department of plant sciences at the Weizmann Institute of Science. Clinical trials in Toronto are being overseen by Dr. John Trachtenberg, professor of surgery and medical imaging at the university of Toronto, who holds the Fleck Tanenbaum chair in prostatic diseases at the University of Toronto and the University Health Network, and is director of the Prostate Centre at Princess Margaret Hospital, where the clinical trials are being carried out.



Avigdor Scherz, left, and Dr. John Trachtenberg

At a reception last week at Princess Margaret Hospital sponsored by Weizmann Canada, the Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation and Steba Biotech, the pharmaceutical company sponsoring the trials, Trachtenberg and Scherz said that the latest trials were very promising.

"After one treatment, half showed no signs of prostate cancer, there was only one adverse reaction." The rest of the 56 patients treated in the clinical trials at the three sites in Canada "showed no side effects at all," Trachtenberg said.

Conventional treatment, he said, has about the same 50 per cent success rate, but the side effects, which may include rectal injuries, blood loss, incontinence or impotence, can be devastating.

Tookad is a photosynsensitizer (meaning that it is only activated by bright light), made up largely of bacterium chlorophyll, the substance that makes plants green.

Since it is light sensitive, Scherz said, it can be directed at cancer cells and then activated, and will not affect surrounding cells.

Also, it clears the body in a very short time, enabling the patient to recover quickly.

Tiny needles are inserted into the blood vessels of the prostate gland, and fibre-optic cables are threaded through the needles. Tookad is delivered through the cables. Intense laser light is flooded into the area and the drug is activated, leaving the cells adjoining the needles untouched.

Trachtenberg said trials so far have been on patients who had previously been treated for prostate cancer, but whose tumour had returned. The plan is to begin clinical trials on those having the cancer for the first time.

The problem is, Trachtenberg said, that many people have tiny tumours in their prostate glands, and in 80 per cent, the tumours are very slow growing. Since prostate cancer tends to strike older men, chances that the tumours will grow enough to be a problem before the person dies are extremely slim.

Treatment, then, is usually reserved for those who really need it. However, the psychological strain of knowing that the tumours might possibly grow lead some men to seek treatment anyway

Host of the program was CITY-TV news anchor Mark Dailey, himself a survivor of prostate cancer. Greetings were brought from Suzy Charbit, on behalf of Negma-Lerads and Steba Biotech; Lionel Robins, chair of the Princess Margaret Hospital Foundation; and philanthropist Murray Koffler, a long-time member and supporter of Weizmann Canada.

Q. I recently lost my husband. Now that I am on my own, I know I will not go to the trouble of making a proper dinner, and I'll likely end up eating a bowl of cereal for dinner. Do you have any suggestions?

A. This is a common problem for many people who live alone, at all ages. I often have single patients tell me that they ate popcorn, ice cream or cereal for dinner, but there are ways around this. The most important key is to make it easy for yourself. You are not likely going to invest much time or make a big mess, but you can still eat a substantial and well-balanced dinner.

One great tip is to make use of leftovers. For example, if you are having a crowd for a family dinner or party, make extras and freeze them for yourself. Let's say you've made soup, chicken, turkey, brisket or meatballs. Make more than you need and freeze the extra food in individual portions. This way you can pull out one portion easily, thaw and heat it, and add a canned, frozen or fresh vegetable or bagged salad for a complete meal.

Even if you are not preparing for others, you can still cook in large quantities. Maybe you want to make a big pot of meat sauce, a lasagna, some soup, etc. Make lots, and again, freeze in individual portions.

If cooking isn't your thing, then consider stocking up on some frozen entrees. There are many different ones, from lasagnas to chicken and vegetables to salmon and rice, and much more. These make no mess and can be heated in five minutes. Also, stock your pantry with canned soups, fish and vegetables, which give you easy ways to round out a meal.

Another great option is this: when you get to the grocery store, buy a whole cooked chicken. Have some that day and some the next day. Then cube the leftovers and freeze them. Later you can toss them into a salad, stir fry or pasta.

Remember too that a nutritious dinner may look more like lunch. Try omlettes or eggs, frozen cheese blintzes, cottage cheese and fruit, or a tuna, salmon, egg, turkey, roast beef or peanut butter sandwich. Add some fruit or vegetables and you're ready to eat.

If you do end up having cereal once in awhile, make sure it's a whole grain one so that you get some fibre. Finish the milk in the bowl for calcium and protein, and throw in some fresh or frozen fruit.

Finally, try to make plans to eat with company each week and you will likely end up having a larger, more balanced meal.

Lisa Weinberg is a registered dietitian/nutritionist in Toronto, in private practice and at the Genesis Professional Group. If you have any nutrition questions, please send them to The CJN

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KIDDISH

Jewish Kids' Fun Page
by Ellene Newman and Hallel Newman

The Chametz Hunt

"I get to hide one!"
"I want to hide one!"
"Me too!"

"Be careful!" warns Ima. "Wait until I finish wrapping them up."

I guess I should explain what's going on. Tomorrow night is Passover. We're going to have a massive family seder. My grandparents are coming, and so are Uncle Alan and Aunt Saralee. Add to that my father, my mother, all my brothers and sisters Sam, Leora, Chani, Daniel, Miri, Rachel and my baby brother, Gavriel wow, it's going to be great. But that's tomorrow night. Tonight, we search for chametz. You see, for the last week or so, we've been getting the house ready for Passover. Ima really put us to work, making us clean up the house and get rid of all the chametz.

I know, I must really be driving you crazy, talking and talking about this chametz stuff, without telling you what it is. So you know what? I'll tell you. I'm going to start from the beginning. When you mix flour and water, you get dough. If you let the dough sit for a little bit, it starts rising, getting bigger and puffier. That's chametz! And on Passover, we don't eat chametz. We don't even leave any chametz lying around. And guess what? Just about everything in the world with flour in it is chametz! Cheerios, bread, spaghetti, cookies, you name it! So what do we eat on Passover? Matzah! That's the bread you get when you bake dough before it has a chance to rise.

Sounds scary, huh? Don't worry, it's not as bad as it sounds. There are a million ways to eat matzah. Crumble it into a bowl, sprinkle it with some sugar, add milk and you've got matzah cereal. Make a cream cheese and matzah sandwich. Fry some – it's called matzah brie. Coat your matzah with chocolate for a great dessert.

But here I am, letting my thoughts wander, when I'm supposed to be telling you what's going on tonight. Now that the house is clean, and free of chametz, we do one final check. We turn off all the lights, and my father searches by candlelight for any overlooked chametz. But we've done such a good job cleaning that he probably won't find any. And what fun is a chametz hunt without finding anything? That's why we hide chametz around the house beforehand. Of course, we wrap it up so it won't get all over the place and ruin our careful cleaning. And that's why Ima's wrapping up little bags of Cheerios, to give us so that we can hide them. I can't wait till it's my turn. I thought of the best hiding place.

"Okay," Ima says, "the bags are ready." Of course, everyone lunges for the bags at the same time. "Children!" calls Ima, and everybody freezes. "Everyone will have their turn to hide a bag. Youngest to oldest. Gavriel, you're first."

Everyone laughs. Gavriel's too young. He would probably eat the Cheerios, not hide them. "All right, how about Rachel?"

Rachel sprints down the stairs, clutching her bag. A minute later, she's back.

"Where'd you hide it?"

"Under the fridge," beams Rachel. Ima writes, "*#1 Under Refrigerator,*" on an index card. That way, if Abba can't find it, we'll know where it is.

"Okay Miri, your turn." I hope Miri won't think of my hiding place. She doesn't. "*#2 Behind the Picture.*"

Then it's Daniel's turn. "*#3 In the Coat Closet.*" Now it's my turn! "*#4 In the Window Blinds.*"

Then Chani, then Leora, and finally Sam.

"There are three left," Ima declares. "I get to hide those." And she does, everyone following her around, giving her advice on where to put them.

Finally… "Abba! We're ready!"

Abba comes out of his study, casting glances around the room.

We go around shutting off the lights. Abba lights the long wax candle, and recites the blessing *"Blessed are you God King of the Universe who has commanded us to eliminate chametz."*

The search is on.

Everything looks different in the flickering candlelight. You can see little clumps of dust that you wouldn't notice in regular light. Abba finds *#6 Under the Table* right away, and deposits it into the bag he's holding. *#2 Behind the Picture* is discovered soon after. Abba looks around some more, then goes into the next room!

He missed mine!

He finds *#3 In the Coat Closet* without too much effort, and then, to everyone's surprise, he finds a cookie underneath the recliner. Well, that's why we're doing the search.

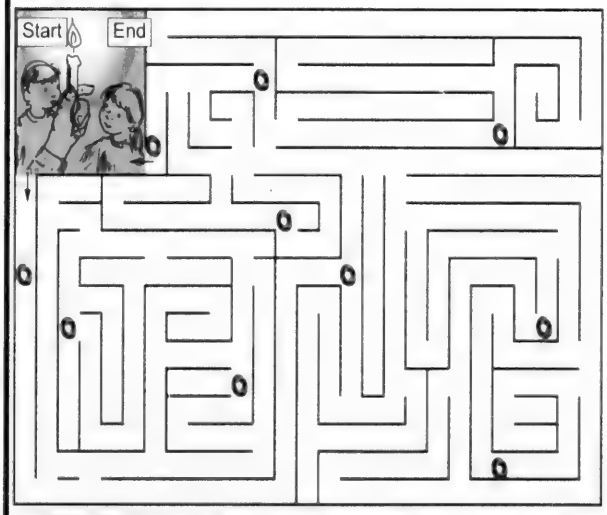
Abba heads back to the dining room to find the last two bags. He carefully examines in, around and behind everything, until he finds… *#4 In the Window Blinds*. Awww… I wanted mine to be found last.

Well, now there's only one to go, and Ima looks worried. I glance at her card. Everything is checked off except for Rachel's *#1 Under the Refrigerator*. Wait a minute, Abba looked there already! Oh no, what could have happened to her bag?

Suddenly, the candlelight falls on a Cheerio, sitting in the middle of the hallway. Abba is picking it up when he sees another one. And close by are two more. Uh oh, I didn't think our cleaning job was *that* bad. Abba follows the trail of Cheerios up the stairs, and there, crunching away, is Gavriel, blissfully holding bag No. 1.

MAZE

Can you collect all 10 Cheerios without passing over the same place twice?



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CJkids

Fun stories that make you think

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Did you ever hear the word "parable"? A parable is a short story that teaches a lesson. Sometimes the story is sad and sometimes it is funny, but we can always learn something from it.

Sheldon Oberman, a Winnipeg man who wrote some wonderful books for children, collected a lot of stories that have been told by Jews, and often other groups of people as well. The book is called *Solomon and the Ant and other Jewish Folktales* (Boyds Mills Press, 2006).

One story about Solomon tells of a young girl, Hannah, who was very poor. She stopped to savour the delicious smells coming out of a bakery, and the baker, who was not a nice person, demanded that she pay him for the smells that she had enjoyed.

The two went to King Solomon to settle the matter. King Solomon said that indeed the baker should be paid. He told the girl to shake the money in her purse. Then he said that she had paid for the smell of the food with the sound of money.

Not all the stories are about Jews. One is about a poor man in an Arab country who was so hungry that he stole a loaf of bread. The sultan sentenced him to death. Just as the executioner was going to cut off his head, the beggar yelled that he had a magic seed, that would grow into a giant pomegranate tree.

The problem is that the seed could only be planted by someone who had never stolen anything in his whole life. All the important people around, even including the sultan, admitted they had stolen something.

The beggar said, "I never took a country or a horse or even a toy. I only took a loaf of bread because I was starving."

The sultan pardoned him and gave him a job as a royal gardener.

There are some stories that don't teach a particular lesson, but just show how smart – or sneaky – someone is.

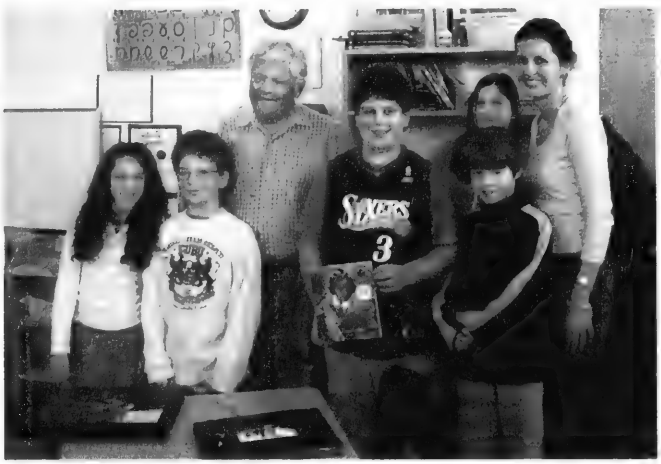
Hershele Ostropolier, a very clever but very poor man, once went to an inn and asked for a meal. The innkeeper, who probably knew Hershele, refused. Hershele threatened that if he didn't get some food, he would have to do what his father did.

The innkeeper got scared, since he thought that perhaps Hershele's father had killed someone or done something just as bad, so he gave him a big meal. When Hershele sat back happily, the innkeeper timidly asked what his father had done.

"He went to bed hungry," Hershele replied.

Oberman also has some stories about Chelm, a fictional town where the people are very good and kind but extremely stupid. They do things like trying to save money by not feeding their cow and then being astonished when the cow dies. In one story, a Chelm judge sentences a fish to death by drowning.

Oberman unfortunately died before the book came out, but the stories and the lessons are a fitting tribute to him.



HOLOCAUST STUDY: Recently, five students from the Montessori Jewish Day School's upper elementary class (grades 4-5) went to see the play *Hana's Suitcase* to learn about the Holocaust. They were so intrigued that they searched out and called George Brady, Hana's brother and a Holocaust survivor, and invited him to speak to their class. Pictured with Brady, third from left, are, from left, Laura Nahmias, Josh Nahmias, Adam Pasternak, Yoni-Shalom Rohn-Pascal, Gabby Pribluda and teacher Irene Mihelic.

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Arts & Travel

Show addresses teen angst and awkwardness with humour

By KYLE GORDON
Special to The CJN

For many children, going away to camp is the highlight of the summer, but this was not the case for Amy Salloway.

"I was sent away to camp against my will. My parents boarded me on a bus and sent me off to camp for eight weeks," Salloway said.

Now, a Minneapolis-based solo performer, Salloway revisits that traumatic summer at a Jewish camp in her new one-woman play, *So Kiss Me Already, Herschel Gertz!* which she performs at the Oh Solo Mio festival in London, Ont., April 6 and 8.

Salloway used the setting of a camp as a backdrop to develop the ideas of alienation and the search for identity.

As the outreach co-ordinator for a Jewish Minnesota congregation, Salloway heard stories from fellow congregation members about feeling alienated from their religion as a child and their inability to bond with the Jewish faith.

"I thought, oh my God, this is exactly what I grew up feeling. The feeling of being a misfit in every way, even in spirituality," she said.

The show is about the desire to rise above the feeling of isolation, she said.

"I felt this way when I was 15, at summer camp, and this is how I feel now. It never changed."

In the show, the character of Amy is pining for the boy she loves – her best friend who sees their friendship as strictly platonic. Meanwhile, at camp, she begins dating Herschel Gertz. But she doesn't feel the same way about him.

"He doesn't have that sparkle or magic that she is looking for, and she knows she feels that for the boy at home," she said.

The show is loosely based on Salloway's own experiences of loving someone she can't have and being able to have someone she doesn't love.

"I have maintained that friend, buddy, pal status for my entire life. It's terribly depressing. It's pathetic," she said.

She said there are times she goes home after performing the show and sits with a bag of potato chips and realizes that her feelings of low self-esteem haven't changed.

"I wrote this show about me at 15 and what has changed? Nothing," she added.

Salloway said she never uses her writing as a form of therapy. She thinks it would end up showing in the performance and possibly make the audience uncomfortable.

"They [the characters] are part of my life, but I can still view them artistically and put them in a different theatrical context," she said.

Mary Hirsch, a close friend of Salloway's, said *So Kiss Me Already, Herschel Gertz!* addressed the themes of angst and awkwardness in an entertaining and hilarious way.

"We all had that horribly awkward moment when we were a teenager wondering about our first kiss, and when it happened we thought 'that's it?'" said Salloway.

Hirsch also said she has noticed a tremendous amount of growth in Salloway since her first solo performance, in 2003, in *Does This Monologue Make Me Look Fat?*

Salloway has become more comfortable talking about herself. "I think she has really developed as an actress. She is a great writer and performer, and that is a really unique quality," Hirsch said.

Tickets are $15. For more information, call 519-434-0606 or visit www.londonfringe.ca

Ten Commandments *mini-series on TV*

By TOM TUGEND
JTA

The story of the Exodus makes for great cinema and stunning visual effects, as Cecil B. DeMille and Charlton Heston proved half a century ago.

Now *The Ten Commandments*, with its timeless themes of slavery and freedom, faith and doubt, adultery and fidelity, battles and miracles, has been shaped into a four-hour miniseries by ABC-TV.

It will air in two two-hour segments April 10 and 11, and should draw good ratings in the Passover and Easter season.

The 2006 *Ten Commandments* easily outscores the 1956 Heston epic.

With commercials, the miniseries is actually slightly shorter than the original three-and-a-quarter hour film, but is by far the more subtle, credible and engaging of the two.

The basic plot is familiar from the Bible. It starts with the rescue of baby Moses from slaughter to God's choice of Moses as liberator, the 10 plagues, the giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, 40 years of wandering in the desert and Moses' death in sight of the Promised Land.

Veteran producer Robert Halmi Sr. and director Robert Dornhelm have gone to considerable lengths to authenticate the biblical scholarship, dress style and physical setting of the drama, with Morocco substituting for the Sinai Peninsula.

The casting draws heavily on the British Isles, with Scottish actor Dougray Scott as Moses, Linus Roache as his brother, Aaron, and Welshman Paul Rhys as Ramses, the stubborn pharaoh.

Scott portrays a complex Moses, a man chosen against his will by God and tested almost beyond endurance, torn by the punishments he must inflict, badgered by his stiff-necked tribe, and yet rising to pre-destined greatness.

Omar Sharif as Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, may be the most familiar face to viewers. Argentina's Mia Maestro is an attractive Zipporah, Moses' wife, though Dornhelm largely avoids DeMille's penchant for making all Egyptian and Jewish maidens look like *America's Next Top Model* hopefuls.

Scriptwriter Ron Hutchinson has introduced some telling analogies between the biblical story and the current human condition in Moses' constant emphasis that "to be a free man, you must stop thinking like a slave and think like a free man."

The TV drama's faults tend to be minor, though a bit much is made of the supposed sibling rivalry among Moses, Aaron and Miriam.

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Arts & Travel

Family fun in Kamloops and at Sun Peaks Resort

By KATHRYN KATES
Special to The CJN

Sun Peaks is B.C.'s largest ski resort outside Whistler.

Visitors to the Rockies are familiar with Kamloops, the third-largest city in British Columbia, as they often spend a night there.

But Kamloops, in the province's interior, is well worth a much longer stay. The city offers visitors a host of family activities all year round, not to mention breathtaking natural beauty, including 1,000 lakes where holidaying families can be assured that the fish will be biting!

Kamloops is known as the "Tournament Capital of Canada." Four major highways – the Trans-Canada, Yellowhead, Coquihalla and Highway 97 – lead many sports teams to the city. Kamloops is a four-hour drive from Vancouver and seven from Calgary.

The city offers full-service air and rail connections, which comes in handy when the city puts on events that attract people from all parts of the globe.

The Kamloops Festival of the Performing Arts runs for about three weeks commencing the third week in February. The film festival and the Kamloops Festival of the Performing Arts both run simultaneously at the beginning of March, followed by the very popular Kamloops Cowboy Festival. This festival showcases cowboy art, country music and cowboy poets from as far away as the state of Texas and city of Nashville.

Families can be kept extremely busy during their stay in Kamloops. Activities offered there include rock-hounding, fossil-hunting and gold-panning tours, available through the Kamloops Rock Works Ltd. For those who enjoy fishing, Gord Honey's operates a fly-fishing guide service. A family can spend a day at The Ranch in Pritchard, about 45 minutes away from the city. It's a family-owned operation where you can take a hayride and feed the animals. Be sure to ask to see the amorous goat or the peacock who likes car hoods, and have a barbecue there. Food is provided or you can bring your own.

Continued on page 62

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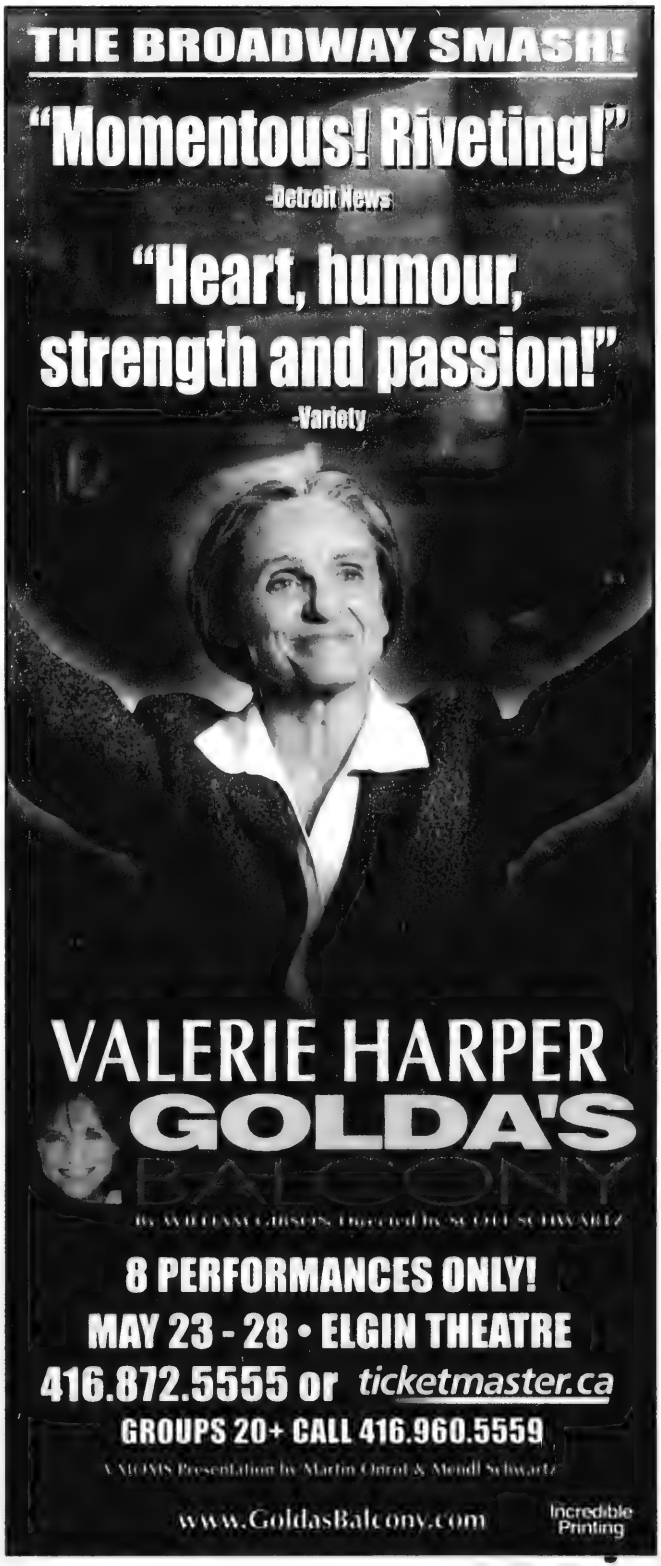

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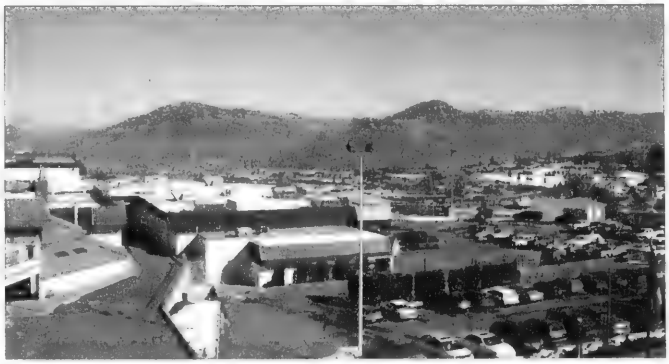
Kamloops offers year-round activities

Continued from page 61

Kamloops Heritage Railway boasts of bringing steam back. Its train, No. 2141, was built in 1912 by the Canadian Locomotive Company in Kingston, Ont., for the Canadian Northern Railway. Since September 2001, the train has been used by Kamloops Heritage Railway to operate tours.

Train tour destinations include Armstrong, which is known for its cheese. There are also very scary Ghost Train tours and the Spirit of Kamloops offers a ride back in time. Some adventure tours the railway offers include a stagecoach ride with some real Old West surprises – yahoo!

The Secwepemc Museum and Heritage Park is just east of the Kamloops Pow-Wow Grounds, on the Kamloops Indian Reserve. The museum houses both indoor and outdoor exhibits, including an outdoor botanical garden. Indoor exhibits allow visitors to learn about the history of the First Nations Secwepemc or Shuswap peoples.



Kamloops is known as the "Tournament Capital of Canada." [Kathryn Kates photos]

Not to be missed is the British Columbia Wildlife Park, where 65 species, including grizzly bears, cougars, goats and a "kissing" moose, roam.

The newly enlarged and renovated interactive Discovery Centre at the park includes an Eco-Inquiry Gallery with interactive displays, from which the entire family can learn about British Columbia's wildlife.

Also found in the Kamloops area are many golf courses. There are a number of cattle ranches, some of which welcome visitors. They include the Douglas Lake Cattle Company, just 40 minutes from Kamloops.

For shopping, visit the Horse Barn, which sells everything from cowboy souvenirs and artwork to western gear.

The ski resort offers skiing, snowboarding, dog-sledding, a "Cat Trax Grooming Tour" and snowmobiling. There's even a track for kids.

Kamloops' Sunmore Ginseng Spa is out of the ordinary. It is a state-of-the-art facility that rivals any first-class spa worldwide. Sunmore not only offers a wide variety of services, but you can also top of your day of pampering with an ancient Chinese tea ceremony. A day at the spa is a perfect treat for mom while dad is fly-fishing with the kids.

Accommodations in Kamloops run the gamut from chain motels such as the Hampton Inn to the historic Plaza Heritage Hotel in the city's downtown core and the beautiful South Thompson Inn and Conference Centre, minutes away from the British Columbia Wildlife Park. The upscale South Thompson Inn sits in the middle of a ranch on the banks of the South Thompson River.

An hour from Kamloops is Sun Peaks Resort. Next to Whistler, it is British Columbia's biggest ski resort. It came into its own in 1993, at the base of what was then known as Tod Mountain. In fact, 1968 Olympic gold and silver medallist Nancy Greene Raine and her husband, Al Raine, left Whistler to open Nancy Greene's Cahilty Lodge, a condo/hotel at Sun Peaks. Now the resort boasts an Italian Tyrolean Village of shops, restaurants and hotels, including the Delta Sun Peaks Resort and the family-owned Pinnacle Resort and Spa.

There are three mountains at Sun Peaks. The terrain over the area's 4,000 acres is varied, offering powder-filled alpine bowls, groomed cruisers and glade skiing. In the winter, families can participate in a number of activities, such as skiing, snowboarding, dog-sledding, the Cat Trax Grooming Tour and snowmobiling. There's even a circular kid's snowmobiling track – with kid-sized vehicles.

In the summer, mountain biking and hiking are but a few of the many activities to keep your family occupied.

Take a trip back in time with an Old West stagecoach.

For more information about Kamloops, visit www.tourismkamloops.com and for information about Sun Peaks Resort, visit www.sunpeaksresort.com.

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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

KOFFLER CENTRE DANCE TROUPE SEEKS SPONSORS FOR ISRAEL TRIP

Toronto's **Nirkoda Israeli Folk Dancers** have been invited to participate in the Karmiel Festival, Israel's largest and most prestigious folk-dance festival, slated for this July.

Nirkoda is a group of 16 dedicated volunteers who express their love of Jewish culture and heritage through choreographed folk-dance performances offered around the community. The troupe's home is the Koffler Centre of the Arts in the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre.

"When performing at international folk-dance events, Nirkoda Dancers act as good-will ambassadors on behalf of the Toronto Jewish community," says troupe director Ronit Eizenman, noting that the Karmiel Festival attracts about a quarter of a million attendees.

Nirkoda is seeking sponsors to help cover the cost of the trip. Tax-deductible donations may be made to the Koffler Centre, Nirkoda account. For details, please call 416-636-1880, ext. 352.

* * *

Names in the News: "A word clearly spoken is like a pattern of golden apples on a silver mosaic," wrote King Solomon (Proverbs 25:11).

Toronto's **David Harduf** knows this all too well. He's laboured for more than a decade on a unique project – *Harduf's Transliterated English-Hebrew Dictionary (Chiefly Biblical Lexicon)*, utilizing the Hebrew Bible and the English-language King James Version. The newly available Volume 14, which begins with the word "speeches" and concludes with "squawk," is the latest volume in print.

The Polish-born linguist, who served in the British army during World War II and arrived in Canada about a quarter century ago, told Eye on Arts that he works on the dictionary "from the morning until 12 o'clock at night." About 100 libraries around the world have put in standing orders for each new volume of the dictionary as it emerges from the press.

The list includes major institutions in the United States, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Israel, as well as the University of Toronto, York University, Ryerson University, the Toronto Reference Library and the Barbara Frum Library in North York.

Harduf estimates another six volumes are needed to complete the dictionary. We wish him a hearty yasher koach as he continues with his monumental task.

* * *

Broadway Melody of 2006: Allan Price, the Thornhill-based actor and maven of show and movie tunes, is hosting a free Broadway Melody Sing-along to which the public is invited. The gala concert is at Holy Trinity Church, 140 Brooke St., Thornhill (south of Centre St. just west of Yonge). Sunday, April 23, 7:30 p.m. 416-222-0895

* * *

Arts in Brief

• **The Israelievitch Duo**, consisting of Toronto Symphony concertmaster **Jacques Israelievitch** and his son **Michael**, perform a new double concerto for violin and marimba written by Canadian composer **Alexander Levkovich**. New Creations Festival, Roy Thomson Hall, Wednesday, April 5, 8 p.m. 416-593-4828

• **Kerry Stratton** conducts the Concert-Verein Orchestra of the Vienna Symphony with Italian pianist **Roberto Plano** in their only joint appearance. The music of **Mozart**, **Schubert** and **Malcolm Arnold** are featured. $30, $60, $90. George Weston Recital Hall, Toronto Centre for the Arts, 5040 Yonge St. Thursday, April 6, 8 p.m. 416-870-8000 or www.ticketmaster.ca

• Markham Little Theatre presents *Moon Over Buffalo* by **Ken Ludwig**, directed by **Gloria Thomas**. Aging thespians' frantic efforts to impress famed director **Frank Capra** lead to hilarious misunderstandings and madcap misadventures. $20.50. 171 Town Centre Blvd. April 26 to 29, 8 p.m. 905-305-SHOW (7469)

• The University of Virginia Press recently published *What Time and Sadness Spared: Mother and Son Confront the Holocaust*, by **Roma Nutkiewicz Ben-Atar** with **Doron S. Ben-Atar**. The book is a saga of Holocaust survival, set in Warsaw, Majdanek, Auschwitz and Israel.

•**The First Baptist Church Halifax Senior Choir** under the direction of **Allen R. Wayte** will present *The Holocaust Cantata: Songs from the Camp*. The choir will be accompanied by pianist, **Diana Torbert** and cellist, **Shimon Walt**, and members of the Jewish community will be offering readings during the presentation. First Baptist Church, 1300 Oxford St., Halifax, N.S., just south of Beth Israel Congregation. April 6 at 8 p.m. Tickets $10. 902-422-5203.

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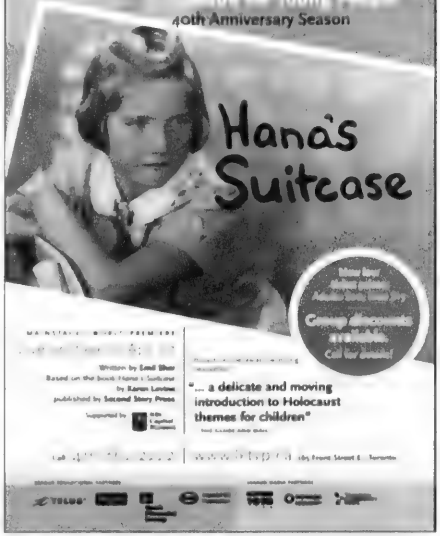

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Oral history reveals German attitudes to Nazis, wartime atrocities

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

***What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder, and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany* by Eric A. Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband, Perseus.**

Major questions about the Hitler era in Germany continue to pique the curiosity of historians and sociologists alike.

Why did the Nazis appeal to tens of millions of Germans? What was known, on a grassroots level, about the deportation of Jews and the death camps in Poland? How entrenched was anti-Semitism?

In short, how did the average German relate to these vital issues?

To a significant degree, the answers are found in *What We Knew: Terror, Mass Murder, and Everyday Life in Nazi Germany* by Eric A. Johnson and Karl-Heinz Reuband, an American and German professor of history and sociology, respectively.

In this enlightening oral history, the authors thrash out the issues through 40 interviews with German Christians and Jews and through analysis.

The oral histories by non-Jews are most revealing because they offer the best clues about the mindset of ordinary Germans during that period.

Johnson and Reuband believe that the popularity of National Socialism was based, in part, on Adolf Hitler's personal magnetism and the cult of personality that formed around him.

Beyond that, Germans were impressed by the economic upswing and the reduction of unemployment and criminality. "The sun was shining for everybody," says Rolf Heberer, one of the interviewees.

Except Jews, of course.

Henry Singer, a Jew from Berlin who fled to Italy in 1938, contrasts the behaviour of Germans with that of Italians who, he recalls, were "very generous... very humane and very hospitable."

Jews, as Leipzig Jew William Benson says, were fully integrated into German society. Nonetheless, state anti-Semitism, as it unfolded during Kristallnacht in 1938, met with popular approval.

Helga Schmidt, a resident of Dresden, says that Jews were presented by the regime as exploiters and that this perception was widely accepted. Yet some Germans, such as a Bavarian stenographer named Anna Rudolf, were disgusted by the persecution of Jews.

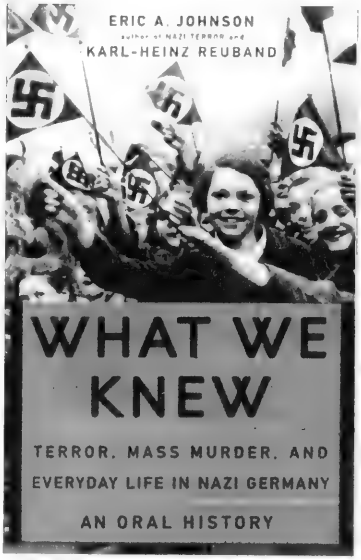
Analyzing the data, Johnson and Reuband conclude that there was a sharp deterioration of relations between Jews and non-Jews after the accession of the Nazis in January 1933.

They report that a large proportion of Jews received considerable help and support from non-Jews, but a greater percentage did not offer their assistance.

Far from being shrouded in secrecy, the deportation of Jews often took place in the full light of day and in full view of civilian onlookers, they add. Hannelore Mahler, a half-Jew from Krefeld, was led past its main Catholic church just as Sunday mass ended.

Ekkehard Falter, who lived in Dresden during the war, says he was aware that Jewish classmates were gradually vanishing from his school. "But the disappearance of the Jews is not something we took note of officially," he observes.

In an important caveat, the authors point out that an awareness of the deportations did not necessarily mean that they would end in mass murder.



Here is their explanation:

"From surveys we conducted, we know that a large number of people in Germany came to know about the Nazi crimes against humanity, such as the Gestapo's use of torture during interrogations and the killing of handicapped and mentally ill persons in the Nazi euthanasia program. But how many Germans came to know about the most egregious Nazi crime of all, the murder of the European Jews?

"Since the number of the physically disabled and mentally ill took place on German soil, it was more likely that news of the killing would spread among the German public. But this cannot be said about the murder of Jews. The conditions surrounding this crime were different. Most significantly, the murder of Jews took place in occupied territory in the east, where the spread of information could be better controlled."

In the early phase of the murder of Jews in Poland and the Soviet Union by *Einsatzgruppen* units, German soldiers commonly witnessed the wholesale massacres. Given these circumstances, they were a source of hard information about the Final Solution. Still other Germans came into contact with concentration-camp prisoners.

Johnson and Reuband calculate that about one-third of the German population knew in some form or another about the Holocaust.

Information about it was spread widely among Germans from all socio-economic backgrounds and communities.

The interviews shed further light on this core issue.

Gertrud Sombart, the daughter of a policeman from a small town near Dresden, was asked what she knew about the mass murder of Jews and the camps.

She replied, "Not about the mass murder. We heard from my mother, who had heard from a female patient at the hospital, that there were such camps. But we thought they were labour camps..." Sombart, however, learned about the murders from a dedicated Nazi who personally watched the shootings of Jews.

Werner Hassel, a soldier from Upper Silesia stationed in Poland, claims he was ignorant of Nazi atrocities. "The soldiers out there on the front knew effectively nothing about the concentration camps and the mass murder of the Jews," he says. "That was really known by people with inside information. When we were in Poland, we heard absolutely nothing... no rumours, absolutely nothing."

But Adam Grolsch, a radio operator in the German army on the Russian front, witnessed the murder of Jews in Pinsk in October 1942.

His testimony leaves one shaking.

"I set out with a friend, and with my own eyes saw how the people there were slaughtered. In two days, 25,000 men, women and children [were killed], and in the most beastly way. I saw how they had to undress in front of the tank traps... And the absolute worst thing I saw was how this man took a screaming baby and beat it headfirst against a wall until it was dead."

Grolsch remembers that the orders, given by Germans, were carried out by local collaborators, Russians, Lithuanians and Latvians. "They did everything they were ordered to do," he says.

In summing up, Johnson and Reuband write that the reaction of many Germans to the persecution of Jews was basically ambivalent.

Although they responded negatively to Nazi propaganda about Jews, they accepted the new situation and concerned themselves only with their own private lives.

Call it human nature.

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CJN Profile

Former yeshiva student plays the lead in his own film

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Harlen Wall is a lucky guy, having realized his childhood dream.

He yearned to be a filmmaker and an actor, and now, with the imminent release of *The Therapeutic Touch*, he has achieved both goals all at once.

The 31-minute film, which Wall conceived, wrote and stars in, deals with such primal issues as abuse, pain, lust, trust and healing.

Scheduled to be screened at the Bloor Cinema on April 26 at a one-night event called The Best of Canada, a showcase for some of Canada's best independent films, Wall's short will be premiered in the United States at the Worldfest in Houston shortly afterward.

"I decided to make *The Therapeutic Touch* two years ago, when several people I knew died of cancer, including my uncle and my doctor," said Wall, a 32-year-old Torontonian and graduate of Northern Secondary School's drama program. "Their deaths really had an impact on me: life is short and I shouldn't wait any longer to pursue my dream."

But before finally taking the plunge, Wall seriously considered the rabbinate. In this spirit, he accepted a one-year scholarship at Aish HaTorah, a yeshiva in Jerusalem, where he developed a passion for biblical studies.

"I became obsessed with Judaism. Acting seemed incredibly boring compared to matters of the divine," he said.

Continuing his rabbinical studies at an Orthodox yeshiva in upstate New York, Wall was all but certain that he was cut out to be a rabbi.

"I love to teach and communicate, and I believed I could make a difference as a rabbi, but I got overwhelmed and took a break."

As a diversion, he studied at the University of Toronto, majoring in English literature and minoring in philosophy. During this period, his religious observance waned while his focus changed.

Bitten by the acting bug yet again, Wall took acting classes in Toronto, honed his talent as an impersonator and created two characters who appear in *The Therapeutic Touch* – Vinnie, an angry Italian gangster from Brooklyn, and Leroy, an African-American boxer.

Wall spent a year writing the script for his low-budget, intense two-character film. Last spring, he started assembling a small crew who agreed to work on a deferred payment basis.

"I was fortunate enough to acquire a great crew. Some of the most talented local filmmakers devoted a considerable amount of time to my film. They loved the story and believed in the message."

The Therapeutic Touch turns on a 30-something nebbish, Ira Goldstein (Wall), who visits a comely prostitute named Mary (Heidi Tan) on the eve of embarking on his rabbinical studies.

Instead of having sex with Mary, he plies her with questions about herself, engages in role playing and takes a phone call from his mother.

Ira also confesses that his heart is not in the rabbinate, gives Mary his Star of David chain, thanks her for her attention and empathy, and gently hugs her as his allotted hour expires.

"In terms of the story, I was motivated by a need to express what I consider to be the greatest lesson in life," Wall said. "This is the importance of being able to walk into an unholy situation and make it holy.

"I see this as the quintessential Jewish struggle to embrace humanity and its temptations and yet remain holy and to sanctify God's name in every situation. The burden of responsibility doesn't end when one makes a decision to visit a prostitute. It only begins. I also wanted to show that nobody is above the frailties and weaknesses of human nature."

The setting is not as controversial as some might think, he said.

"The Torah does not shy away from the reality of prostitution. The union of Judah and Tamar is the best example of this. One of the greatest biblical figures employed the services of the prostitute Tamar. And when Joshua went to Jericho, before the conquest of Israel, it was a prostitute who hid him in her house and saved his life along with other Jewish spies."

The Therapeutic Touch is definitely not autobiographical.

"I've never been to a prostitute. However, there are certainly parallels to my life. Ira is torn between his need to become a rabbi and his desire to be an actor. This struggle is one I relate to very closely."

Ira, too, is the product of a broken home, said Wall, whose parents, Jack and Lori Allan, split up.

"When I was young, my twin brother and I found ourselves in the middle of a bitter divorce, and I can relate to the pain of having to choose between parents. It's an awful thing to be put in the middle."

Harlen Wall decided to make his first film, *The Therapeutic Touch*, two years ago, when several people he knew died of cancer.

Since Wall had limited financial resources, he and his director/producer, Paul Stark, completed the film in only three days. "We shot on digital video, so we were able to keep the cost still further down."

They made the film in a seedy motel at Spadina and College. "Just as we were about to start filming, the police showed up and kicked us out because they assumed we were shooting a porno. I had to start all over again and assemble another crew. It took a long time, but eventually I found the right people to help bring my vision to life."

He learned an important lesson during the shoot.

"There is nothing glamorous about making a film," he explained. "It's one of the most difficult things to do in life. It's like going to war. Making a film is like giving birth. It's so painful. As you're making it you swear you're never going to do it again. Then you look at the end result, and before you know it, you start planning the next one. You decide to go through the whole process again. It's crazy."

Wall's interest in cinema began as a child.

"I always loved movies. My childhood was turbulent, but I could always escape into the magical world of film. I dreamed of being in a movie and used to look in a mirror and impersonate my favourite actors and comedians."

Wall, who earns a livelihood as a Hebrew and Jewish studies tutor, is currently planning his second film, *The Salesman's Son*, based on a script he wrote several months ago.

"It's a story about the special relationship between a father and a son. It's about resolving the pain of the past."

Production is set to begin soon.

As well, Wall is looking for a publisher for his first novel, *Little King Con*, which revolves around a young Jewish man whose web of lies and deceit turns into a journey of self-discovery.

Despite his fascination with film, Wall is still thinking of the rabbinate as a career alternative.

As he put it: "I don't want to close the door on being a rabbi. I think it's good to have a back-up plan. The entertainment business can be very superficial, and it's important to keep growing spiritually. One has to be grounded.

"My investment in biblical studies has only helped me as an artist. The Bible is replete with timeless metaphors and powerful stories of human struggle. In a strange twist of irony, my theological training has made me a better actor and writer."

Sonny Goldstein, CFP

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Michelle Goldstein Zaldin

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510 UPHOLSTERY
515 WATERPROOFING
520 WINDOW COVERINGS
525 WINDOW REPLACEMENT
530 WINDOW CLEANING
550 WORKSHOPS

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• • •

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SOLD

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SOLD

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15 HOUSES FOR RENT

Bathurst/Glencairn, house for rent. 2 bdrm + den, 2 washrooms, asking $1600 + utilities, available April 1. Call Marc at 416-783-4561 evenings

30 CONDOMINIUMS FOR SALE

2 NEPTUNE
www.rpt.ca/neptune708
The Reuben Cipin Healthy Living Snrs. Bldg (65+) - Spacious North facing 2 bdrm split layout, 2 baths, kitchen, LR/DR, neutral décor, ensuite laundry, immed poss, 5 appliances, great facilities, 1 parking + locker. Move in and enjoy. Asking $252,000. Call.
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110 COTTAGE FOR RENT

Lake Couchiching, Orillia, priv. waterfront, 3 bdrm., den, sleeps up to 10, full amen., hot-tub, boat w/motor, docks. Avail. July only. Call 416-489-1205.

Lake Kashawigamog, Haliburton, modern, fully equipped 3 bdrm, 2 bathrm, sleeps 8, lakefront, non-smkng, pet friendly, gas fireplace, bbq. Weekly Apr.-May-Nov.-Dec. 416-445-5422.

125 FLORIDA PROPERTY FOR SALE

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160 ISRAEL PROPERTY FOR RENT

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alerek@advocateplacement.com
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Advocate Placement

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Family Moments
Mazel Tov
see page 31

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The Canadian Jewish news

Coast to Coast

Rabbis, imams forge ties in Seville

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The four days of workshops, dialogue and dinner table conversation produced no Middle East consensus. It also included its fair share of tension and the occasional Jewish stereotype and angry diatribe against Israel.

Yet, the only two Canadian Jews to attend the Second World Congress of Imams and Rabbis for Peace last month in Seville, Spain, insisted the event was worth it.

Upon reflection less than a week after their return to Montreal, Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz of Tifereth Beth David Jerusalem Synagogue and Rabbi Howard Joseph of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation were grateful to take part in an event that was so rich in symbolism, and that underscored the common humanity of Muslims and Jews, and the aspirations of 150 religious leaders of both faiths to live in peace.

"If two people need to talk but live far apart, the first thing you have to do is to set up the phone lines," Rabbi Steinmetz said. "Here, we set up the phone lines."

Rabbi Joseph, who also attended the inaugural congress in Brussels more than a year ago with Rabbi Barry Levy of McGill University, was impressed the second event drew more participants, up 50 per cent from the 100 who came last year.

"I think the first few years will involve increasing the number of people, of widening the circle, he said. "There's real achievement there."

The forum drew many top figures from the Jewish and Muslim worlds, including André Azoulay, counsellor to King Mohammed IV of Morocco; Israel's chief Ashkenazi rabbi, Yona Metzger; Ahmed Abbadi, director of Morocco's public affairs department; Reuven Firestone of Hebrew Union College; and former Israeli cabinet minister Rabbi Michael Melchior.

During the March 19 to 22 congress, rabbis Joseph and Steinmetz witnessed both uplifting and disappointing events.

For example, the congress, with close to 300 participants (including academics) from 31 countries – including a large number from Israel – issued a final statement affirming that there is "no inherent conflict" between Islam and Judaism, as well as calling for mutual tolerance and respect for religious symbols, and condemning "any incitement against a faith or people."

It added that "our two religions share the most fundamental value of faith in the One Almighty whose name is Peace, who is merciful, compassionate and just."

As if to underscore that sentiment, the Alcora Hotel, where most of the congress took place, housed a mosque and a synagogue in adjoining rooms where imams, rabbis and others prayed mere metres from one another.

Rabbi Joseph said he saw imams come into the shul to observe Jewish prayer. That, he said, would be virtually unimaginable in most of the participants' countries.

On Monday evening, after a long day of workshops, rabbis, all of whom were Orthodox, joined imams in an impromptu dance session as music played.

As much as it helped build bridges, the forum – sponsored by the Paris-based conflict resolution group Fondation Hommes de Parole, under the patronage of King Mohammed VI of Morocco and King Juan Carlos I of Spain – at times had tension simmering beneath the surface, rabbis Steinmetz and Joseph said.

After an encouraging start on Sunday, they recounted, some of the Palestinian imams – particularly former Hamas member Imad al-Falouji – tried to "hijack" the conference by harshly denouncing Israeli policy.

"Things blew up," Rabbi Steinmetz said.

Rabbi Joseph estimated that perhaps a half-dozen Palestinian imams attended with the agenda of "grandstanding" and using the forum to make accusations against Israel.

But, both he and Rabbi Steinmetz stressed, they comprised a "clear minority" among the imams who attended.

Rabbi Steinmetz said he has already gotten flak, and expects to get more, for having being quoted by Associated Press as saying that "the guys from Gaza needed to be heard."

But he also said he has received "much more support" than criticism for attending the conference.

"Let's face it," he said. "People are open [to such an event] but also quite skeptical. The challenge is to have achievable goals and to sustain a sense of hope without overreaching."

For all the talk that took place, the rabbis said that whatever progress occurred in building bridges was made at the personal level, through exchanges in hotel corridors or around dining tables, and not in any concrete initiatives from the congress.

And despite the underlying tensions that never quite disappeared, the rabbis and imams did gradually warm to each other, they said.

Rabbi Steinmetz, who led one workshop on racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, came away astounded by the many differences in practice and levels of sophistication within Islam.

One imam, he recalled, was "absolutely furious" that any effort would be made to suppress free speech by censoring Danish cartoons of the prophet Muhammad that inflamed so much of the Muslim world earlier this year. The cartoon issue was a topic of fervent debate at the forum and was alluded to in its final statement.

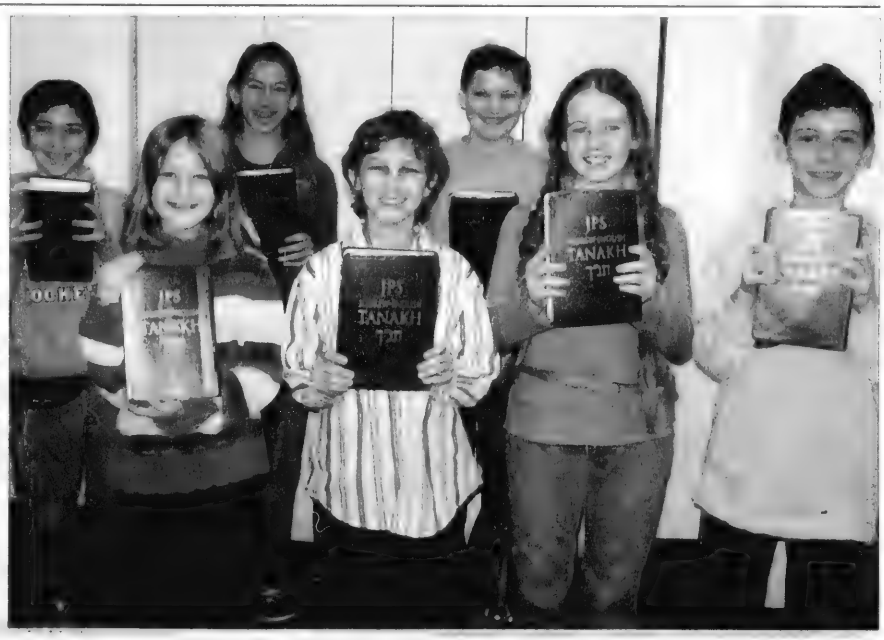
Paradoxically, he said, an imam could show warmth and acceptance toward one of his Jewish counterparts and at the same time believe stereotypes about Jews. But he said that might be because many of the imams had never met a Jew.

Puncturing such stereotypes, Rabbi Steinmetz said, would be virtually impossible without such a forum.

"That is the advantage of dialogue," Rabbi Joseph added.

BIBLE BRAINIACS

More than 20 Bialik Hebrew Day School students in grades 5 to 8 took part in the regional Bible contest recently, and seven advanced to the National Bible Contest next month in Toronto. They are, back row from left, Paul Slodovnick, Mishelle Weinerman and Matthew Goodman; and, front row from left, Mindy Chapman, Matthew Turk, Zoe Sebastien and Joshua Wine.



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Marlie starred for Israel at international tournament

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Daniel Erlich is the go-to guy for his hockey team in Toronto, the AAA Bantam Marlies, so it was no surprise he was the player expected to lead the way for Israel's under-18 juniors at a recent International Ice Hockey Federation tournament (IIHF).

Erlich didn't disappoint, as he carried the Israeli juniors to a silver medal in the IIHF's Division III competition in Romania, helping move the Israelis up to Division II next year.

Along the way, the 15-year-old led the tournament in scoring (12 goals, 14 assists in five games), was named team and tournament MVP, and impressed his head coach, Jean Perron, with his skills and attitude. All the while he was matched up against 18-year-olds

"He's quite a good player," Perron said on the phone from Montreal. "For his age, he's probably the best I've seen playing that type of hockey."

Perron, who as head man of the Montreal Canadiens has seen lots of good players, said Erlich "does everything right. He's got a knack for the net, good stickhandling, he's fast, he plays well with his teammates.

"There's nothing I can complain about. He's a complete player."

When *The CJN* caught up with him, Erlich was on his way to a post-season game. The Marlies were competing in the All-Ontario Bantam AAA Championships, and as the box score would later show, Erlich would register a goal and an assist to help the team to a 6-4 win over Nepean Raiders that night. The win evened the Marlies' record at 1-1-1 at the time. Erlich had two goals and two assists in the Marlies' first three games in the six-game round-robin event.

The styles of hockey in Canada and internationally are quite different, Erlich said. "Here, it's a lot better calibre and the reffing is better. I play a little rough here. It's different. You have to."

At the IIHF event in Romania, "there's not much hitting, so it's more about skill," he continued.

With lots of skating room, the five-foot-six, 140-pound Erlich was able to showcase those skills. Even against the gold-medal Romanians, who were fighting to get back to the Division II after being relegated the year before, he was able at times to make the opposition look foolish.

Daniel Erlich

Perron recalls one particular play – a highlight for Israel in a 13-2 loss. In an unforgettable display of stickhandling skill, Erlich undressed three Romanian forecheckers in his own zone. "He did something against Romania, and they were the best team," Perron said.

"He deked three players in a row. I wish I had that sequence on tape. They went after Daniel, he deked one. He did a spinarama and the three Romanians collided among themselves. I never saw anything like this."

> ***'There's nothing I can complain about. He's a complete player'***

Erlich remembers eluding the three forecheckers, too. "I deked out three guys and they all hit the boards. It was funny, really funny," he said.

"No question, Daniel was the best player in the tournament," Perron stated. "The exhibition he put on against Romania put him in that class. Nobody could compete one on one with him."

Though he possesses tremendous individual skill and scoring ability, Erlich said he sees himself foremost as a playmaker. "I like to make my teammates look better and set them up," he said.

Erlich and his family immigrated to Canada from Israel when he was an infant. He's been on the ice since he was three and at around seven or eight, he really started to excel at hockey.

He was also a very good soccer player his father, Arie, played professionally for Hapoel Tel Aviv – but decided to devote all his sporting energy to hockey.

He's been playing at the AAA level for eight years. "I just practise a lot," he said. "My dad put me in a lot of hockey schools." Erlich worked hard on his skating and stickhandling, and he does lots of dry-land training in the gym to improve his stamina.

Perron feels if Erlich continues to develop he has a chance at making a major junior team, but Erlich has other ideas. Next year he'll play minor midget hockey for the Marlies and then he'll graduate to the Ontario Hockey Association (OHA) and junior A. From there he hopes to impress U.S. college scouts and earn a scholarship to an American university.

In the meantime, he's enjoying the international hockey experience.

After practising with the Israelis during their stopover in Toronto last year, he was recruited to the team and joined them earlier this season on a North American tour.

"I feel good playing with them," he said. "You play for a country – not a lot of kids can play for a country."

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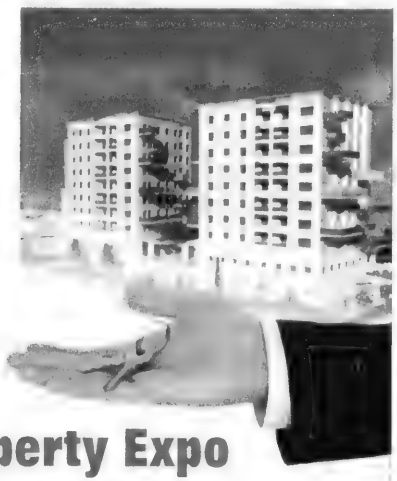
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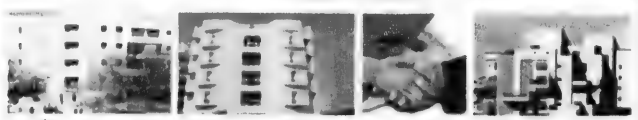
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Education may be dividing us

By YONI GOLDSTEIN

New Views

Toronto boasts an expansive Jewish educational system that ranks highly among major North American Jewish communities. We have more than 70 schools and a wide variety of choices for every age group, from kindergarten through high school. There are so many schools that you can choose whatever flavour of Judaism you desire. There are schools for the ultra-Orthodox, modern Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, traditional and post-denominational, to name just a few. You want it, Toronto's got it.

It's a terrific selling point for our community, but Toronto's Jewish education boom has also served to increase many of the serious divisions in our community. We haven't simply grown as a single whole, we've splintered into smaller communities, often based on the minutest of religious details. And the establishment of new schools at such as rapid pace has served to maintain closed borders within the community.

The education system was not always a means to produce exclusivity. Not too long ago, one could find diversity within Jewish schools, as opposed to between them. Twelve years ago, my eighth grade class mixed all kinds of kids: a couple of boys with Mizrachi/Bnei Akiva backgrounds, a bunch with Agudath Israel sensibilities and some who sported long peyot and had no clue what bands were hitting the top of the pop charts. Not so surprisingly, we managed, for the most part, to all get along and find the common interests that connected us. We didn't worry too much about the small details that divided us, and neither did our teachers.

But my Grade 8 melting pot simply could not exist today. The community has grown large enough to spawn entire classes and grades for every type of child – there's no need, so the theory goes, to mix them. Each segment of our community is now in a position to offer its own specific type of education to its own constituents. And that means our city's young Jews are missing the opportunity to meet, learn with and learn about their contemporaries who have even slightly different values than their own. That's a tragedy in the making.

There's no doubt we'll never see a return to the heterogeneous schools of the past. Our growth means we can afford more and more schools that can accommodate the beliefs of every small community along Bathurst Street. Admission policies and educational mandates will only become more detailed as time goes on, and, eventually, we will create schools that churn out cookie-cut children complete with blinders to block out whatever isn't on their school's ever-more-limited curricula.

It's a bleak picture, to be sure, and one that will be hard to prevent. But if children from different parts of the community will never study together on a day-to-day basis, we might at least find ways for them to meet in neutral, pressure-free settings that all schools can be comfortable with. Currently, the UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education does not hold a single community-wide event for students that boasts participation from a majority of Toronto's Jewish schools. (According to its website, the BJE organizes approximately five inter-school programs each year, but none, excluding the national Bible Contest, appear to attract a majority of elementary and secondary day schools, and supplementary schools.)

That scary statistic suggests the BJE does not recognize the seriousness of the situation. Why not establish an annual, community-wide science fair, or a track-and-field day, or a picnic in Earl Bales Park? How about an annual early-June trip to a Toronto Blue Jays game for every single student at a Toronto Jewish school? Or maybe a city-wide spelling bee? There are so many possible ways to encourage children to meet and learn with each other in informal, pressure-free environments. The key is to leave the politics – religious and otherwise – out of these events. Let the kids just be kids, even if it's only for one day.

As Jewish Toronto continues to grow, these kinds of community-wide programs may be the only chance we'll get to introduce children to a wide world of Judaism that they won't have the opportunity to experience or learn about in school. It's up to the BJE to ensure that the Jewish youth of Toronto are not moulded into the instruments that make permanent the borders that are already beginning to divide us.

Stuffed Boneless Chicken Breast w/ Apricot Jam

Stuffing: 1 cup boiling water
3 c matzah farfel
1 1/2 med onions, finely chopped
1/2 green pepper, finely chopped
3 ribs celery, finely chopped
1 tblsp oil
3 large eggs, beaten
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Chicken: 6 boneless chicken breasts, halved

Apricot jam

Preheat oven to 350°F. Stuffing: Pour boiling water over farfel; wait until all the water is absorbed. Let cool. Sauté onion, green pepper and celery in oil over medium heat until the onion softens. Combine beaten eggs, sauteed vegetables and soaked farfel in medium bowl; season with salt/pepper to taste. To stuff breasts, spoon 3 tblsp. stuffing on top of each chicken breast. Roll up; use a toothpick to fasten closed. Yield: 8 to12 servings.

Recipe *by Joan Nathan*

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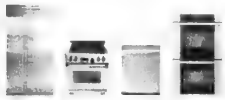

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BETTER THAN THE MOVIES: Israelis wearing protective glasses watched from Mount Bental in the Golan Hights as the moon partially covered the sun during a partial solar eclipse last week. [Israel Sun photo]

The good women of China

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

If you stand in one place long enough the world will come to you

— Chinese Proverb

URBAN WRITER

Volvo has just announced that it will produce its new S40 sedan in China. Wal-Mart is set to build 20 more stores in China this year. Last year, the firm bought $15 billion (US) worth of products from China. About 70 per cent of the commodities sold at Wal-Mart are made in China.

China's economy is growing rapidly and the world is going Asian crazy with the prospect of unimaginable treasures and riches. Yet in all of this excitement, there is a near inaudible whisper about China's human rights record and the depth of the damage caused by the Maoist Revolution.

Recently, I read a book titled *The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices* (Vintage Canada) by Xinran. Xinran was the first person to host a radio call-in show – *Words on the Night Breeze* – for women in China. In her book, she tells the story of her own suffering during the Cultural Revolution of the late 1960s, as well as the stories of a number of Chinese women growing up in a destructive, chauvinistic and dangerous country.

In this 240-page book, Xinran writes about the regular abduction of young girls from their families during the 1970s and 80s. Many were gang raped as a "right of passage" into the Revolutionary Guard. Wives and mothers were also stolen from their families an husbands and married off to movement members in distant villages. They often never saw their relatives again.

Xinran writes about one young girl, the daughter of a Chinese military officer, who was repeatedly raped by her father over a series of years. The broken girl ultimately ended up in an institution, inflicting physical harm on herself so she could stay locked up and far away from her father, who was immune from prosecution because of his military status. Xinran writes of how the adolescent befriended a fly in an attempt to love something. Soon enough, the fly died and the girl, unable to bare any more suffering, killed herself. According to the author, stories such as this were common during the Cultural Revolution.

Just as Jews were publicly humiliated during the Holocaust, so too were many Chinese women during the Cultural Revolution. Some were paraded through the streets for the crime of simply adopting a foreign fashion or trait.

"Everyone who has lived through the Cultural Revolution remembers how women who committed the 'crime' of foreign clothes or foreign habits were publicly humiliated," Xinran writes. "Their hair was shorn into all sorts of strange styles for the Red Guards' amusement; their faces were smeared with a mess of lipstick; high-heeled shoes were strung together and looped around their bodies."

China's leadership is responsible for the murder and persecution of millions of its citizens during the Cultural Revolution, as well as for human rights atrocities that are happening today. Recently, a Tiananmen Square veteran, Li Jianping, was indicted for "subverting state power through Internet articles."

Every businessperson who invests in China should read *The Good Women of China*. Through it they might realize that while economic prosperity could create a better place for the next generation of Chinese, countless men and women living today are suffering terribly from the pain inflicted upon them over the last few decades.

That whisper, the very low-key one, seems to become quieter with every new Wal-Mart store. Judge for yourself. According to a review in the *Globe and Mail*, *The Good Women of China* is, "a jeremiad of suffering… and a shock for outsiders to learn of the things that went on in China."

China's deeply wounded call out to us. While you're doing business in China, make sure to respond.

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[Israpet photo]

The Haggadah inspires hope for a better life

Editorial

The story of the Exodus from Egypt has been the bedrock foundation of Jewish peoplehood across time and space for more than 150 generations. That is why its re-enactment is the central purpose of our celebration of Pesach. Even as our ancient forebears were being freed from their pharaonic bondage, they were commanded to tell their children about the miracle of their freedom.

The Haggadah is, of course, the narrative instrument that our sages created to forever enshrine that re-enactment in our rituals and traditions. They prescribed an order a *seder*, in Hebrew – for the requisite components of the festive retelling of the Exodus.

Compiled more than 1,500 years after the event, the Haggadah is the most poignant of all proofs, if proof were ever needed, of the profound, all-encompassing, empathy, love, concern and respect that our ancient rabbis had for their people, Israel.

Layered and interwoven delicately into one seamless instructional book, the Haggadah is, among other things, a history text, an educational guide, a prayerbook, a songbook, a psychologist's interpretative key and an aid to good parenting.

But, above all else, the Haggadah takes its place in our hearts and on the barricades of Jewish history as a book of everlasting hope.

Freedom from Pharaoh's slavery is meant to tell us that the lives of human beings count above all else. Freedom from all forms of slavery is meant to teach us that the highest calling in the service of mankind is the betterment of the human condition.

The hope of a better life, of a better world, is the first step to its realization.

The retelling of the Exodus begins, not with the actual first details of the story, but rather with the loud and very emphatic proclamation expressing concern for the well-being of "all who are hungry and all who are needy." To be without food or a place to celebrate is an affront to human dignity.

If we cannot reaffirm the fundamental importance of human dignity on the night of Pesach, the first night of our freedom, then what have we learned from the holiday in years past? And what is the purpose of our celebration?

Continued on page 10

Shabbat Chol Hamoed
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Greater Toronto Area

Chag Samayach! Happy Passover to everyone!

The News in Brief

Canada

Aliyah Record Set

TORONTO — A record number of Canadians – 376 – made aliyah in 2005, up from 312 in 2004 and 229 in 2003, the Israel Aliyah Office for Toronto and Western Canada said last week. Of the 2005 olim, 65 per cent were Orthodox, 15 per cent Conservative and 15 per cent Reform or secular. As well, half were single, and nearly 50 per cent were 18 to 34. The Office expects a new record of close to 450 olim in 2006.

Cleric Condemns Hate

OTTAWA — The Catholic archbishop of Ottawa wants Catholics to "turn in love" to people who have experienced anti-Semitism and other religious and racial prejudice, the Canadian Catholic News service reported. Archbishop Marcel Gervais made the comments in his annual Easter message. He was responding to B'nai Brith Canada's recent audit that reported a threefold rise in anti-Semitic incidents since 1981, and the recent kidnapping and murder of Ilan Halimi in France. "In Canada, we already have laws that prohibit any discrimination against any racial, ethnic or religious groups. But the rise in anti-Semitism reminds us that our society has a long way to go before we can claim a truly just society," he said. He also said the Second Vatican Council document *Nostra Aetate* condemns anti-Semitism.

Israel Trips Offered

TORONTO — Toronto Jews from 18 to 26 years old are being invited to apply for 80 spots on two Jerusalem Fellowships trips to Israel, May 14 to June 4 and June 12 to July 3, being organized by Aish HaTorah. For details or to apply online, visit worldwide jewishadventures.com.

World

Editor Defends Piece

LONDON — The editor who published a controversial article on the pro-Israel lobby in the United States defended her decision to publish the piece. The *London Review of Books*' Mary-Kay Wilmers, who is Jewish, told the *London Observer* March 31 that "when I reread the piece, I did not see anything that I felt should not have been said." The report was written by John Mearsheimer, a political science professor at the University of Chicago, and Stephen Walt, an international affairs professor at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. It accuses pro-Israel groups of skewing U.S. policy, and suggests that Israel's supporters pushed the United States into the Iraq war. Harvard has distanced itself from the article, which has been widely criticized for being anti-Semitic and unscholarly.

Return Art, Panel Says

VIENNA — An Austrian panel recommended that thousands of Nazi-era looted artworks be returned to their original owners. The panel recommended last week that 6,292 works be returned. Austria's state-run museums took over many of the works before, during or after World War II.

Anti-Semitism Down

NEW YORK — The number of anti-Semitic incidents in the United States decreased slightly in 2005, a new report says. The Anti-Defamation League's audit, which looked at anti-Semitic activity across the United States, recorded 1,757 such incidents last year, down slightly from the 1,821 incidents in 2004, which constituted the highest level of anti-Semitic activity in nine years.

Charges Denied

PARIS — The chief suspect in the brutal murder of a French Jew denied to an investigative judge that he committed the crime. Youssouf Fofana admitted he was the leader of a gang suspected in the case, but he gave no explanation for Ilan Halimi's death, his lawyer said. Fofana is accused of leading the gang that allegedly kidnapped and tortured Halimi, 23, who died of his wounds.

Hezbollah Sign-Off

WASHINGTON — Two European satellite firms, one French and one Spanish, removed the Hezbollah radio station al-Nour last week. The move will affect South America, Europe and Asia, the Coalition Against Terrorist Media said. The move follows the U.S. Treasury Department's recent designation of Hezbollah's al-Manar TV station, al-Nour radio and the parent firm of both, the Lebanese Media Group, as specially designated global terrorist entities.

Camp Name Change?

WARSAW — Poland has asked UNESCO to change the name of the Auschwitz death camp. Authorities asked UNESCO to change its name from "Auschwitz Concentration Camp" to the "Former Nazi German Concentration Camp Auschwitz-Birkenau." They say it will remind people that Auschwitz's horrors were committed by German Nazis, not Poles. Tomasz Kuncewicz, head of the Jewish Education Center, Oswiecim, told JTA that Auschwitz is sometimes "referred to as a Polish death camp, and this is very upsetting to many Poles." He added that some Poles don't know the camp was run by Germans.

Birthright Haggadahs

NEW YORK — The birthright israel program is distributing 100,000 free Passover Haggadahs to alumni and supporters. Thousands more will be able to access the Haggadah through the group's website www.birthrightisrael.com.

Former Native Leader Appeals Hate Ruling

SASKATOON — Former national native leader David Ahenakew last week appealed a 2005 ruling that said he willfully promoted hatred against Jews.

Doug Christie, his lawyer, said the decision was the first step toward a "tattletale police state," because Ahenakew, now 72, made the comments in what he thought was a private conversation.

Ahenakew was fined $1,000 and stripped of the Order of Canada for 2002 comments to a reporter at a native health conference in which he called the Jewish people a "disease" and asserted that Hitler was justified when he "fried six million of those guys." Just before the comments, he made a speech in which he blamed Jews for starting World War II. The judge said he will rule on the appeal in a month or two.

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Vol. XXXVI, No. 16 (1,743)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation: 42,245 copies
Total paid circulation: 41,398 copies

CCNA verified circulation Feb. 9, 2006

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada: $35.95, 1 yr. incl. GST
$63.95, 2 yr. incl. GST
U.S.A.: $100 U.S funds, 1 yr
All other countries: $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr

Postmaster: Please return 2985 and changes of address to Toronto office

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40018684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

*Under current ownership

The Canadian Jewish news
How To Reach Us

Head Office: 1500 Don Mills Rd., Ste. 205, North York, Ont., M3B 3K4 Tel: 416-391-1836
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Ottawa urged to act against suicide bombing

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Wiesenthal Centre releases report on digital terrorism and hate

The Canadian government is being asked to use its influence at the G8 meetings in Russia this summer to make suicide bombing a crime against humanity.

Foreign Affairs Minister Peter MacKay was asked to consider the step as part of Canada's role in the war on terror, said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Los Angeles-based Simon Wiesenthal Center.

Rabbi Cooper met with MacKay and other lawmakers last week as part of a Canadian visit during which he released *Digital Terrorism & Hate 2006*, a CD that contains updated information about the use of the Internet by terrorists and hatemongers. Rabbi Cooper also met with Justice Minister Vic Toews and Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day.

Rabbi Cooper said the G8 meeting is expected to be contentious, "but suicide bombing can't wait. If there's a joint resolution on this, [it will mark] an important step forward.

"People around the world would like to see Canada be Canada, not Switzerland. We'd like them to roll up their sleeves and get back in it and take a leadership role," he added.

Part of his discussion with Day included the Wiesenthal Center's findings on Internet terror and an offer to further brief the minister and his department on the issue.

Rabbi Cooper said the Internet is increasingly being used as a virtual "university of terrorism" in which detailed and accurate information is traded on "making a dirty bomb, poison gas, instructions to target churches and synagogues."

One web document contained instructions on making dirty bombs, chemical weapons, rocket propelled grenades and suicide vests.

"Most of it is in Arabic," Rabbi Cooper said.

Neo-Nazi and skinhead groups, which were the focus of the annual *Digital Hate* CDs when they were first released eight years ago, "use overseas Internet sites to evade anti-hate laws and attract thousands for illegal hate music concerts. Hooligan sports groups seek recruits for racist manifestations at football matches," the centre said in a news release.

Rabbi Cooper said hatemongers continue to be a problem, but the real "existential threat" lies with terrorists.

Wiesenthal Center researchers uncovered "how-to videos" setting out in minute detail the preparation of suicide devices. One video posted on the web followed a suicide bombing team. It showed them preparing, departing for their target and then detonating the device. When the explosive went off, the people holding the video camera can be heard "actually cheering and saying Allah Akbar [God is great]," Rabbi Cooper said.

Another video shows a civilian helicopter being shot down in Iraq. The Bulgarian pilot survived and after being calmed down and told to walk away, he was riddled with bullets.

For Iraqi insurgents, capturing the attacks on video and making them available on the web is a way of recruiting new terrorists, Rabbi Cooper said.

These kind of "snuff videos" are popular in the Middle East, he added.

Rabbi Cooper said terror groups are constantly shifting between the web, chat rooms, bulletin boards and e-mail.

"Terrorists are on the cutting edge of technology," he added. "They try to harness the new technology and make it more difficult to be tracked by the big boys – police and intelligence agencies."

Wiesenthal Centre researchers uncovered a terrorist website that publicized a confidential alert between law enforcement agencies about explosives that had disappeared. The information was turned over to U.S. authorities.

Rabbi Cooper shrugged when asked whether that indicated terrorists had hacked into law enforcement websites. "This report shows us that every cutting edge development is being manipulated, absorbed and brilliantly used by terrorists. We've reached a new level."

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Moses our teacher

The irony of the coincidence could not have been more poignant. Last Sunday, on the eve of Passover, as it were, Thomas Axeworthy, a prominent Canadian political scientist, the former principal secretary to Pierre Trudeau from 1981 to '84, wrote a column that appeared in the *Toronto Star* whose headline asked: What qualities do we want in a leader?

Quoting Richard Neustadt, his colleague at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, Axeworthy stated that there were "four essential questions that Canadians should consider as they assess the men and women who seek to be prime minister."

The four Neustadt questions were, in somewhat paraphrased form:

- why does the person want the job?
- what is the person's "feel" for governing?
- what is the person's "power to persuade?" and
- "what sustains a leader against the frustrations and temptations of power?"

Interestingly, sadly, of the four criteria proffered by Neustadt and Axeworthy, only the first and last touch upon the issues of character and deep values of the individual – and these only indirectly.

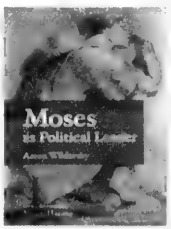
As elaborated upon by Axeworthy in his article, the Neustadt criteria are overwhelmingly pragmatic in their scope and application. Only by implication do they suggest that we ask: who is this person and what does he or she stand for?

The celebration of Passover – the holiday that established the beginning of the Jewish people's national freedom and political independence – provides a wonderful opportunity for us to look within our own tradition to reflect upon the question posed by Axeworthy.

The Haggadah is silent on the subject of Moses and his involvement in the Exodus from Egypt. For important theological, nation-building and historic reasons, our ancient sages preferred to omit reference to Moses when they compiled the text of the Haggadah. God's all-powerful outstretched hand steered the events that unfolded some 4,000 years ago in Goshen and beyond.

But outside the pages of the Haggadah and even within its lines, the figure of Moses looms large. The late, renowned biblical scholar Nahum Sarna referred to Moses as "this towering personality, pre-eminent in the entire cast of biblical characters." Moses was our teacher, indeed the teacher of all teachers, and the leader of the people for some 40 years during their difficult, formative, transitional desert wanderings.

Despite the centrality of his place in the formation of the Jewish people, the biblical narrative provides few details about Moses' life before his appointment by God. The midrash fills in some of those details. The bible focuses upon his mission and the way he fulfilled it.



Through the ages, many scholars have speculated and written about the character, nature and life of Moses, the human being. For even without a full biographical portrait of the man in the Bible, there are a great many aspects of his life from which we can learn.

In 1984, one of America's most singularly recognized political scientists, the late Aaron Wildavsky, wrote *Moses as Political Leader*. It was a breakthrough study that examined the story of Exodus from a politico-academic point of view and the role of Moses as a political leader moulding a vulnerable rabble of freed slaves into a God-fearing, law-abiding nation of free men and women.

Wildavsky was particularly qualified for his task. He was a professor of political science and public policy at the University of California, Berkeley. Among the many titles he held was president of the American Political Science Association and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was the author of 39 books on all aspects of government. Wildavsky passed away in 1993 at the age of 63.

Some two decades after *Moses as Political Leader* first appeared, Shalem Press (Jerusalem and New York) has rereleased it with an accompanying foreword by Yoram Hazony. One of the reasons, Hazony writes, for rereleasing Wildavsky's remarkable book is to "place the Hebrew Bible within the overall history of political thought in the West."

We owe Shalem Press a great debt. Wildavsky's insights and observations are powerful. Merely one example will suffice.

"Only when Moses accepts the human need to wrestle with history can he begin to free his people from the moral and mental fetters of slavery. The Egypt of those days was a specific place. But the slavery it symbolizes is a permanent condition, from which men continually struggle to liberate themselves. It is not physical miracles for which Moses deserves praise… but rather the miracle of moral rebirth, through which mankind occasionally can overcome the slavery of its self-absorption."

Moses as Political Leader is an inspiring book. Tom Axeworthy should read it.

–MBD

SeeJN

BIALIK PEACEMAKERS: Grade 5 Peacemakers at Bialik Hebrew Day School donated gift bags to the children who came to the seders held by Ve'ahavta: The Canadian Jewish Humanitarian and Relief Committee for families in need. In each bag was a small gift, along with the Passover story in English and Hebrew, written by the students.

Ambassador pleased with evolving ties with Canada

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

It's early yet in the lives of the new governments in Canada and Israel, but Israel's ambassador, Alan Baker, is pleased about the evolving state of the relationship between the two countries.

On the issue of Canada's voting record at the United Nations, on its views of the Palestinian Hamas government, on fighting terrorism and on bilateral trade, Baker sees relations between the two countries moving closer together.

Alan Baker

"We're very enthusiastic that the government [in Ottawa] is realizing where Canada's true interests should be in the Middle East," Baker said in a telephone interview from Ottawa.

Israel and Canada, he noted, "are liberal democracies based on the rule of law, countries of immigration, bilingual and both are eager to combat terrorism and to ensure true democracy."

In the short time since the Conservatives assumed power in Ottawa, Baker has met Prime Minister Stephen Harper and International Trade Minister David Emerson and he hopes to meet with Foreign Minister Peter MacKay and Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day.

He characterized his meeting with the prime minister as a "friendly" one in which the two discussed a number of issues, including the new Hamas government, Hezbollah, "the threat of Iran," and bilateral trade.

He said Harper was keen to encourage commerce between the two countries.

On the Hamas file, Baker said that "it was only natural" Canada would decline to fund the terrorist government elected by Palestinians.

Canada joined other western nations in saying there would be no financial support for Hamas unless it agreed to give up terrorism, accept agreements negotiated by the previous Palestinian government and recognize Israel.

"We welcomed it… it was certainly an important message to convey to Hamas," Baker stated. "We think Canada got off to a good start on this."

At the same time, Baker voiced concern there might be an attempt to rehabilitate the Islamic terrorist movement and paint it as a reasonable peace partner for Israel.

He pointed to a recent *Globe and Mail* article that focused on the contemporary appearance of a senior Hamas official – his modern mustache, his sports jacket – and which repeated the official's query as to what Hamas did do deserve its international opprobrium.

Hamas, Baker said, "has not moved one iota from its character as a terrorist organization."

It will take "a revolutionary development for Hamas to become a mainstream political party," he said.

"In my previous incarnation as legal adviser to the Foreign Ministry of Israel and as a researcher on international terrorism, I was able to look into the character and ideology of Hamas as a terrorist organization," Baker distinguished between the Fatah-led Palestinian national government, which was also a terrorist entity but "could adapt pragmatically and change." That allowed it to negotiate arrangements with Israel and although they violated their agreements, talks were possible.

However, "Hamas can't even make that commitment. The way they interpret the Qur'an, any change in their character would render them no longer Hamas."

As a result of the Palestinians' decision to elect Hamas, Baker said there appears no hope for a peace process with the Palestinians. Without a peace partner, Israel will have to act on its own to implement its strategic and tactical interests, he said.

Turning to local issues, Baker said he hopes to foster a "strong relationship between the Jewish community and the embassy."

Continued on page 6

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Canada urged to push for changes to UNRWA

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Canada has a unique opportunity to take the lead in pushing the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees (UNRWA) to exclude Palestinian terrorists from its payroll and to adopt the same criteria on refugees that the UN uses elsewhere, an Israeli researcher said last week.

David Bedein told a small workshop at the Shaarei Shomayim Congregation that Canada has leverage as chair of the Refugee Working Group, an independent multilateral assembly that supplements bilateral discussions on Palestinian refugees. Canada can push for the application of the principles used by the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to the Palestinian situation, he said.

Since its creation in December 1949, UNRWA has had jurisdiction over Palestinian refugees, while UNHCR has a mandate to address the humanitarian needs of all other refugees around the world. UNRWA has departed from the principles of resettlement and normalization that UNHCR applies universally in all other refugee situations, said Bedein, founder of the Israel Resource News Agency.

Instead of "resettl[ing] refugees with dignity," UNRWA predicates its operations on a "right of return" for Palestinians to homes they once possessed in what is today Israel. Bedein argued that "right of return" does not exist as a principle in international law and that by advocating it for Palestinians, UNRWA has kept them in "a situation of limbo" since 1949.

As a result, UNRWA is guilty of "the ultimate crime of manipulating people's human dignity," he stated.

Bedein said UNRWA's staff includes many members of Hamas, the radical Islamic terrorist organization that recently formed the Palestinian Authority government. Canada, which has announced it will not fund the Hamas government, co-ordinates the 38 donor countries who provide funds for the UNRWA payroll, gives UNRWA $11 million and makes sure it remains solvent, Bedein stated.

In addition to UNWRA's employing numerous Hamas operatives, schools it administers in refugee camps use textbooks that fuel the conflict with Israel. They ignore the historic Jewish connection to the land and maps in the textbooks don't include Israel at all, he said.

Bedein said the concept of the right of return has been integrated into the "UNRWA curriculum" and is part of the pervasive atmosphere in the camps. UNRWA camps have celebrated Martyrs' Day, which honours suicide killers.

Bedein said donors providing funds to UNRWA should demand accountability of how those funds are used in UN schools.

Bedein's address was sponsored by the Media Action Group and the Canadian Coalition for Democracies.

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Baker welcomed graciously

Continued from page 5

In his two years on the job, he has crossed the nation, visiting large centres of Jewish life as well as smaller communities in Regina, Sydney and Victoria.

"To me, it's very important to enable the Jewish community to have access to the Israeli ambassador and get briefed...and [allow them] to make their views known."

He has been welcomed graciously and his diplomatic colleagues representing other states are envious when he tells them how warmly he has been received.

While the Jewish community often sees eye to eye with the embassy on important issues, he acknowledged there can be areas when that is not the case. Asked to comment on the question of UNRWA, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which is responsible for providing humanitarian aid to Palestinian refugees, Baker said Israel has had a sometimes rocky relationship with the agency. Some past UNRWA leaders were hostile to Israel, and when Israeli Defence Forces entered the Jenin refugee camp in 2002, soldiers saw UNRWA schools full of posters glorifying suicide bombers.

But "at the moment," he said, "we're going through one of the better periods of co-operation."

Israel is committed through long-standing international agreements to permit the functioning of UNRWA in Palestinian refugee camps. He said Canadian citizens have a different interest in UNRWA.

"Canada is being asked to finance this organization and pay substantial portions of its budget," he said. "Canadians have the right to be interested in how it's spent, so I don't think one thing should be connected with the other.

"It's your tax money going to UNRWA and so the Canadian community has an interest [in UNRWA] from another perspective."

Turning to the diplomatic community in Ottawa, Baker said relations are good, though he has faced "hostility from the former Saudi Arabian ambassador," who was at turns "rude and hostile" to him in a variety of social situations.

Baker has no contact with the ambassadors from Syria and Lebanon; however, he is good friends with the Jordanian and Egyptian ambassadors and he maintains good ties with the his Turkish and Moroccan counterparts.

Looking ahead, Baker said he hopes to build on the evolving relationship with Ottawa and to invite the prime minister or his senior ministers to visit the region.

He has plans to rejuvenate the moribund Canada-Israel Chamber of Commerce and promote trade between the two countries.

When he was first assigned to Ottawa, he admits "I thought it might be slow and boring. It's not."

Right now, he said, he's too busy to be bored.

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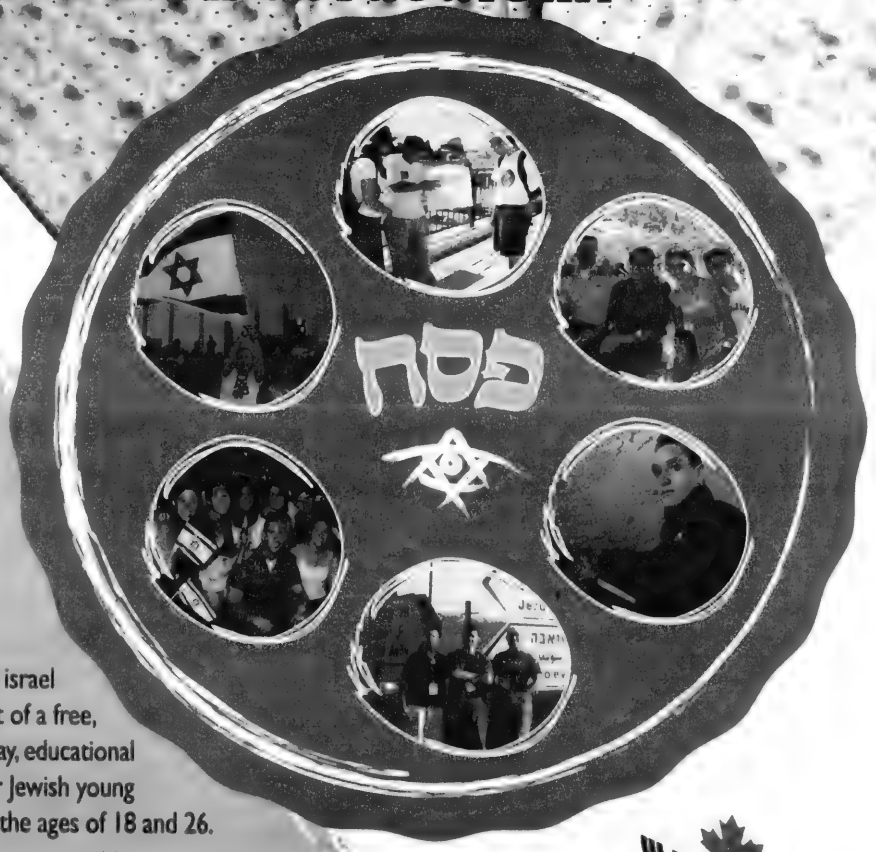

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Israel's El Al registers record profit in 2005

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Last year was a pretty good year for El Al in Canada and around the world, though 2006 is shaping up as a more difficult year for the Canadian branch of the Israeli national carrier.

Last year, the Israeli airline recorded its biggest net profit ever – $64.1 million (US) – and the carrier's Canadian route flew at 94 per cent capacity, compared to 84 per cent the year before.

This year promises to be more difficult, said Stanley Morais, general manager of the airline's Canadian office. "The situation is not as rosy as we'd like it to be," he acknowledged. Bookings are down 18 per cent in 2006 from the same period the year before and the airline will offer only eight weekly flights during the busy summer season, which begins June 25, compared to nine in 2005.

In an interview at his downtown Toronto office, Morais attributed the decline in bookings this year to a particularly large volume in 2005 due to pent-up demand. Passenger traffic to Israel began a steep decline in 2001, coinciding with the Palestinian intifadah, though it rebounded in 2005 as well as the year before.

As a result of the re-emergence of Israel as a popular travel destination, El Al recorded its more successful year ever in its 56-year history. Last year's profit marked a 94 per cent jump over earnings the year before.

"The increase in profits is a direct result of many steps taken to improve efficiency and in reducing operating expenses despite a steep surge in fuel costs," El Al said in a statement.

The airline's profitability coincides with the privatization of the carrier. Control of the airline moved in late 2004 from the State of Israel to Knafaim-Arkia Holdings, which in turn led to changes in company management and structure.

Morais said that while the airline industry as a whole has suffered since 9/11, El Al was in even worse shape because of the added impact of the intifadah.

"For a small airline like us to show a profit shows privatization works," he said. "When the government was involved, it was hard to make it work. You see the positive results."

In addition to cutting staff from a high of 5,000 (at the start of the intifadah) to 3,500 today, El Al made improvements in on-board service and comfort in order to appeal to the traveller. Food quality was improved and more convenient arrival and departure times were implemented, Morais said.

"In 2005, El Al made a huge investment in Toronto," investing $3.8 million (US) to upgrade the business class in the Boeing 767s that fly the Toronto-Tel Aviv route. The cabin was made larger, more room was placed between rows and the seats now recline farther than before, Morais said.

"As a direct result, we've seen a dramatic increases in the number of business class passengers," he said.

El Al, which has been flying between Canada and Israel for 35 years, also improved its on board services by adding satellite phone service at a fee of $1.60 a minute.

The Toronto-Los Angeles route has proven quite profitable for El Al, Morais continued. Once the airline acquired the right to fly passengers between the two cities, it began selling between 50 and 60 tickets per flight, adding $2 million to the airline's revenues.

Morais noted that while the airline's business has bounced back in recent years, it's still centred in the Toronto market. Something like 80 per cent of its traffic originates locally, while 15 per cent comes from Montreal, and a further five per cent can be attributed to the rest of Canada.

Stanley Morais [Paul Lungen photo]

Within those numbers, "the Jewish market is the bread and butter of… this airline," he added.

El Al is in discussions with WestJet "to find new solutions" for passengers flying to Israel from Western Canada. The goal is to make the airline more attractive to Christian groups from the West who are travelling to the Holy Land, while WestJet and El Al are discussing increasing the Canadian airline's profile in Israel to make it an option for Israeli travellers to western Canada, he added.

Responding to suggestions that El Al's fares are too high – a critique voiced recently by representatives of the Israeli Tourism Ministry – Morais said, "everybody would like everything cheaper, but at the end of the day, somebody has to pay the bills."

He said airlines experience large variable costs – such as fuel and, in Toronto, de-icing, which can add $30,000 to the cost of a flight – something people in other industries don't appreciate.

He suggested some of the sniping at El Al might be because of institutional jealousy at the airline's newfound profitability. He acknowledged there is tension between Israel's Ministry of Tourism and El Al, adding, "It's because people in the ministry don't understand the airline business."

Morais said he remains optimistic about the future, "but we're aware it is very sensitive to the [security] situation in Israel and we don't know from day to day how it will turn out."

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The Canadian Jewish news

An independent community newspaper serving as a forum for diverse viewpoints
Publisher and Proprietor:
The Canadian Jewish News, a corporation without share capital.
Head Office:
1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4

Hope and promise of a better world

Continued from page 1

Our concern for the dignity of our fellow man is so ingrained, especially at this time of year, that for centuries, it has been customary for individuals and the community to collect funds for *kimcha d'pischa* (flour for the making of matzah on Pesach) or for ma'ot chittin (money for the buying of wheat) to distribute to the needy and indigent.

The photo on page 1 of today's *CJN* is a plain-truth, emotional example of taking action on behalf of the other's dignity. It shows the distribution in Jerusalem last week of provisions for the seder to needy survivors of the Holocaust. Provisions worth hundreds of thousands of dollars were distributed to as many in need as possible in Jerusalem and throughout Israel.

But there are many hungry and many in need. A survey conducted last week disclosed that one-third of all Israelis will find it financially difficult to get through the Pesach holiday and that 10 per cent of the general population will not be able to hold a seder meal at all.

In every community around the world where Jews assemble to celebrate Pesach, countless volunteers have gathered to collect and distribute food and other provisions to people in need.

Performing acts of kindness, friendship and charity is part of the instructional inheritance left to us by our ancient sages. They understood, from the often difficult conditions under which our people lived, that kindness and caring, like the golden lines on an early morning horizon, brought hope to the hearts of the weary or oppressed.

That is why they infused the Haggadah with signals and signs of hope.

For example, opening the door for Elijah to sip from the ceremonial cup was not simply an invocation by the wise rabbis for Divine justice.

It was far more. And every Jew who ever lived in conditions of fear or want, knew it.

For it is Elijah, our traditions and folklore tell us, who will usher in a sense of unity within our people, who will "reconcile parents with their children and children with their parents." It is Elijah, we are told, who will one day announce the coming of the messianic age.

In every generation, at every table of every seder, we have welcomed Elijah. In their profound wisdom and undifferentiated love for all their people, our beloved ancient rabbis chose the most perfect, even if somewhat enigmatic, way of holding out the hope and the promise of a better world.

We thank God for bringing us to this day. *Chag Samayach.*

25 years ago in *The CJN*

- A Canadian Jewish Congress national executive meeting unanimously passed a resolution making the rescue of Ethiopian Jews "an urgent priority."
- In a speech at Holy Blossom Temple, Reform scholar Rabbi David Polish warned Jews against emulating the religious fanaticism sweeping the western world.

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Passover 5766

The democratic struggle for human dignity is the spirit of Passover.

The idea that liberty must prevail in every generation and be enjoyed by each individual is an integral part of our daily prayers. Every person, in every generation, must picture himself as having been freed from Egypt. This identification with the Jewish struggle for freedom has given the Jewish people the determination to carry on.

Indeed, the springtime festival of Passover acts as a harbinger of new life and hope for women and men who have suffered the bitter cold of exile and oppression. Even as we celebrate around the festive seder table, we remember our long, stormy history.

Throughout centuries of adversity, the Passover festival has given Jews newfound strength and hope. It unites today's generation with its ancestors from the days of Moses, the Maccabees, the Spanish Inquisition, the cruel blood libels of the Middle Ages, the barbaric pogroms, the unspeakable crimes of Nazi Germany, the heroic uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Arab nations' repeated efforts to crush the reborn Jewish state.

Yet we have triumphed over our suffering and degradations, and witnessed the birth of our beloved State of Israel. We learned from our history and gained the faith and confidence to carry on our struggle against our present enemies in order to reach our ultimate victory.

Around the seder table, the Haggadah reminds us of our heritage, and reaffirms our faith in God's concern for Israel and humanity, and in the hope that justice and freedom for all women and men will prevail.

Today, Passover's legacy sustains the Jewish people in their struggle against terrorism and the rising threat of a new global anti-Semitism.

Baruch Cohen
Montreal

* * *

Israeli women denied divorces

In modern 21st century Israel, a democratic country, or so it would like to think of itself, women are still not equal to men. Hundreds of women are waiting for divorces and are prevented by religious law from receiving one. Their husbands, long separated from them, have not yet found other women whom they wish to marry or who are willing to marry them – and so they refuse to divorce their wives. Without a divorce, these women cannot ever marry again. This vindictive behaviour on the part of the husbands often continues for many years.

Judaism is an ancient tree with strong roots. Fierce cold winds, hot dry weather and sudden environmental changes will split those heavy, overloaded branches that then break off; those lifeless branches that bear neither fruit nor even leaves will wither and hang there uselessly until they drop off onto the ground. The tree's roots, however, are healthy, and new, young and vigorous branches will appear from time to time.

True, in the last half century, there has been minor alterations in the status of Jewish women. But how long must women be punished for having been born Jewish? No wonder Jewish men thank God for never having been born women.

Ezra Halevi
Moshav Habonim
Israel

* * *

The ulpan at Hebrew U

Jean Gerber will be happy to know that the summer ulpan at Hebrew University is an amazing place to meet members of many diverse cultures ("Budget cuts threaten our special ulpan," *CJN*, March 30). My family went one summer, all four of us in different levels.

To give you an idea of the people we met: in my class, we had Jewish people from Germany, parts of Russia, France, Canada and the United States, from yeshiva boys to people who had never celebrated Shabbat. We also had two Japanese girls in the class. Both my mother and sister became close friends with Palestinians in their classes. My father had the most interesting classmate – a Pentecostal man from Louisville, Ky., with a thick southern accent who claimed he was there because one day, speaking in tongues in a religious trance, he magically spoke and wrote a bit of Hebrew. He now wanted to learn the language properly.

While it would be a pity if Gerber's ulpan closes, she should rest assured that Hebrew University will continue to provide a safe location for contact between all kinds of interesting people.

Carolyn Gehr
Cote St. Luc, Quebec

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Why isn't Moses in the Haggadah?

By REUVEN HAMMER
Jerusalem Post

Moses Presenting The Ten Commandments, engraving by Gustave Doré (1832-1883)

The Pesach Haggadah is a fascinating work, an accumulation of prayers, readings, songs and stories that has one aim: to fulfil the Torah's command: "And you shall tell your child on that day, 'It is because of what the Lord did for me when I left Egypt.'" (Exodus 13:8)

But as a matter of fact, the story itself is told in only the most cursory fashion. The sages found the briefest account of the story, in Deuteronomy 26:5-8, and placed it as the centrepiece of the evening, together with ancient rabbinic comments to those verses. The details, the "story" as such, are completely ignored. Of course, there is nothing to prevent us from discussing the details. As a matter of fact, we are told that "the more you tell the story, the more meritorious it is." Yet I have a suspicion that the reason they included only that brief account is because what is told there is what they considered important.

What is in those verses? We went down to Egypt. We multiplied and became a nation. We were oppressed. God saw our distress and rescued us. In their eyes, that is all you know and all you need to know. That is also the message of Rabban Gamliel's teaching that three things must be expounded at the seder to fulfil the obligation of "telling": Pesach, matzah, maror. To the sages, Pesach represented God's protection of Israel; the matzah, God's redemption of Israel; the maror, the enslavement.

The details, the exact story who did what when were not important. God's plan for Israel is what matters. God's saving power, which is a promise for the future as well as a story of the past, is what our children must learn. I often think about that when I read the debates among archeologists as to whether or not the Exodus ever took place, or if all the details as related in the Torah are completely accurate. Could there really have been 600,000 males wandering through the desert for 40 years? Where is the Sea of Reeds and how could such a parting of the waters have taken place?

When the radicals among them tell us it never happened because we have found no archeological evidence, my first reaction is that you cannot learn anything from the fact that something has not been found. My second is to say: do you really think the Israelites would have made up such a story from whole cloth? What was to be gained from saying you had been enslaved if you were not? My third is to say that the details are of no consequence. We were enslaved, we were freed from slavery and we believe that it was the Divine will that accomplished it. That is quite sufficient for me.

One of the interesting details that is ignored in the Haggadah is the existence of a man called Moses who served as God's messenger in bringing about the Exodus. I am not aware of any specific injunction against mentioning him, but it hardly seems credible to think that the omission of Moses from the Haggadah is a mere accident or an oversight. We can only speculate as to the reason, but I believe that there are two reasons: one internal, the other external, one positive, the other negative.

The internal, positive reason is that the sages wanted us to focus on the role of God in our freedom. Israelite monotheism is very strict in focusing all power on the one God. It may have allowed for the existence of other non-human beings – angels or what you will – but they were not invested with independent power. Thus the sages emphasized that it was God and not any other being, human or divine, who brought about Israel's salvation.

The external, negative reason may have been a reaction to the rise of Christianity and the calamity of the Bar Kochba rebellion. The core of the Haggadah was created in the early days of Christianity and is found in the Mishnah, which was edited in 200 CE after the defeat of Bar Kochba, the most terrible calamity for our people until the Shoah. Christianity was concerned with redemption. So is the Haggadah. For Christianity, redemption is from sin and death; for Judaism, it is from foreign oppression. Christianity also had its interpretation of the Pesach in which the meal becomes the sacrament, the wine the blood of Jesus, the matzah Jesus' body and Jesus himself the Pesach lamb.

For Judaism, it was therefore important to stress that no one other than God Himself was responsible for redemption. This emphasis on God came at the expense of Moses. Furthermore, the tragedies brought about by belief in human beings as redeemers – first Jesus and then Bar Kochba caused the sages to play down the role of any messianic figure in Jewish history. They therefore do not say anything disparaging about Moses – how could they? But in the ritual retelling of the story they ignore him and concentrate solely on God. "Not by an angel, not by a seraph, not by a messenger. I and no other!" That lesson should not be ignored.

Reuven Hammer is the head of the rabbinical court of the Masorti movement and the rabbinical assembly of Israel.

Stop whining and start moving

I have nothing against complaints. Complaints are society's quality-control mechanism, targeting ineffective things for improvement. More importantly, righteous protest is the first step on the road to freedom.

Rabbi Chaim Steinmetz in Montreal

From the Exodus to the U.S. civil rights movement, outcries against injustice are a call to responsibility.

Yet, many of today's protests are simply old-fashioned whining, with paranoia and self-pity masquerading as calls for justice. A few insensitive cartoons in an obscure Danish newspaper, and suddenly you have a worldwide cause célèbre. A public figure makes an errant remark, and suddenly he faces accusations of anti-Semitism, sexism or racism. These complaints are more about making noise than pursuing justice.

Whining is a form of self-pity, and a way to shift blame to someone else so that we're no longer responsible or in control. And it's natural. We all like to indulge in self-pitying fantasies of helplessness.

So how do you break out of a whining spell? Do you need to read books or attend workshops? Actually it's very simple. You just have to move on. When the Jews were being chased at the Red Sea, they cried out to God, paralyzed by uncertainty. God's answer, via Moses, was simple: "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on." God's advice, phrased in a less formal way, is to "stop whining and start moving"

God tells the beleaguered Jews at the Red Sea to move on, because no one should ever believe they're helpless. The moment we start whining, we must find ways to take action – any action – to change our circumstances. Even in the bleakest moments, a person can choose his destiny

I draw inspiration from people who made the best of awful situations, like Rami Harpaz, an Israeli pilot who, along with nine other Israelis, was an Egyptian prisoner of war for three years. During their time as PoWs, they conducted classes for each other and worked on plans for their lives once they were freed

One day, a parcel arrived with a copy of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, and they immediately started to work on translating it. Together, the 10 men completed a translation that is now one of two standard ones in Hebrew of Tolkien. They may have been prisoners, but they refused to give up.

Harpaz put it best in a recent interview: "Falling into captivity presents you with a number of choices. You can either pity yourself and wallow in misery, or do something to organize your time as constructively as conditions allow."

His advice is useful to anyone, no matter what their situation: when you're feeling sorry for yourself, stop whining and start moving.

We must show steely resolve against Islamism

In March, after Israel invaded a Palestinian prison in Jericho to apprehend the murderers of an Israeli cabinet minister, Palestinian "militants" went on a kidnapping spree. The targets, naturally, were westerners who help Palestinians. One Canadian social worker, Adam Budzanowski, said on video: "I was advised straight away that this action is not taken against me personally or against any other detainees."

Gil Troy in Montreal

Budzanowski's gentlemanly understanding might be understandable, considering the filming occurred at gunpoint. But the reaction of an American victim, Douglas Johnson is incomprehensible. After being freed, Johnson said of his kidnappers, "They are angry over what is going on in Jericho. I feel sympathy with them." News reports reinforced this seemingly logical reaction by noting that angry Palestinians accused Britain and the United States of complicity in Israel's siege of the prison.

Putting aside Palestinians' self-destructive targeting of Western do-gooders who are sympathetic to their cause, why is the West so complacent about such racism? Rejecting attempts to punish members of an entire group for the perceived crimes of particular individuals was one of the 20th century's greatest moral achievements. Americans learned to recoil when Southern whites lynched a group of blacks, claiming that one black man had dishonoured a white woman. South Africans learned to question the assumption that if one person of colour happened to be ignorant or violent, all were. Germans learned about the evils of deeming one group "diseased" and deserving of eradication.

Yet the Islamist war against the West has returned such evil bigotry to the mainstream of world discourse. Intellectual idiots such as Johnson validate such thinking, while supposedly objective reporters make such twisted thinking seem logical by writing stories in a linear fashion. That so many mainstream media outlets deemed the Danish cartoons of Muhammad "offensive" – when most were benign – seemingly rationalized the racist attacks on Danes, Europeans, and westerners in general. A dozen cartoonists sketched the controversial drawings, yet hundreds of millions were targeted – even as most cowering Western media outlets suppressed the cartoons.

Such bigotry is a defining characteristic of the new, ugly Islamism seeking world domination and advocating mass murder. While U.S. President George W. Bush carefully salutes Islam as "a religion of peace" and only targets Islamofascists, the Islamofascists target westerners promiscuously, aggressively and shamelessly.

The Hamas charter declares war on all Jews. Osama Bin Laden's fatwas target "Jews and Crusaders" – Islamist shorthand for all Christians. Iran's president singles out Israel and the United States, while his mullahs and their fundamentalist colleagues worldwide vilify all westerners. Bruce Bawer's terrifying new book, *While Europe Slept*, shows, in the words of its subtitle, "How Radical Islam is Destroying the West from Within" by exploiting European naivete.

While westerners rationalize each violent outburst – explaining away Palestinian suicide bombings by blaming Israel, 9/11 by blaming America, the fall riots in Paris by blaming the French, the cartoon jihad by blaming the Danes – the Islamists pursue an integrated strategy of world war. While westerners dither about a response, the Islamists snicker and move forward. Hamas fanatics must laugh when suckers like former U.S. president Jimmy Carter hail their "pragmatism."

Recently, Iran's former leading nuclear negotiator, Hassan Rowhani, admitted that while western diplomats chatted in Tehran, the Iranians installed critical nuclear bomb-making equipment at the Isfahan nuclear facility. "From the outset, the Americans kept telling the Europeans, 'The Iranians are lying and deceiving you and they have not told you everything.' The Europeans used to respond, 'We trust them,'" Rowhani boasted in a speech to a closed meeting of leading Islamic clerics and academic.

"We trust them" reflects some of the western mind's most noble impulses: the commitment to rationality, the instinctive empathy for others, and the assumption that we are all fundamentally similar. But "We trust them" must not become the West's epitaph. Too many lovely westerners "trusted" Hitler for years until the Anschluss. Too many idealistic westerners "trusted" the Communists for decades, even after the Stalinist purges. Likewise, too many naïve Westerners seem to trust the Islamists today.

We need to see this hateful ideology for what it is. We need to work together to encourage moderate Muslims to stop the bigots while showing that the West is united, resolute, powerful, and ready to fight terrorism and repudiate Islamism. We must stop finding excuses for an integrated, hate-mongering, pathological ideology that threatens good people throughout the world.

What's on my seder table

Over the years, a number of items have made their appearance on my seder table. Not part of the traditional array of Passover symbols, these items come in addition to the ones I recall from the seders of my grandparents, long ago. Like the contents of my grandparents' seder plate, they carry symbolic meaning that is elaborated as part of the *maggid*, or storytelling, of our seder, complete with supplementary readings.

Sara R. Horowitz in Toronto

Some of these latter-day additions to the seder table have come and gone, while others have become a permanent part of our Pesach celebration. These respective readings have been tucked into the pages of our Haggadah, nesting there and yellowing from one year to the next. Among the items that have graced our seder table are a fourth (and some years a fifth) matzah, an orange wedge and a cup of water.

The fourth matzah first appeared at our seder many years ago, at a time when Russian Jews could not openly practise Judaism, speak Hebrew or affirm a connection with Israel. As we read about the movement of our ancestors from slavery to freedom, we also read from letters written by Russian dissidents. The fourth matzah called us to engage in the struggle of our contemporary brethren imprisoned in gulags or constrained by a regime hostile to all things Jewish

In later years, a wedge of orange jockeyed for position on the seder table. Inspired by an urban legend that circulated among Jewish women, the orange was a response to a man who (in the most popular version of the story) declared, in response to the suggestion of increased women's participation in synagogue ritual, "A woman has no more place on the bimah than an orange has on a seder plate!" Alongside readings in the Haggadah of our forefathers and our sages, we told stories that recalled the redemptive courage of the midwives in Egypt, who rescued Jewish infants from a genocidal decree, and other stories about the valour and wisdom of women such as Deborah, Bruria, Rachel, and countless women whose names were forgotten.

In recent years, our seder table has included a *kos shel Miryam*, a cup of Miriam, filled with water and placed alongside the *kos shel Eliyahu*, Elijah's cup, filled with wine. After we sing about Eliyahu Hanavi, the prophet Elijah, who will usher in the messianic age, we sing – to the same melody – of *Miryam Haneviah*, the prophetess Miriam, who shall lead us to the waters of salvation (*mei hayeshua*).

In Jewish legend, Elijah often appears incognito as a pauper or beggar, testing a host's hospitality and generosity. Linked with the redemptiveness of the Messiah, Elijah also appears at moments of crisis. At the seder, he is most closely associated with the prayer that entreats God to pour out His wrath on our enemies. In Jewish tradition, Miriam is linked with a well that bears her name. Created on the second day of creation, Miriam's Well sustained and nurtured the Israelites through their desert wanderings, because of the merit of Miriam. Side by side, the cup of water and the cup of wine remind us of the force and nurturance inherent in God's presence, and they call us to the redemptive work of tikkun olam, repairing the world.

This year, I plan to make space on my seder table to remember the victims of genocide and slavery in Darfur, Sudan. The journey from slavery to freedom that the seder recollects grounds us in a remembered experience by which we may calibrate our moral compass. Repeatedly, the Torah reminds us that we were once slaves, strangers in a strange land, and enjoins us to use that collective memory as a source of compassion and ethics. There is much in Jewish memory, both ancient and recent, that should cause us to feel a particular empathy with those suffering now in Darfur.

Because they, like our ancestors, are a desert people, I shall again set an extra matzah, and place it near Miriam's redemptive waters. I shall pray that their crisis ends speedily, with the same haste in which our ancestors baked the first remembered matzah. And I shall read from Primo Levi's poem, *Shema*, which cautions those "who live safe/ in your warm houses/... who find, returning in the evening,/ Hot food and friendly faces," not to ignore the atrocities suffered by others.

The Kirshner File

Gaza settlers are angry and depressed

Two thousand disoriented Israelis wait for better days in a hastily erected camp off a busy highway connecting Ashdod with Ashkelon.

For the past eight months, since Israel's unilateral withdrawal from the Gaza Strip, they have lived in Nizzan, a bleak encampment carved out from the lush fields of Nizzanim, a kibbutz near the Mediterranean Sea captured and destroyed by Egypt during the 1948 War of Independence.

Sheldon Kirshner in Israel

The Jews of Nizzan, the overwhelming majority of whom are Orthodox, represent the largest concentration of former Gaza settlers repatriated to Israel.

Five hundred of the 1,700 Gaza families are in Nizzan, which was partially developed by the Jewish National Fund. As a community, Nizzan consists of identical 90-square metre, tan-coloured four bedroom cottages that resembles a raw North American suburban subdivision.

The other settler families have been scattered by the wind to Yad Binjamin, south of Ashkelon; to a scruffy tent city adjacent to Yad Mordechai, a kibbutz near Gaza; and to rented quarters throughout the country and in the West Bank.

David Bonfad

David Bonfad, a 56-year-old settler from Neve Dekalim, seems typical of the evacuees in Nizzan. Born in the development town of Sederot, he was a kibbutznik in Sde Eliyahu before settling in Gaza in 1985 with his family. "I was looking for a community, a good life," he said.

An observant Jew who sports a knitted yarmulke favoured by Israeli religious nationalists, Bonfad was also attracted to Gaza by a messianic belief in the Greater Israel philosophy. "My whole life has been ideological," he explained. "I thought I would spend the rest of my days in Gaza. It was clear."

Though he waxes nostalgic about Gaza, populated by some 1.3 Palestinians, Neve Dekalim left deep psychic scars on him. His beloved teenaged daughter, Shimreet, was murdered there by Palestinian terrorists.

Bonfad said adieu to Neve Dekalim prior to the Aug. 15 deadline imposed by the Israeli government. Today, he can hardly believe that he will never set foot in Gaza again.

"I did not think God would let it happen," he mused. "Lots of things are unpredictable. We don't understand what God will do."

A sad, ethereal man who still grieves for his late daughter and has created a shrine in her honour, Bonfad regards his departure from Gaza as an expulsion and the government's decision as a betrayal.

At Neve Dekalim, where one-third of the residents were engaged in agriculture, he ran the local post office and supplemented his income as a handyman and plumber. In Nizzan, he is in charge of organizing recreational activities for the settlers, most of whom are unemployed, angry and depressed about their fate.

"I'm back to square one," said Bonfad, who has received only a portion of a government compensation package to which he is entitled. "I have to build a house and find a job. We were once normal people, but now we're under psychological care. I have trouble concentrating, and I can't sleep at night."

Bonfad's second daughter, 15, who was born and raised in Gaza, has been emotionally scarred by the disengagement. "She was assured by many rabbis that the withdrawal would never happen. Now she and other young people are confused."

He rents a cottage for $450 (US) a month. Water and electricity are extra. As if invidiously comparing his home in Gaza with his current dwelling in Nizzan, he said, "It's too hot in summer and too cold in winter, as well as poorly insulated. When you close the front door, the whole house shakes."

Bonfad expects permanent housing in Nizzan to be ready within a year and a half. In the interval, he wallows in sorrow. "It's hard for me to believe that I can ever replicate my life in Gaza here."

Like Bonfad, Arik Harpaz, 50, is something of a refugee in his own land.

A secular Jew from Elei Sinai, in the northern tip of Gaza, Harpaz lives in a tent opposite a gas station and gift shop owned by Yad Mordechai, a kibbutz besieged by Egypt in 1948 but recaptured by the Israeli army shortly afterward.

To him, Elei Sinai was like a dream come true, at least until his 19-year-old daughter, Liron, and her boyfriend, Assaf Yitzhaki, 21, were gunned down in cold blood by Palestinians on Oct. 2, 2001, a year after the eruption of the second intifadah.

Recalling his halcyon days in Gaza, he said, "Doors were unlocked. Children frolicked on the streets."

But after his daughter's untimely death, Harpaz and his family never ceased mourning. "We were broken, though we got a lot of support from our friends. This was very important. We were not alone."

Of the 90 families from Elei Sinai, 30 live in Yad Mordechai's flyblown tent city, which has its own communal kitchen and dining room. The remainder of the settlers are found in neighbouring kibbutzim and in Ashkelon, pining for the moment when they move to new quarters in Palmachim, a kibbutz near Rishon Le Zion, in the heart of Israel.

"We are in the process of negotiations," said Harpaz, "but nothing is ready as yet. The bureaucracy is killing us."

Arik Harpaz and Keren Ratzabi in Yad Mordechai's tent city [Sheldon Kirshner photos]

He has received not a penny in compensation so far, perhaps because he and about half of the settlers in Elei Sinai refused to heed repeated warnings to leave before the mid-August deadline. "We decided that money was not everything. We wanted to show the government that we were not afraid."

The army evacuated them on Aug. 21. "There was no violence. We didn't touch the soldiers. We had one last Sabbath meal with them before we walked out peacefully to the border. One of the soldiers cried as we left."

Elei Sinai was established in 1982, amid pristine sand dunes and marvellous views of the Mediterranean Sea. The first six families were from Yamit, a model settlement Israel gave up as part of its 1979 peace treaty with Egypt. Virtually everyone in Elei Sinai, including Harpaz, an expert in hydraulic systems, commuted to jobs in Israel.

A former resident of Ashkelon, he arrived in Elei Sinai in 1990. "I simply wanted to give my three daughters a nice place to live. We fell in love with the scenery. It had nothing to do with ideology."

He added, "I never dreamed I would leave, since, in terms of distance, we were so close to Israel. I was shocked when [Prime Minister Ariel] Sharon announced his disengagement plan. Sharon broke his promise and went the other way. I would have been prepared to leave my house for real peace, but not for this," he said in a reference to Hamas' victory in the recent Palestinian Authority legislative election and Islamic Jihad's continuing Qassam rocket attacks against Israeli border towns and kibbutzim since Israel's pullout. "The Palestinians have won through terror."

Meanwhile, Harpaz lives from day to day in the unsightly tent city. "It's not too nice in this place. We have no privacy."

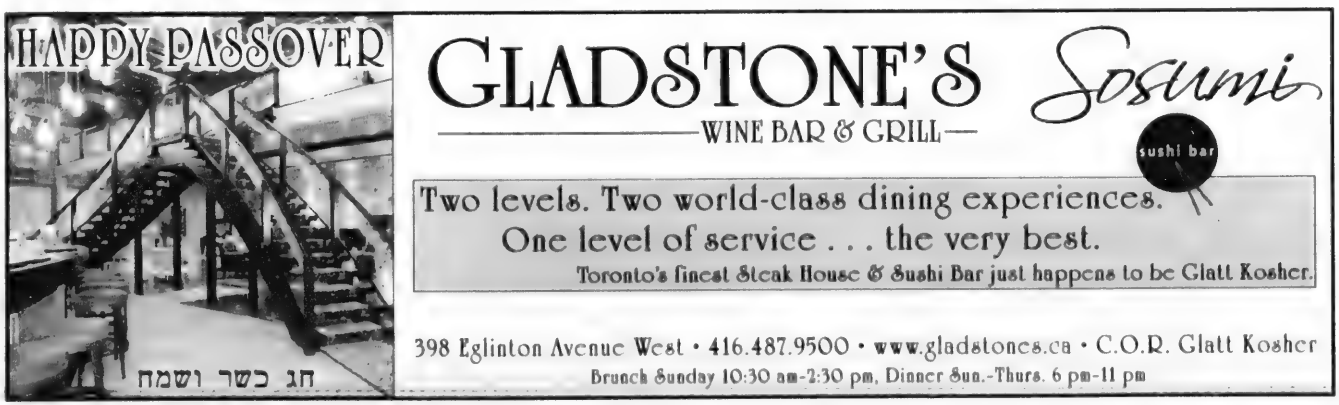
Harpaz's fellow setttler, Keren Ratzabi, an observant 30-year-old English teacher from Gush Katif, is bitter, too. She and her unemployed husband currently live in an army barrack in Ashkelon, but hope that they and their four children will soon move into a house near Kiryat Gat, north of Be'er Sheva.

Born in Rehovot, she worked in Dimona and Mizpe Ramon before landing in Gush Katif two years ago.

"We went to Gaza for faith and ideology," she declared, passion oozing out of every pore. "We belonged in Gaza, which was ours from the beginning. We came to claim ownership. Great Jewish communities existed in Gaza. We came back, and it was ours. I knew it was the right thing to do. This area was ours. Gaza is ours. We'll be back. Nothing will stop us, but it will take time. You need to have faith. The nation of Israel is not aware of this, of our right to this land. What was promised to us as a nation should belong to us. The government really encouraged us to go to Gaza. Suddenly, it's a mistake?"

The withdrawal has ruined the lives of countless settlers, said Ratzabi, who does not qualify for compensation payments. "People became sick. There were divorces. Families fell apart. People are paying a high price for having done the right thing. It's very hard."

Not surprisingly, she has mixed feelings about Sharon, the architect of the Gaza disengagement. "I feel sorry for him," she said, referring to the stroke that incapacitated him on Jan. 4. "But he hurt his brothers. I can't feel angry, but I pity him."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Poland has become one of Israel's best friends: journalist

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Poland has been one of Israel's best friends in Europe since its peaceful transition from communism to democracy in the late 1980s, says the former editor of a leading Polish Jewish journal.

"Poland has not joined the stampede of Israel-bashing countries," said Konstanty Gebert, a 52-year-old Polish-Jewish journalist who was here last week to address the Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation at the University of Toronto.

In an interview, Gebert, the publisher and former editor of *Midrasz*, a journal dealing with Polish-Jewish relations, said that Poland, a staunch U.S. ally, is more politically supportive of Israel than most European nations.

"The new, democratic Poland has a moral obligation to make up for Poland's dreadful record toward Israel during the Communist era," observed Gebert, who writes a column on world affairs for *Gazeta Wyborcza*, the largest daily in Poland, with a circulation of about half a million.

Poland, in line with the former Soviet Union, severed diplomatic ties with Israel in 1967 during the Six Day War and displayed hostility toward the Jewish state for many years afterward, said Gebert, whose father was Poland's ambassador to Turkey from 1960 to 1967.

But in 1990, Poland became the second country in Soviet-dominated eastern Europe to re-establish formal relations with Israel. Czechoslovakia, as it was then known, was the first such country to do so.

Since the 1990s, Poland and Israel have formed an intricate web of political, commercial, cultural and military links, and Poland's relationship with Israel today is as good as Germany's relations with the Jewish state.

In terms of its policy on Israel, Poland – which supports a two-state solution of the Arab-Israeli conflict and maintains cordial links with the Palestinian Authority and Arab states – is somewhere between the European Union and the United States, said Gebert, currently a visiting professor at Grinnell College in Iowa, where he teaches a course on Polish-Jewish relations.

On the economic front, Israeli investors have poured $2 billion (US) into Poland, with interests in shipping, real estate, high tech and major department stores.

Polish investments in Israel remain insubstantial, but there is a Polish cultural centre in Tel Aviv, a Polish church in Jaffa and a Polish hostel in Jerusalem.

Military and security ties have grown. "The Israeli military attache in Warsaw is extremely busy," said Gebert, adding that Polish officers have had a respectful attitude toward the Israeli armed forces since the Six Day War.

Cultural ties, running the gamut from book readings to film screenings, are flourishing, he said, and the Roman Catholic church has a generally positive outlook toward Israel.

But irritants muddle Poland's relations with Israel.

"Poland, unfortunately, has not done much to combat anti-Semitism, despite its official condemnation of anti-Semitism," said Gebert.

He cited the case of a Poznan city councillor who once remarked that a dead Jew is a good Jew. When he claimed that he was joking, the prosecutor dropped charges against him.

To date, only one Polish anti-Semite has been indicted for racial incitement. "Anti-Semitism of this kind essentially remains unpunished."

Anti-Semitism is also widely tolerated by the public. "Generally, Poles are not offended by anti-Semitism, but surveys indicate that up to two-thirds of Poles reject anti-Semitism."

There is still a belief that Jews played an immense role in imposing Communism on Poland, a claim that has been mentioned more than once by Poland's primate, Cardinal Jozef Glemp.

Nevertheless, the hierarchy of the Catholic church is less anti-Semitic than it was 15 years ago, said Gebert, whose parents grew disillusioned with Communism after Poland's anti-Zionist campaign, launched in 1967. Still, what he described as "the biggest anti-Semitic bookshop" in Warsaw is found in the basement of a prominent church.

Some church leaders, notably Poznan's cardinal, are positively disposed toward Jews, but they are "marginal voices" in Poland.

According to Gebert, anti-Semitism is a "pressing concern," but not an actual threat to Jews. In the final analysis, Polish anti-Semitism is no more serious than French anti-Semitism, he said.

Postwar restitution is another problem roiling Poland's relations with Israel, but it is expected to be resolved within the foreseeable future.

On a communal basis, Poland has compensated the Jewish community for property seized by the Nazis and the Communists. But legislation for individual property losses has yet to be enacted, making Poland virtually unique in Europe.

Two factors account for the fact that Poland has resisted such legislation, Gebert said. Poland fears that 3.5 million ethnic German expellees will also raise claims, and anti-Semitic Poles oppose individual compensation to Jews.

In Gebert's view, the Polish government will eventually make these payments, but in the best-case scenario, Jewish claimants will receive only a symbolic proportion of their property.

Gebert said that 8,000 "card-carrying" Jews live in Poland today, with an additional 16,000 marginally involved in the Jewish community. In his estimation, there are thousands of Poles of Jewish origin who have chosen not to disclose their identity.

The intermarriage rate has reached the 50 per cent mark, and Jews are well assimilated into Polish society. Citing an example, Gebert said that Poland's current foreign minister, Stefan Meller, is of Jewish origin, as was his predecessor.

Demographically, the Jewish community "teeters on the brink," but two Jewish day schools in Poland, both subsidized by the Lauder Foundation, work at perpetuating Judaism and Jewish culture.

Some young Jews want to rebuild their lives abroad, including Israel, and Gebert said he doesn't know whether even his own children will remain in Poland.

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Archbishop says Anglicans aren't divesting from Israel

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Despite reports the Church of England voted last year to divest from Israel, the head of the Anglican church's Canadian arm said those stories were untrue, and he repeated earlier reassurances that his church is not considering such a proposal.

Archbishop Andrew Hutchison, the 12th primate of the Anglican Church of Canada, addressed almost 400 people as the keynote speaker at the 20th annual Neighbourhood Interfaith Dinner, held April 5 at Beth Tzedec Congregation in Toronto.

Anglican Archbishop Andrew Hutchison admires a photographic portrait presented to him by photographer Al Gilbert on behalf of the Neighbourhood Interfaith Group. [Sheri Shefa photo]

Last fall, it was reported that a statement issued in Jerusalem by the worldwide Anglican Peace and Justice Network (APJN) about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict had urged the Anglican Church to follow the American Presbyterian Church's lead to vote to divest from Israel.

In a letter earlier this year to Canadian Jewish Congress, Archbishop Hutchison said that the AJPN document was not urging divestment and that his church will not consider the issue for the time being. He added that the APJN statement doesn't reflect the views of the Canadian church.

At last week's dinner, Archbishop Hutchison explained that the Anglican bishop in Jerusalem, Riah Abu El-Assal, a Palestinian, had called on his sister churches in the Anglican Communion to disinvest from Caterpillar Inc., the maker of equipment the Israel Defence Forces uses to bulldoze houses of suspected terrorists in the territories.

He said the divestment call came before the synod (a council of church officials) of the Church of England, and the resolution it adopted called on the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East "to heed the call... to disinvest from companies profiting from the illegal occupation, such as Caterpillar Inc., until they change their policies."

Archbishop Hutchison said the resolution was meant as a call for further study of the issue, and "is a long way from either a decision to disinvest from Caterpillar, or from the State of Israel."

He also stressed it was not meant as an attack on Judaism or Jewish people.

"We have always maintained the freedom to criticize government policies we perceive to be unjust... But we must be clear in saying that criticism of a policy or action of the State of Israel is not a criticism of Judaism or the Jewish people," he said.

He acknowledged, however, that "given the legacy of Christian anti-Semitism," church officials need to be more mindful of how their statements might be interpreted.

Archbishop Hutchison also said during his talk that he wanted to send a message of respect, appreciation and tolerance to the leaders and members from 11 churches and synagogues in Toronto who were in attendance.

Archbishop Hutchison, a recipient of the Jerusalem Prize and the Alan Rose Award for his leadership in interfaith dialogue, said it's unclear what impact members of the religious community can have in international politics, but he added that "it is here at the local level that our faith communities have the best opportunity to meet one another in ways that promote the deep shalom that is the divine hope for us all."

He described the friendships he has made over the years with members of the Jewish community, such as Victor Goldbloom, chair of the Canadian Jewish Congress' national executive, and philanthropist Charles Bronfman, before ending his address on an inspiring note.

"As people of faith, we must do all in our power to find a common voice to speak to the powers of this world in the name of the Holy One who calls us to justice and peace."

He added that if it's true that there is only one God, "then what we do here can only draw us closer to the one truth that binds us together in the divine love and give us courage to be witness to that love in the world."

Darfur Relief Fund established

Funds raised through UJA Federation will support activities of Israeli relief organization

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

Since 2003, a Sudanese government-backed militia known as Janjaweed has been engaging in a systematic program of murder, terror, sexual abuse, and expulsion in the Darfur region of Sudan. To escape the ethnically charged violence, some 200,000 Sudanese refugees have fled, seeking shelter in Chad.

The refugees must cope with their physical displacement and the trauma from their ordeal at the same time.

To assist them, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto has created the Darfur Relief Fund - the latest in a series of humanitarian UJA Federation initiatives.

"UJA Federation like other Canadians, has a strong sense of commitment to social justice and providing relief to victims in the international arena," said David Engel, chair, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "For us, as Jews, to turn our backs on the horrendous acts being perpetrated in Darfur would be inexcusable."

A team of relief workers from IsraAid and HIAS are currently assisting victims of violence in Darfur, Sudan

The money raised by the Fund will support the activities of IsraAID: The Israel Forum for International Humanitarian Aid, an Israeli relief organization which travels around the world. IsraAid - along with the Hebrew Immigration Aid Service (HIAS), the oldest international immigration refugee resettlement agency in the U.S. - have teams of relief workers on the border of Chad and Sudan providing aid and counseling to the victims, teaching them the skills needed to survive and function in the aftermath of extreme violence.

Working with local staff, the Israelis are identifying the most vulnerable refugees including victims of rape, separated children, single mothers, the elderly, the handicapped and trauma victims to ensure they access basic services.

The group is also working to provide psychological services and to establish activities for children that will help them adjust to living in the refugee camps and dealing with the trauma they survived.

For many, the psychological counseling sessions were quite emotional, leaving some members of the group crying, provoking others to share their experiences.

At the end of one session, one refugee said, "This session is a turning point in my life. I'm so lonely in the camp having lost my father, mother, two sisters and brothers in the war. I cry a lot and see their images at night. During the day, when I stay alone, I find myself in conversation with them. Listening to others talk I realize that I'm not alone and I think we need to continue coming together to share what we think and feel as we are like a family that shares the same pain."

Most girls found it difficult to share their painful experiences because many were sexually attacked. One told the group that it was better to keep quiet than to talk of the things that happened. "When I don't talk about what I saw and experienced, I forget." The group was educated on negative and positive coping skills. They were taught that trying to forget things was one negative mechanism that humans use to mask pain, but that did not mean they dealt with the problem.

The organized Jewish communities in Canada and the United States have been at the forefront of galvanizing public attention to the Darfur tragedy.

On April 30, thousands, including representatives of UJA Federation, will join the "Save Darfur: Rally to Stop Genocide" at the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

To make a donation to the Darfur Relief Fund, visit www.ujadonations.com/darfur or phone the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto hotline at 416.631-5705.

Toronto part of world wide Yad Vashem project

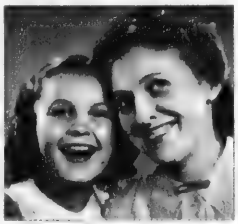
By DANIEL HOROWTIZ
UJA Federation

When one speaks of the horrors of the Holocaust, we know all too well that six million innocent Jewish men, women and children were brutally murdered at the hands of the Nazis.

We know the number, but what about the people themselves? Where did they live? What were their dreams? In short, who were these people?

Over the past 50 years, Israel's Yad Vashem has been working to recover the names of the six million, half of whom are memorialized in its Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names, which contains over three million names, photographs, and biographical details of Jewish victims. But many of those who perished are still missing from this important database.

In response to a worldwide, 11th-hour appeal from Yad Vashem to add as many missing names as possible to its database, Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto (JIST) - a component of the UJA Federation Latner Centre for Jewish Knowledge & Heritage - along with its partnering agencies - is reaching out to survivors, their families, and others, to fill out Pages of Testimony and submit them to Yad Vashem.



This photograph and a Page of Testimony of Holocaust victims Margherita Rubinfeld and her daughter, Helga, were submitted to Yad Vashem by Margherita's brother.

Together with the Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living, JIST is offering free weekly clinics to those who need help completing the forms. The clinics will be held at the Betel Centre starting on April 26 and running every two weeks to the end of June from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Trained volunteers will help people complete the Pages of Testimony and show them the database and its features.

"It's a race against time," says Barbara Barak, senior coordinator, JIST. "Holocaust survivors may not be able to share their memories later on. It's important that we gather the names of as many of the victims as possible in order to honour, memorialize and preserve their legacies," says Barak.

The Pages of Testimony section of the website includes specific information on the Jews who perished in the Shoah. Each Page records the victim's full name, date and place of birth, place of residence before the war, profession, parents' and spouses' names, the circumstances of death, even the name of the person who submitted the information, as well as a photograph of the victim when available.

For details about the dates and times of the clinics or for more information about the forms and the database, members of the community can call JIST at 416-635-5600 or e-mail jinfo@ujafed.org. To access the Yad Vashem database, go to www.yadvashem.org.

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

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Walk With Israel 2006 an event for the entire community

Expert hired to make Walk accessible to participants with special needs

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

Don't be surprised if you see a lot of new faces at this year's UJA Federation Walk With Israel. Walk organizers and UJA Federation's Inclusion Committee have been working hard to ensure that the event, which will be held on Sunday, May 28, will be more accessible to individuals with special needs.

"We want to ensure that every person can come out and participate this year, so we have gone to great efforts to try to accommodate everybody's needs," says Nelly Zagdanksi who is co-chairing this year's Walk With Israel along with Felicia Posluns and Sara Zagdanski.

"What we're trying to do is visibly make a move forward in terms of creating an inclusive event," says Stan Kugelmass, chair of UJA Federation's Inclusion Committee. "The biggest challenge will be getting the word out that this is an opportunity for people who otherwise would not participate in an event like this to come out."

Organizers are implementing a number of strategies in order to make the Walk accessible to the entire Jewish community.

Laurie Sue Robertson, an inclusion expert, has been hired to train the Walk volunteers and staff on the needs of people with disabilities. She will also be wheeling the route ahead of time to identify barriers. The staff and volunteers will then be able to ensure that solutions are found for the problem areas on the day of the Walk.

In order to assist the hearing impaired, a sign language interpreter will be at the Walk starting point at Coronation Park, across from the CNE Princes' Gates, which will feature opening speeches and entertainment.

A shuttle bus will be available in order to provide an option for individuals unable to walk the entire 7.7 km route because of physical limitations.

UJA Federation is also working with Reena and other agencies that serve people with special needs in order to communicate these changes and to identify volunteer opportunities for their clients.

This year's Walk With Israel has adopted many measures so that participants with special needs will be able to comfortably join walkers like these without special needs

While these measures are intended to enable more people to participate in the Walk With Israel, says Kugelmass, they are also important in order to communicate to the community that UJA Federation is serious about making important events inclusive. "The whole community means everyone," adds Kugelmass. "How do you get people out there who can't walk or talk or hear or see? That's what this is all about."

(l-r) Felicia Posluns, Nelly and Sara Zagdanski are back this year as chairs of the UJA Federation Walk With Israel, which takes place on Sunday, May 28.

Walk organizers hope that, in the future, inclusion will become second nature. "Change is slow; this is a starting point," says Robin Gofine, vice president, UJA Federation's strategic planning and engagement. "We hope to build upon these efforts over time."

"It's not easy to do," says Kugelmass. "But it will be worthwhile if even one person comes out who otherwise wouldn't participate in an event like this."

The UJA Federation Walk With Israel will begin at 10:30 a.m. rain or shine, and will hold its registration kick-off party beginning at 9:30 a.m. at Coronation Park, and will include live entertainment, inflatables, face painting and more. The Walk, which begins at the corner of Strachan and Lakeshore (Coronation Park), will wind its way through the streets of Toronto, ending at Ontario Place where the RioCan Carnival will provide walkers with a great kosher barbeque, prize draws, arts and crafts, the Office SuperCentre treasure hunt and much more. During the Walk, participants will be entertained by DJs from five different companies: Corey Mandell, Superior Sound, Mint Events, Magen Boys Entertainment and Sole Power.

For more information about this year's Walk With Israel, or to acquire sponsors on-line, call the Walk hotline at 416.631.5700 or visit www.ujawalkwithisrael.com.

Hamas a pariah entity, says Israel's ambassador to Canada

By electing Hamas in the recent Palestinian election, "the Palestinian public doesn't yet realize what they've done."

That's the opinion of Alan Baker, Israel's ambassador to Canada, who expressed his comments during a recent address to a group of UJA Federation donors.

"I'm not sure whether they expected that voting for Hamas would bring about a situation where they're rapidly becoming a pariah entity," said Baker. The good news about Hamas' electoral victory, according to the ambassador, is that "now we know exactly who we're dealing with, and the world knows who we're dealing with."

Baker also spoke on a wide range of topics, including the Canadian media, the outcome of the recent Israeli elections, and the Iranian threat.

Baker was pleased to be the first ambassador to receive a formal introductory meeting with Prime Minister Stephen Harper, and says that Harper was reassuring regarding Canada's support for Israel.

Alan Baker

His biggest concern regarding Canada-Israel relations is the under-utilized free trade agreement. Baker told the group to anticipate the revival of the Canada-Israel Chamber of Commerce. "There is good business to be done. There are huge profits to be made."

While Baker believes that there is a chasm between the reality in Israel and how it is portrayed by the Canadian media, he says that the tone of the CBC has changed recently. "I don't know if it's because of the change in government, a change in the area, or possibly it's because of the new ambassador—he's a bit of a nudnik."

Baker noted that this is an interesting time, as the Canadian, Palestinian, and Israeli elections are all bringing about change in the Middle East. "At the present juncture, we're at a change in direction from all angles," he said.

Baker discussed likely scenarios for a Kadima-led coalition in the Israeli Knesset, saying that he believed there would be a solid, stable coalition.

Toronto Jewry sends condolences to family of Ilan Halimi z"l

Over the past three weeks, more than 2,000 members of Toronto's Jewish community signed an electronic condolence book offered on UJA Federation's website, www.jewishtoronto.com for the family of Ilan Halimi z"l. The 23-year-old was found tortured and murdered on February 13 near a railroad track in the Parisian suburbs. The personal thoughts and prayers sent by community members have been sent to Ruth Halimi, Ilan's mother, in France.

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Don't want to be a slave to your seder?

Try a more interactive approach

By JENNIFER M. MACLEOD
Special to the CJN

Most of us attend one of two seders: the "Uncle Murray" model, with a single leader, or the "read around the table" type, where everybody takes turns.

Neither is entirely satisfying, said Baruch Sienna of Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Education at a recent workshop titled "Don't be a slave to your seder" that aimed to help Jews bring meaningful, hands-on spirituality to their seders.

In the Uncle Murray seder, "one person really knows what they're doing… and everyone else is passive," Sienna said.

In the second type, which seems preferable, we may end up reading passages we hate, with Hebrew we can't pronounce, or with verses we don't understand – in either language.

"That doesn't work much better," he added.

Sienna, a longtime Kolel instructor who teaches the centre's "Doing Jewish" course, prefers a third approach: the "conductor" model.

A symphony conductor doesn't play an instrument, he noted, but orchestrates musicians in pre-assigned parts.

Assigning roles requires advance preparation, Sienna said, but it allows participants to express their creativity and beliefs by building a diorama to depict "their" section, or by creating a play – with or without puppets – or by leading a Ladino song.

"Seder is the original dinner theatre," he joked.

There's a tension, however, between the carefully scripted Haggadah and the evening's personal, improvisational nature. Though the word seder means "order," the Haggadah and "Maggid," its largest section, both come from the root word "to tell," which is a more spontaneous process.

"It's a night of telling, not reading," Sienna said.

While prayer books are mostly Hebrew, much of the Haggadah, even the opening invitation to "all who are hungry," is in Aramaic, the common language at the time it was written.

Sienna said the intention was to make it understandable – which for us North Americans means using more English.

"If I invite you in a language you don't understand, I haven't invited you," he said.

Every year, we should ask: "What new traditions are [we] going to try?"

Even if last year's seder was perfect, we can't just run it over again – too much has changed in the world and in ourselves. Yet, "too many new things" can make a seder unrecognizable, he cautioned.

Sienna's favourite innovation is to make long readings bearable, especially for children, by serving not just one tiny vegetable during the early-on "Karpas" section of the seder, but a selection of appealing vegetable appetizers – even potato chips – with accompanying dips.

"You will not hear 'When do we eat?' even once."

Sienna discussed many seder foods, including horseradish, which he noted, is not the original maror (bitter herb).

Rather, like the potato that represents a "green" vegetable in many homes, it was all that was available in Russia or Poland in early spring.

Bitter lettuce or endives are far more authentic, and many families now acknowledge both traditions with an extra food, called "chazeret," on the seder plate.

The foods we serve represent freedom. According to Maimonides, Sienna said, the meal should even begin with dessert, the ultimate freedom, since "slaves have no control over the menu."

Through taste and touch, story and song, each person should come to see themselves in the narrative of Pesach.

"Telling the story is like living the story," Sienna said.

But why do we do this with this particular tale? The Chanukah story is powerful, yet we don't relive it in the same way.

Pesach, Sienna said, signifies not only our past, but also our present and future. Matzah, which represents both the food of slavery and our first taste of freedom, prepares us to treasure what Rabbi Yitz Greenberg calls the "past and future redemption of humanity."

We might make a distinction between the seder and the meal, between the cuisine and its spiritual lessons, but, said Sienna, "it's not just a meal; it's not just reading." The two are one and the same: "The seder is the meal."

Sienna presented three lessons from the Haggadah text to make any seder – modern or traditional – more interactive and meaningful.

First, the seder should be multisensory. As modern educators are discovering, different learners respond to different "modalities" – for instance auditory, tactile and visual.

The seder involves all the senses in an evening of "show and tell."

From the Four Questions, we learn that every seder should start with questions.

"But the Four Questions should not be the only four questions," Sienna said. Asking a question says: "I want to begin a conversation." Suggest that guests come prepared with questions of their own. "Some will be wonderful questions."

Finally, from the narrative of the Four Children, we learn to speak to each person differently. "Who's coming to your seder? How do they need to hear the story?"

That doesn't mean "Uncle Murray" reading the story in 20 different languages.

"The conductor doesn't play every instrument." Rather, create "openings" into the story for each individual – ask a psychiatrist to talk about different types of personalities, or a chef to bring a new charoset recipe.

"Don't do everything yourself… start with the listeners," Sienna recommended.

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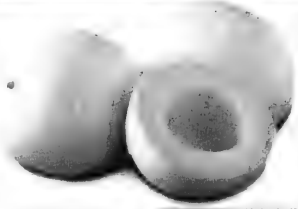

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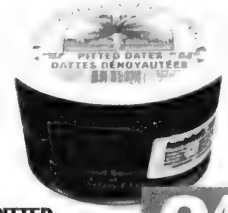

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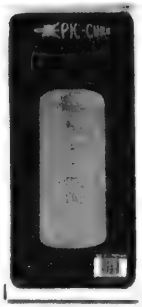

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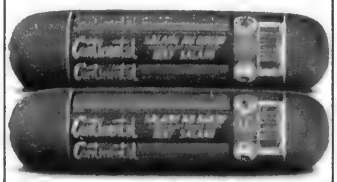

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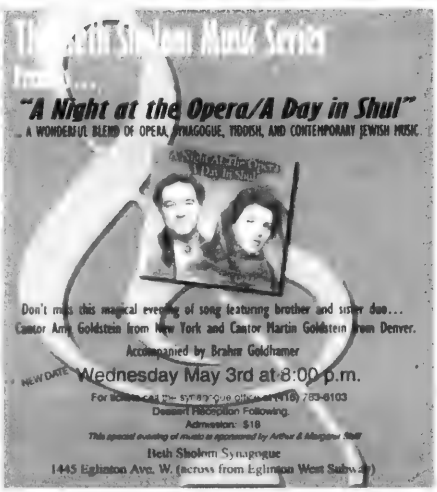
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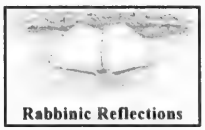
Jewish Life

Food for thought on Pesach

By RABBI JOHN MOSCOWITZ


Rabbinic Reflections

In constructing the seder routine almost two millennia ago, the rabbis were quite explicit about the proceedings: when to dip, when to recline, when to bless, etc.

Yet they chose not to be explicit about the afikoman. The afikoman is often referred to as the "dessert" that properly concludes a good meal, a good evening.

Early Jewish and Christian sources reveal that the afikoman was associated with a post-symposium festivity among the Greeks in which they went from house to house and which may have spiralled into a drunken orgy. The rabbis knew that, and as they constructed the seder evening – borrowing liberally from the Greek symposium, a party for aristocratic men, and "Judaizing" the Greek elements – they didn't want the seder concluding with an "off-site" festivity, undermining what just took place.

"Ain maftirin achar haPesach, afikoman," they said. "It is not appropriate to wind up the Passover meal by running around town acting as though the Passover story you just discussed doesn't mean anything!"

And so the rabbis likely took this word "afikoman," left in its original language (its origin was known explicitly, at least to the early generations) and transformed its meaning from after-dinner festivity (and "dessert") as the Greeks intended it, to after-dinner activity and "dessert," as they wished it to mean. The rabbis apparently felt that, in borrowing from the Greek symposium, they couldn't keep the fun of the afikoman out – a rebellion might ensue – but they could bring the afikoman into the seder and give it a new meaning.

The authors of the Haggadah understood the attraction in retaining some aspects of the old, Greek meaning.

Hence, the afikoman is a bit mysterious, it's fun, and it still takes place at the end of the meal. By changing the meaning of the word, however, the rabbis could influence the values, the thinking, the character (to use a good Greek word) of those who sat at the seder table, young people most especially.

And by leaving the meaning of the word purposely vague, the rabbis could have it both ways: the afikoman retains the fun and mystery as the Greeks intended it and the sense of constraints which the rabbis sought.

"Ain maftirin achar haPesach": don't conclude the seder, the rabbis taught, with the afikoman, as the Greek symposium would do it, but conclude with our version of the afikoman, the piece of matzah we hide and encourage the children to locate.

Younger people – in fact, all of us, really – would finish the evening, the rabbis hoped, knowing Judaism counsels not to ignore or avoid the attractions and "desserts" of life but to use them to glorify and thank God for what's been done for us.

Rabbi Moscowitz is the spiritual leader at Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto.

Four cups remember four Matriarchs

By RACHAEL TURKIENICZ

As we all sit at our Passover seders, the symbols of slavery and redemption fill our senses. Yet at the same time, the subtle tribute being paid to Jewish women should not be ignored.

Some of our earliest memories of preparing for the seder as children revolve around the repetition of the number four. Four questions are asked by the youngest child and four sons are questioning their parents. Four cups of wine are consumed throughout the evening and four commandments outline the minimum of our obligations. The number four weaves itself into the seder ritual and spans the imagery from start to finish. What is the significance of this number and why does it frame our commemoration of redemption?

A Jewish authority, the Maharal, states that the four cups of wine at the seder represent the four Matriarchs. These four cups create reference points and shape the progression of the seder. The Haggadah itself makes this connection for us in one of the songs we sing called *Who Knows One?* This song centres on the question of numbers and their significance in Judaism. The song begins: "Who knows one? I know one! One is our Lord who is in the heavens and the earth." At number four, the song states the Maharal's conclusion: four is for the four Matriarchs.

The Babylonian Talmud states that the Jewish women enslaved in Egypt modelled themselves on the four Matriarchs: Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel. In fact, according to the Talmud, it's due to the merit of the women enslaved in Egypt that the entire nation of Israel was redeemed. Yet one wonders how the Matriarchs served as models for an entire generation of women, to the point that this alone forces God's intervention for an entire people? A closer look at these biblical women answers our questions.

Women today are rightfully demanding that the Matriarchs be studied and honoured

Embodied in the model of our Matriarchs are the virtues to which all Jews strive. Each Matriarch faced her particular challenges from life and her unique challenges from the covenant. From the virtues of each woman an entire generation in Egypt could shape itself and begin a new Jewish era of fulfillment. Our Matriarchs still speak to us in their distinctive voices with their unique messages. Sarah teaches us diplomacy and respect. Rebecca teaches us kindness to all living creatures. Leah shows us the strength necessary to persevere. Rachel embodies the traits of loyalty and love. Each had good and bad qualities, and each strove for what they believed to be true justice. Each Matriarch knew that although she could not accomplish it all, she must accomplish her part.

All of Israel is redeemed because these women were used as models for a generation of women facing cruelty and hardship. Women today are rightfully demanding that the Matriarchs be studied and honoured. When we encounter the number four in our seders this year, or we pick up a cup of wine and make a blessing, perhaps a moment could be taken to pay tribute to these women.

Our Matriarchs and the Jewish women of Egypt teach us of Jewish values, goals and patience, for it is through them we learn that the journeys of a life may take longer than a lifetime.

Jewish Life

Where is Miriam on the seder plate?

Guest Voice

By YAEL LEVINE
Edah Journal

In recent decades, feminists have looked at the Passover seder and said: "Wait a minute! Where are all the women?"

The result has been several new rituals, which continue to gain acceptance and popularity. It turns out, however, that our contemporaries were not the first generation to look for a way to bring to the seder table the role of women in Israel's redemption.

After looking at some of the texts used centuries ago, it is clear that what we call the "traditional" seder indeed has something fishy about it. What's fishy is a missing person, a missing ritual, and actually, some missing fish.

For many years, the seder was a time when Miriam, and the achievements of women, were memorialized. The most basic practice was a piece of fish placed on the seder plate to commemorate Miriam.

We have two cooked foods on the seder table – an egg and a shank bone. The Talmud explains this as reflecting the holiday's two sacrifices, the special Passover lamb and the general holiday offering.

It turns out, however, that the number of dishes at the seder wasn't fixed.

Rabbi Sherira Gaon of 10th-century Babylon noted a custom of putting three foods on the plate.

"Those three cooked foods are fish, meat and an egg, corresponding to the foods that Israel will eat in the Time to Come; fish corresponding to Leviathan, egg to Ziz [an enormous mythic and fabulous bird], and meat corresponding to wild bull." The foods symbolize the mythic creatures from the realms of sea, air and land that will be eaten in the Meal of the Righteous in the messianic times.

A second reason offered by Rav Sherira, however, is one that resonates more strongly with our generation: "There are those who put an additional cooked food in memory of Miriam, as it says, 'And I sent before you Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam.'" (Micah 6:4) According to this, Miriam and the role she fulfilled in the redemption from Egypt is represented by the third cooked food on the seder table.

This tradition is worthy of renewal in our time, in recognition of the crucial role Miriam and the righteous women in Egypt played in the Exodus. Writing a millennium ago, Rav Sherira was noting a then-living custom.

In order to explain the reason for the additional foods at the seder, it would seem that since, according to Rav Sherira, the Leviathan corresponds to the fish and the fish represents Miriam, verses about both the Leviathan and Miriam are suitable to be recited.

Another rabbi cognizant of the importance of women to the Passover story was Rabbi Abraham Grate of Prague. His 1708 Haggadah commentary explained several seder rituals, including the initial hand washing, as referring to Pharaoh's daughter Bitya and her rescue of Moses from the Nile.

Several traditional sources have drawn a connection between the four cups of wine that punctuate the seder and the four matriarchs, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

And if these proto-feminist commentaries are from relatively forgotten sources, how to explain the fact that a basic interpretation of charoset revolves around women – and almost nobody knows it? According to the Talmud, charoset is in memory of the apple tree, and Rashi in his commentary makes reference to the midrash, in which the women would go to their working husbands and would conceive children between the fields. When the women were ready to give birth, they would leave their homes out of fear of the Egyptians. They would lie underneath the apple trees and give birth. Apple charoset, then, is about the fact that the Jewish women did not lose hope in those difficult times.

Rituals, even time-honoured rituals like the seder, can make room for change rooted in traditional sources. These "changes" are in fact historical corrections bringing the women's voice back in after it was somehow dropped.

As the Haggadah itself reminds us, the more one expounds on the Exodus, the more one is to be praised. In reviving these authentic and authoritative seder rituals commemorating the role of our Jewish foremothers, we can more fully tell of the going out from Egypt.

Yael Levine holds a PhD from the Talmud department of Bar-Ilan University. Edah is the advocacy movement for a modern and relevant Orthodox Judaism.

Online Haggadot, Part 2

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

Last week, we looked at some of the traditional, contemporary and children's Haggadot that you can print out and use at this year's seders. Today, we'll tour some of the most beautiful Haggadot you can find online and find out why one relatively simple Haggadah has been able to stir up both passion and criticism.

Yale University Library has put together a stunning exhibit of ancient and modern Haggadot, including the 13th-century Birds Head Haggadah. Most of the human figures have been replaced with birds' heads, probably to comply with the biblical prohibition of depicting graven images. **[http://tinyurl.com/gmbup]** Don't miss the Tzafonet's impressive site, which follows the evolution of the Haggadah from the 13th century to contemporary Israeli editions. If you don't speak Hebrew, you will still be impressed by the illustrations. **[http://tinyurl.com/j67zz]**

Even if you don't have a trip planned to London's British Library, you can still thumb through one of the jewels of its collection – the Golden Haggadah. Made around 1320 by a wealthy Jewish family in or near Barcelona, the Golden Haggadah contains 56 miniature paintings illustrating stories from Genesis and Exodus. **[http://tinyurl.com/qwzsw]**

Karen Roeckard has studied the evolution of the Haggadah. In the 16th century, she notes, there were approximately 25 printed Haggadot, while there are more than 3,000 versions today. For centuries, the text of the Haggadah was more or less static, but the editions were distinguished by illustrations and later by rabbinical commentaries. Real change occurred at the dawn of the 20th century when content began to be changed. In the 1970s, political Haggadot (environmental, vegetarian, egalitarian, etc.), were introduced, then, more recently, "self-liberation" Haggadot, and finally, tailor-made Haggadot. **[http://tinyurl.com/kfyoc]**

If you were illustrating a Haggadah, how would you depict the "ben rasha, the bad son?" Rabbi Berel Wein says that how you draw him says a lot about Jewish attitudes to the world. In early times, the bad son was "portrayed as a Greek thespian or as a Roman gladiator. In medieval times, he was either the rough, coarse, unlettered peasant or the equally brutal and cruel wandering knight. In later Haggadot, the "'bad son'" was portrayed as being foppish and a dilettante in appearance. In early 20-century American Haggadot, he appears as a member of an organized crime gang, cigarette dangling from his lips and a large hat pushed back on his head." **[http://tinyurl.com/ke4oq]**

I was surprised to see how much controversy can be stirred up by one Haggadah. I'm not referring to Haggadot that promoted a controversial, contemporary theme. This one just promoted coffee.

The Maxwell House Passover Haggadah is not illuminated. And it doesn't have a remarkable commentary. But many people reserve fond memories of it. A Maxwell House press release says nearly 40-million copies of its blue and white Haggadot have been distributed since the 1930s. **[http://tinyurl.com/j3mvd]**

Although many people remember the Maxwell House Haggadah fondly, Andrew Silow-Caroll wonders whether the no-nonsense Haggadah has left a less than favourable legacy. "Who knows how many Jewish children, numbly and obediently flipping through the… Maxwell House, came to regard the seder as a stultifying arcane ritual, a regimented recitation of thees and thous, an endurance test as lacking in levity as leaven? Is it only a coincidence that in the 70 years since Maxwell House began distributing tens of thousands of Haggadot as promotional items, the intermarriage rate among Jews has soared?" **[http://http://tinyurl.com/rjh32]**

Rabbi Scott Rosenberg of Temple Reyim of Newton, Mass., comes to the rescue of the Maxwell House Haggadah. He says that we owe it a great deal. **[http://tinyurl.com/l5hfm]** "As a product of the Great Depression, it reminds us of some of the hardships we faced as an American Jewish community struggling to survive difficult economic times. If it were not for the generosity of Maxwell House, many families during the '30s and '40s would not have had Haggadot. This classic should be part of every synagogue library."

A Haggadah that's good to the last song.

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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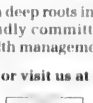
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Vaughan families urged to recycle Passover waste

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Families celebrating Passover in the city of Vaughan are being encouraged to recycle their waste products rather than toss them in the garbage.

To ease the transition over the holiday, the city is permitting unlimited amounts of recyclable materials and free garbage tags, which permit families to bag more waste than they would under phase one of the city's Greening Vaughan initiative.

However, citizens of Vaughan will have to change the way they sort their garbage if they wish to meet the requirements that will be fully implemented by September 2007, said Ward 5 Councillor Alan Shefman.

He said Vaughan is in the midst of a three-phase transition period of waste reduction and increased recycling. At the end of that period, families will be charged if they exceed garbage bag limits.

In phase one, which concludes on Nov. 10, households are limited to four bags of garbage, though families are allowed to exceed that amount if they place a free tag on their bags.

In phase two, the limit will be reduced to three bags and a fee will be charged for extra tags. In addition, the green wet waste box will be introduced.

In phase three, which will kick off on Sept. 10, 2007, the three bag limit will be retained but garbage collection will go from once a week to once every two weeks.

The limitation on waste materials hits larger families harder than most, Shefman acknowledged, and so he has been in dialogue with rabbis and members of the Orthodox community to encourage large families to participate in the Greening Vaughan initiative.

"The idea is to cut down the amount of waste," cut costs and divert it from landfills, he said.

When the recycling and waste reduction program was launched a few months ago, "we got a flurry of e-mails and calls saying, 'We can't do it.' We explained it can be done. It's not an issue that's going away."

The City of Vaughan is "trying to be responsive to the community and large families in particular," Shefman said, adding that when the program is fully implemented, exceptions may be made for very large families.

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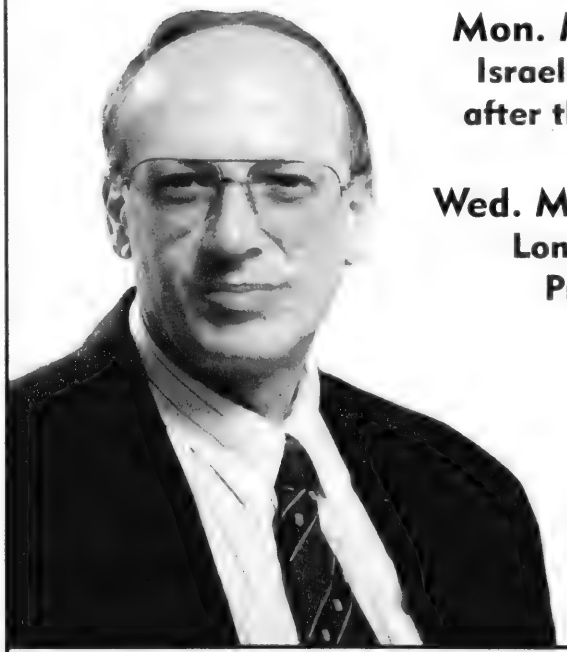

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WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT: Top photo, junior kindergarten student Noy Ravid and her grandparents, Yacov and Kochava Ziskind, and bottom photo, JKer Ryan Bloom and his grandmother, Rosalie Gottlieb, celebrated Passover together at a special family seder April 5 at Associated Hebrew Schools' Kamin Education Centre in Thornhill.

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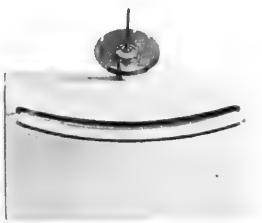

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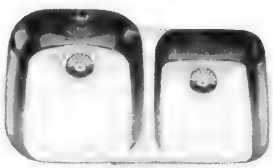

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Movie event planned to support Israel Elwyn

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Moshe Greengarten and David Rechtsman give far more than lip service to their support of Israel Elwyn.

As chair and treasurer respectively of Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn, an organization that provides services for more than 1,600 children and adults with special needs, the two stuff envelopes, make calls, raise money and provide hands-on leadership to board members and volunteers.

Currently, they are in the midst of planning a movie event at the Toronto Jewish Film Festival being held at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre on May 7.

The Birthday Party, a documentary by Ruth Walk, Israel's current Laureate of the Prize of the Art of Cinema, is the story of 25 child Holocaust survivors who for 40 years have marked May 5 as the day of their liberation and the date they have all taken as their official birthday.

All funds raised at the Canadian premiere of the film will go toward the endowment of a speech and communications therapy room in a new Israel Elwyn children's facility.

Greengarten, associate director of Hay Health Care Consulting Group, has been involved with the organization for five years, he says, since he learned about it while in Israel.

He met with Elwyn executive director David Marcu and "came on board, but it wasn't until about two years later that I visited some of its programs and realized just how wonderful the organization is."

David Rechtsman and Moshe Greengarten

Its services include preschool and adult development centres, work activities centres, supported employment services and transitional employment programs.

"Elwyn's work wasn't well known in Canada, and I felt that with my skills and my experience on boards, my passion for its work could come across."

Greengarten has been president and chair of professional health care boards such as the Ontario Hospital Association, and has been involved with Baycrest and Bialik Hebrew Day School.

His first visit to an Elwyn program was to one of its preschool centres, a project of Canadian Friends of Israel Elwyn, "and the kids just grabbed me. I realized there were issues with the facility. It needed to be made wheelchair accessible," he says.

He also visited an adult program whose focus is to integrate clients into the community through vocational training, supportive residences or workplace placement.

"Their measure of success is how many people move into the community and I get goose bumps when I think about how successful they are. The program is designed to help people feel valued," Greengarten said.

"Its mission is to bring up standards of social service in Israel, and improve the quality of life for the vulnerable."

He was "hooked", he says, and "didn't need to convince David to get involved."

Rechtsman, a principle of Greenpark Homes, has been involved with such organizations as State of Israel Bonds and the Association for the Welfare of Soldiers of Israel. He says he joined Greengarten about two years ago because he wanted to get directly involved in an organization.

"I can see where my time and money are going. There is a direct link between my involvement and the end product."

For information on the May 7 fundraiser – there is a 3 p.m. coffee reception and 4 p.m. screening – call 416-787-1151, ext. 300. Tickets are $36 for adults and $18 for children. A charitable receipt will be provided for a portion of the ticket price.

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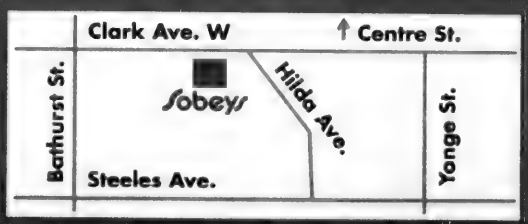

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Major life insurers revise Israel travel guidelines

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Manulife Financial, Transamerica Life Canada and Sun Life Financial, three of the country's largest insurers, are advising brokers and distributors that they have revised their foreign travel guidelines to permit the sale of life insurance to travellers who visit Israel.

Manulife, Canada's largest insurer and the second-largest in North America, issued guidelines recently that advised retailers, "It may be possible to cover travel to Israel (excluding West Bank, Gaza and Golan Heights), Bahrain, Qatar and United Arab Emirates for up to eight weeks on a standard basis if the applicant is under age 75."

The advisory followed one from Sun Life, which states, "For life coverage, travel to rateable countries for a maximum of eight weeks annually can now be considered for standard rates. Previously, in order to qualify for standard rates, travel was limited to a maximum of four weeks annually."

"Manulife has been at the forefront of assisting me with helping to obtain a positive response and clarification on the Israel travel issue for the past two years," said David Brown, partner with insurer and financial planner Al G. Brown & Associates.

Brown has been among a number of agents working to convince insurers to lift restrictions on life insurance sales to people visiting Israel. Until recently, policy issuers declined to write life insurance to individuals who planned to visit Israel for prolonged periods. Re-insurers, which assume much of the risk, were convinced that travel to Israel was too dangerous and declined to back such policies.

Brown contended that these fears were not grounded in statistical data.

Responding to concerns expressed by insurance retailers, insurance companies have been issuing policies that excluded liability for policy holders while they were in Israel over a certain length of time, or which charged travellers higher premiums.

Brown cautioned that while the large insurers will now write policies for visitors to Israel, there is no blanket promise of coverage. The Manulife advisory's second paragraph states: "The underwriter will consider factors such as plan reinsurer, length of travel, applicant's age and underwriting assessment when determining if travel to a particular country is insurable. The travel risk for countries are reviewed regularly, and if the risk changes, then the underwriting position will also change."

TOTS COLLECT PASSOVER FOOD: Last week, students at TorahTots Preschool brought in Passover food to be distributed to the needy. From left are Corey Wachtel, Jordan Wachtel and Megan Kohn.

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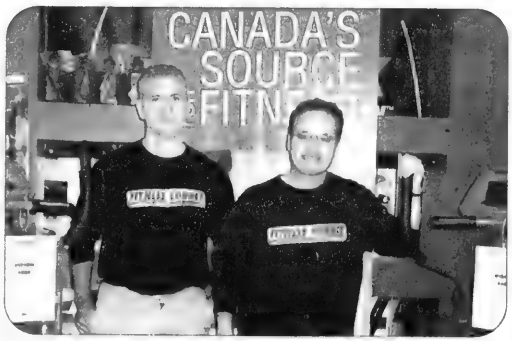

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FOOD DRIVE: Grade 4 students, from left, Danya Lewis, Adina Tanen, Kayla Halberstadt, Micki Schwartz and Kayla Shields, of Netivot HaTorah Day School packaged Shabbat and yom tov candles for the Passover food drive boxes assembled by the rest of their class at the National Council House of Jewish Women. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

MATZAH GIRL: Toronto Heschel School kindergartner Amanda Kauffman makes holes in rolled-out dough to prevent bubbles from forming during the matzah-baking process. She and her fellow Heschel students in senior and junior kindergarten visited the Chabad Lubavitch Model Matzah Factory earlier this month.

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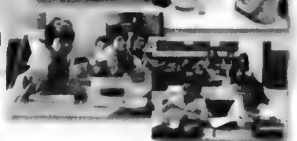

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USDS deals with mould concerns

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

United Synagogue Day School is following up on its promise to fix the mould problem at its Richmond Hill branch and to take steps to ensure the related communication breakdown does not recur.

Parents at the branch were furious to learn late last month that mould had been found last fall in two classrooms and two offices. A Nov. 29 report by consultants Pinchin Environmental Ltd. detailed the damage and made recommendations including communication of the report's findings.

In a letter to parents last Friday, USDS board president Allen Gales and head of school Lucy Cohen said the school's board of directors determined at a recent meeting that "due diligence was exercised to ensure the safety of our children and staff, particularly by proactively taking the initiative to have an assessment done."

Gales and Cohen added, however, that there was "clearly a breakdown in internal communication… that may have led the school to conclude wrongly that there was no need to communicate" the findings.

At a meeting Mar. 29 between parents and school representatives, Gales said the school's decision not to communicate the report's findings to parents and staff was based on conversations with Pinchin representatives before the report was received. Parents, angered over what they consider a potential health risk, as well as their ability to trust the school, demanded accountability from him and Cohen.

In last week's letter, Gales and Cohen outlined the steps the school is taking:

- The damage was scheduled to be repaired over Passover.
- The rooms will remain closed until Pinchin confirms that mould has been removed.
- The school is creating a parent-led safety and wellness committee to ensure proper handling of related concerns. The school's executive vice-president, Brian Klar, who is a physician, has been asked to chair the committee.
- All staff will be required to report safety and wellness concerns to the committee, which will be responsible for dealing with them "within a reasonable time."

Gales and Cohen invited parents from each campus to join the committee.

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Sculpture inspires Baycrest resident

Art can have a profound effect on a person, just ask Helen Rynski.

The 86-year-old resident of Baycrest's Apotex Centre, Jewish Home for the Aged, remembers the day she went outside for a walk and spotted a 15-foot, whimsical Ian Leventhal sculpture in the courtyard.

"The first time I saw it, I knew I had to make it," said Rynski, whose youthful spirit belies her age.

With a little help from Brenda Lass, who works in Baycrest's Creative Arts Studio, and volunteer Marvin Fagan, Rynski created a stunning miniature model out of pottery clay. The 20-inch sculpture is her interpretation of Leventhal's *The Sky Watchers*, and it is as colourful and fun-spirited as the original.

Asked why she felt so emotionally stirred by Leventhal's piece, Rynski said that it was "just a feeling" she had. The project took Rynski more than a year to complete and involved building the sculpture from the base upward, and painting and firing each of the different parts in the kiln.

"Here in the creative arts room we make people into artists, even when they were not artists before," said Lass. "They feel a great sense of purpose when they are able to give gifts they created to their families, or produce works of art and hand-painted cards to be sold in our store or displayed in silent auctions."

Leventhal learned of Rynski's project and dropped by to meet the budding artist and her creation. He was bowled over by her beautiful design.

"The piece is so happy and whimsical, it captures the essence of my sculpture outside," said the Toronto-born artist whose artwork can be found on display in restaurants, hotels, libraries, malls, banks and hospitals from Toronto to Tel Aviv. Colour, fantasy and humour are hallmarks of Leventhal's style – and he has said that all his pieces have one simple message: "joy and happiness."

Rynski's inspired creation carries the same message. "I fell in love with it and I knew I just had to have this piece," said Leventhal.

When he learned her sculpture was entered in the silent auction at Baycrest's annual Art & Soul fundraiser in March, Leventhal made sure to put in the highest bid for it. Then in a move that is characteristic of his philanthropic nature, he promptly donated it back to Baycrest to be displayed in a public area for everyone to enjoy.

"Art is important for all ages," said Leventhal, who teaches art classes to young children. "Unfortunately many children give up art when they reach their early teens, so this makes me extremely happy to see someone in later life picking up art."

"For me I never had an ambition to do such a thing and all of a sudden I had to do it," said Rynski.

The Sky Watchers are smiling more than usual today.

Helen Rynski is seen here with artist Ian Leventhal and her mini sculpture of Leventhal's original work, *The Sky Watchers*, which is on display in a courtyard at Baycrest.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

ייִדיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פֿון: אַלעק סילווער

פון שקלאַפערײַ צו פֿרייהייט

(געדאַנקען צום יום־טובֿ פּסח)

פֿון אַלעק סילווער

דאָס ייִדישע פֿאָלק קען קיין מאָל נישט פֿאַרגעסן — אָן סאָר קיין מאָל נישט פֿאַרגעסן — אַז „בכּדים היינו", מיר זיינען געווען שקלאַפֿן. דער דאָזיקער פּאָקט וועט אײַבערגעהאַרט יעדעם יאָר בײַ דעם פּסח־סדר, וואָס איז דער אַממערסטן פֿאָלקסטער אָן העכסט באַוטעטער ריטואַל אין דעם ייִדישן קאַלענדאַר. דער סדר מיט די סימבאָלישע מאַכלים, ווי מרור, חרוסת, זאַלצוואַסער, כרפּס, מצה אָן וויין, שטעלט מיט זיך פֿאָר אַ וויזואַלע דערמאָנונג פֿון יענער צייט, וועָן מיר זיינען געווען שקלאַפֿן אָן וועָן עס האָט זיך אָנגעהויבן דער ערשטער ייִדישער קאַמף פֿאָר פֿרייהייט. דאָס אײַבערדערציילן די געשיכטע איז דער הנדה העלפֿט לערנען אָן דערמאָנען אַלט אָן יונג די וויכטיקן פֿון שקלאַפֿערײַ אָן די פֿרייד פֿון פֿרייהייט.

צוזאַמען מיטן „והגדת לבנך..." — זאַלסט דער־ציילן דײַנע קינדער — האָבן מיר אויף זיך בעצומען אַ חובֿ צו אײַבערחזרן נאָך אָמאָל אָן נאָך אָמאָל, ווי אַזוי דאָס ייִדישע פֿאָלק מיט אײַבער דריי טויזנט יאָר צוריק האָט געשטרעבט צו פֿרייהייט, רעוואָלטירט קעגן די פֿאַרשקלאַפֿער אָן געוווּנען די דאָזיקע פֿרייהייט.

אויך זאַלסטו דערציילן צו דײַן משפּחה אָן צו די פֿאַרזאַמלטע גאַסט, אַז דאָס איז נישט דאָס אײַנציקע מאָל אין אונדזער לאַנגער געשיכטע, וועָן דאָס ייִדישע פֿאָלק איז געווען פֿאַרשקלאַפּט, געצוווּנגען צו טאָן שווערע אַרבעט, געפֿינטיקט אָן געמאַרטעט. „בכּל דור ודור..." — אין יעדן דור האָט דאָס ייִדישע פֿאָלק געמוזט קעמפֿן פֿאַר דער פֿרייהייט, וועלכע זי האַלט אַזוי טייער. פֿון דעם ערשטן פֿרייהייט־רעוואָלט אין מצרים ביז דער איצטיקער צייט, איז עס אַ הֶמשכדיקער קאַמף צו קעמפֿן פֿאַר, צו פֿאַרטיידיקן אָן אַנהאַלטן די דאָזיקע פֿרייהייט, וואָס פֿאַר די בני־ישׂראל מיינט עס פֿשוט בלייבן ביים לעבן.

פֿאַרגעס נישט צוצוגעבן, אַז פּסח איז נישט בלויז „למען תזכּור את יום צאתך מארץ מצרים" — בלויז כּדי צו דערמאָנען דעם נס פֿון יציאת מצרים. די פֿייערונג פֿון פּסח דערמאָנט אונדז די ראַשלע אײַבערלעבנדיגן פֿון אַ פֿאָלק, פֿון עם ישׂראל, וואָס איז געצוווּנגען אויסצו־שמידן טאָג־טעגלעך זייַן קעגנוואָרט אָן צוקונפֿט אין אַ ווידערשטאַנד־קאַמף קעגן דער רשעות אין דער וועלט. אונטערן דרוק פֿון טעראָר־מעדיעס, פּיזישע קרבנות, אַסימילאַציע אָן אַנטיסעמיטיזם מוז דאָס וועלט־יידן־טום שטיין כסדר אויף דער וואַך אָפּצוהיטן די אויס־גערעכנטע פֿרייהייט. עס איז אַן אייביקער פֿאַרמעסט פֿון אַ קליינעם גייסטיקן כוח קעגן דער ברוטאַלער מאַכט פֿון גיגאַנטן.

אין דער צייט וועָן די מצרישע פּיראַמידן קענען זיך מער נישט אַנטקעגנשטעלן דעם מאַרש פֿון יאָרן אָן צעפֿאַלן זיך, וועָן שטאַרקע פֿעלקער־שׂונאים פֿון ייִדישן פֿאָלק האָבן געליטן מפּלות אָן עקזיסטירן שוין נישט מער, וועָן וועלט־פֿאַרשקלאַפֿער האָבן נעמוזט זיך אָנ־טערנעמן דעם רעוואָלט פֿון קנעכט, וועט דער יום־טוב פּסח פֿאַרצײַכן צו אינספּירירן די וועלט — די ייִדישע אָן די נישט־ייִדישע — מיט זיין דערקלערונג, אַז פֿרייהייט איז נישט בלויז אַ וואָרט. עס איז אַ צוהאָג, אַז עס וועט קומען אַ טאָג, וועָן די מענטשהייט וועט זיך קענען באַפֿרייען נישט נאָר פֿון ייִדישער שקלאַפֿערײַ, נאָר אויך פֿון פֿאָליטישער, פּסיכאָלאָגישער אָן גייסטי־קער קנעכטשאַפֿט. אַלע צוזאַמען וועלן בערענען די אמתע פֿרייהייט פֿאַר דער וועלט.

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From left, Jonathan Laski, STAND Canada's media director, Estee Fresco and Eleanore Gann of STAND at U of T, and co-chairs of Tzedec Hillel Mira Lyon and Eleyna Fremes helped organize the concert.

Darfur benefit raises money and awareness

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

A benefit concert organized to raise money to end the genocide in Darfur attracted a capacity crowd at a University of Toronto pub last week.

More than 100 people attended the event called Live Aid, organized by Students Taking Action Now: Darfur (STAND) and Tzedec Hillel. They raised more than $1,000 for the OXFAM Darfur fund.

Since 2003, a conflict over land between African farmers and Arabic nomads has escalated into a violent war between African guerrilla groups and the Arabic Janjaweed.

To date, more than 400,000 people have been killed, about two million are displaced, and millions more are suffering from starvation, exposure, and disease. It is feared that the death toll could reach a million if the international community doesn't interfere.

Eleanore Gann, the president of STAND at U of T, said she was encouraged by the number of students who came out to support the cause so soon before the exam period is set to begin.

"Not only did people come up to me, but they went to people on the committee to say that it was a really great evening and that they wanted to get involved with STAND," Gann said.

"I hope this event will act as a catalyst for increased advocacy. The general apathy now is really disheartening," she added.

Throughout the evening, students were treated to live music performed by U of T band Jasper Flat, jazz vocalist Sarah Jorram, African drumming, spoken word and even a comedy sketch.

The organizers also held a raffle and gave out prizes – gift certificates, tickets to a concert and an overnight stay at the Sheraton hotel in Toronto.

> *'I hope this event will act as a catalyst for increased advocacy'*

But, Gann said, they made an effort to balance out the evening by entertaining while raising consciousness.

A 10-minute video clip of an eye-witness account from a front-line aid worker who works with the International Red Cross was shown, and Jonathan Laski, the media director of STAND Canada also addressed the gathering.

"He explained what is happening in Darfur and talked about STAND's goal of education and humanitarian aid. He also gave a heartfelt plea for people to care," Gann said.

Organizers encouraged people to sign a petition that calls on the United Nations to appoint a full-time envoy to Darfur as well as an intervention force to bring security to the region.

For more information, visit www.standcanada.org or www.savedarfur.org.

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On Campus

Jewish regeneration depends on intermarriage: prof

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

"A shiksa, not bad."

That's the phrase that Sander Gilman, a professor at Atlanta's Emory University and the author and editor of more than 70 books, used to conclude his lecture at the University of Toronto last month in an attempt to convince his audience that intermarriage is what will regenerate the Jewish people.

About 40 people gathered March 22 at the Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life to hear Gilman speak about "Multiculturalism and the Jews: The Melting Pot." His talk was sponsored by Beth Tzedec Congregation.

"It is the sickly, the pale, the bent, the ill Jew who is going to be resuscitated… through marriage with shiksas," Gilman said.

"The big question that was asked 100 years ago was can Jews be integrated into western Diaspora, Christian culture? If they can be integrated, how can they be integrated?" Gilman said, adding that he believes Jews can be integrated without disappearing into the mix.

Sandor Gilman

He explained that two models arose from this "big question." One was called cultural pluralism, which imagined a group of cultures existing parallel to one another. The other model, he said, uses the idea of "hybridity," or the melting pot, in which different cultures combine into one.

Gilman referred to a hit Broadway play in New York in 1908 called *The Melting Pot*, written by a British Jew named Israel Zangwill, who Gilman said was perhaps the most important English-speaking Jew of the 20th century.

Former U.S. president Theodore Roosevelt saw the play, which was about immigrants living in America, and said it stood in opposition to all hyphenated Americanism, Gilman said.

He added that Zangwill himself married a non-Jewish woman. To those who shunned him after he decided to intermarry, Zangwill wrote that his wife shared the same Jewish ideals as he did. Zangwill said that Judaism is spiritual, and that his opponents were attempting to make it racial in their comments about intermarriage.

Gilman said that Zangwill wrote in the appendix to *The Melting Pot* that "intermarriage will follow wherever social intimacy exists. Jews need intermarriage. It is not only a model or metaphor of hybridity, it is that which will regenerate the Jews."

Gilman said that hybridity is not about assimilating into a dominant culture, but about "whether there can be an ideal society where Jews as Jews can function."

He compared the idea of a melting pot to a symphony, in which every musician's contribution is valued.

"To survive, you must be regenerated, you must be healthy, you must be able to contribute to that new world symphony.

"The Jews with their violins, the Scots with their bagpipes and the Canadians with their – whatever Canadians play. And out of that comes the new world symphony. It is not that the Jew vanishes, but that he becomes a part of their new hybrid world in which the Jews' contribution is valid."

He added that North Americans who oppose racism should embrace the model of hybridity.

"When we start to think today of what we demand of those who we wish to admit and not admit into Canadian, North American or U.S. culture, we should keep in mind the metaphor of the symphony and ask whether or not hybridity, the urge to integrate into the world, is one model, which, as much as we wish to deny it, that has the power to break down barriers, that no other model does."

Campus anti-Semitism condemned

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Anti-Semitism on U.S. campuses is a "serious problem" that merits a campaign to inform Jewish students of their rights, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights said last week.

The commission announced its position April 3 after considering testimony last year from the American Jewish Congress, the Zionist Organization of America, the Institute for Jewish and Community Research and other groups.

It cited anti-Israel propaganda on campus that exploits longtime stereotypes, and it urged the U.S. Education Department to run a campaign to inform Jewish students of their right to be free of harassment and to collect data on anti-Semitic and other hate crimes at universities.

It also concluded there is "substantial evidence" some university departments of Middle East studies "may repress legitimate debate concerning Israel."

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On Campus

Liberal U.S. rabbi advises leftists to get spiritual

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

A spiritual crisis in the western world is leading millions of people to seek comfort in the religious right, said Rabbi Michael Lerner, the editor of *Tikkun Magazine*.

"It is a spiritual crisis that is about the deprivation of recognition, the deprivation of love, the deprivation of meaning in life, and this is central to the experience that has led them to the right," he said.

Rabbi Lerner was in Toronto last week to promote his book *The Left Hand of God*. He spoke at a lecture titled, "Taking back our country from the religious right" in an event at the University of Toronto organized by the Social Justice and Democracy Program at Ryerson University and co-sponsored by Tikkun Toronto, Kairos, the Muslim Canadian Congress, the Canadian Association of Jews and Muslims, the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union, and the Canadian Auto Workers Union.

Rabbi Lerner told more than 200 audience members that only after doing focus group research with thousands of people to find out why middle-income Americans are moving to the right – even though doing so goes against their economic interests – did he begin to understand that people are desperate to find a higher purpose to their lives and abandon the "ethos of materialism and selfishness."

He said the religious right has only identified the problem in America, but it hasn't come up with a solution.

Meanwhile, the left "doesn't have a clue about the spiritual crisis in America… When it hears about the spiritual crisis, it assumes that spirituality is new-age mush… and that spirituality is a code word for people who can't think straight," the San Francisco rabbi said.

The left is unwelcoming to people who believe in God, he added.

"A general sense that was conveyed was that if you're into God or into religion, you are probably on a lower level of psychological or intellectual development than the rest of us, and this message is conveyed in many subtle ways."

He said leftists need to put an end to a culture that puts down spiritual people and stop thinking of spirituality as something that could pollute them.

The left needs to address the spiritual crisis and make leftists more accepting of religious people, he added.

Capitalism teaches people to act in their own self-interest, to view others in a utilitarian way and to look out for number 1 in the workplace, he said.

Inevitably, they pass this philosophy on to their children.

"Thousands and thousands of people told us stories about how they hate it. On one hand, they feel like this is the real world and there is nothing we can do to change it. On the other hand, they feel dirty by being a part of this world, that they would really like their lives to connect to a higher meaning and purpose," Rabbi Lerner said.

Rabbi Michael Lerner

"The major complaint that people had was 'I feel surrounded in my personal life by people who are just out for number 1.' And they weren't being paranoid. They were correctly perceiving that everybody around them were learning the same things they were learning."

Unfortunately, this mentality is seeping into our personal relationships, which suffer as a result, he said.

The way people date each other is a symptom of this, he added.

The habit of trying to have different experiences is like going to a "supermarket of relationships," and people are using their partners to fulfill their own selfish needs, such as wanting to raise a family or buy a house, he said.

"More and more people, when they enter into committed relationships or marriages, do so with a conscious or unconscious calculation that says something like this: 'Of all the people who would fall for me, this one will fulfill more of my needs than anyone else.'"

He said this can cause insecurity, because you can never be sure that your partner may find someone else who can fulfill more of his or her needs.

But a spiritually conscious person wouldn't think about whether a partner will fulfill a superficial need like impressing a boss or being a good cook.

The "spiritual consciousness" is being able to "look at another being and see in them embodiments of the sacred as created in the image of God, as fundamentally deserving of love and caring for who they are," Rabbi Lerner said.

He said the key to a more fulfilling life is to change what we value from money and power to love and caring.

Student sues JDL, Hillel for terrorist claims

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A U.S. student accused of having links to terrorists is threatening to sue two Jewish groups if allegations against him are not retracted immediately.

Fadi Kiblawi, a third-year law student at George Washington University, said last month he would sue Hillel and the Jewish Defense League if they don't retract statements claiming he is a terrorist and associates with suicide bombers, according to the *GW Hatchet*, an independent student newspaper.

Kiblawi told the *Hatchet* he filed a complaint with University Police regarding an e-mail sent recently through the Hillel listserv. At an Israel divestment lecture March 27, where Kiblawi spoke, members and supporters of the Jewish Defence League distributed flyers alleging that Kiblawi has said "kill the Jews," and has also voiced a desire to "strap a bomb to one's chest and kill."

Kiblawi denied the charges, the paper reported, saying the remarks were taken out of context in one instance and in another, sent out in an e-mail in his name under false pretenses.

The Hillel e-mail referred to alleged Kiblawi statements to encourage Jewish students to attend the lecture, said Robert Fishman, the campus Hillel director.

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On Campus

GIFT OF LIFE: Member of the Jewish fraternity Alpha Epsilon Pi – from left, Jeff Justiz, Aron Katz, Paul Hertz, Brandon Desyatnik, Matt Harris and Ryan Levey – pose with a banner advertising the Gift of Life drive at York University on March 23. AEPi teamed up with Hillel at York to sign up more than 60 potential donors through Gift of Life, a worldwide bone marrow registry.

The Canadian Jewish news

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If you wish, please enclose a photo - we'd be honoured to publish it in an upcoming issue.

Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

Happy 90th birthday to our mother and bubbie Helen Smith Gold on April 3. Love your children Steven, Lori, Cherry, Harold, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mazel tov to Simone Joseph & David Carolin on your engagement. Love, your parents Juliet & Paul Joseph, Janice & Ted Carolin and their families.

Mazel tov to Avi Koifman on your 40th birthday. Love, Barbi, Julia, Frank, Judy, Omi and David & Rebeca.

Happy Passover to my Bubbie & Zaide Bonnie & Earl Moskovitz. I love you, Zackery Kai Nudelman

Welcome Sadie Hannah Seaton, born Jan. 2 to Jordie & Aaron Seaton. Granddaughter to Sylvia & Michael Caplan of Ottawa, and Rosie & Paul Seaton.

Ingrid & Gerry Levitz, Ottawa, Kathy & Joel Shefrin, Winnipeg announce the upcoming marriage of Ingrid & Gerry. Mazel tov to grandparents Leon Gluzman, Fred & Agnes Funk.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, April 24, is the deadline for the May 4 issue and Monday, May 1, is the deadline for the May 11 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Sunday, April 16

MATZAH BALL

Beth Emeth Synagogue presents its first annual "Matzah Ball," a dance for all ages with music from the '50s & '60s. 7:30 p.m. Tickets $15 in advance at synagogue office. 416-633-3838

Tuesday April 18

SEVENTH NIGHT SEDER

Join Beit Rayim Synagogue for a "Seventh Night of Passover Community Seder" led by **Cantor Eli Bard**, with literature, history, songs and poetry. 6:30 p.m. Adults $36, seniors and children 8-13 years $18. Reserve at 905-770-7639, ext. 31.

Other news

MUSICAL SHABBAT

Congregation Darchei Noam celebrates chol hamoed Pesach with a musical shabbat featuring scholar-in-residence **Cantor Jonathan Comisar**. The program begins Friday, April 14, at 8 p.m. with a "Joyous Kabbalat Shabbat Service," and continues Saturday, April 15, with a Shabbat service at 10 a.m. and a concert of Jewish music Sunday, April 16, 7:30 p.m. 15 Hove St. 416-638-4783.

INTERFAITH DATING

Jack Botwinik, author of *Chicken Soup with Chopsticks*, speaks about "The Four Questions of Interfaith Dating," his journey in interfaith dating and how it led him to become an observant Jew. Sunday, April 16, 8 p.m. at the Village Shul, 1072 Eglinton Ave. W., 416-785-1107, and Monday, April 17, 8 p.m. at Aish Thornhill, 949 Clark Ave. 905-764-1818.

BETH TIKVAH WEEKEND

Beth Tikvah Synagogue hosts a weekend with **Dr. Ronald Zweig**, historian, professor and author. On Saturday, April 29, he speaks, during the service, on "Knowing and Not Knowing: Choosing to Ignore Evil"; at a luncheon on April 29, by reservation only, on "Righting Historical Wrongs"; and on Sunday, April 30, at breakfast, by reservation only, following minyan at 9 a.m., on "The Hungarian Gold Train." To reserve, call 416-221-3433, ext. 316.

SPRING LECTURE SERIES

The adult education committee of Temple Emanu-El offers a lecture series Mondays, 2-4 p.m. April 17, "China: Challenges and Opportunities" with **Bernie Wolfe**, of Schulich School of Business; April 24, "Carmen: Femme Fatale or Liberated Woman? The History of a Stereotype" with **Linda Hutcheon**, professor of English and comparative literature, University of Toronto; May 1, "Times Have Changed: What's New in Estate Planning" with **Cindy Pinkus**, lawyer; May 8, "The Jazz Singers: Crosby, Holiday, Vaughan, Fitzgerald, etc." with **Mike Daley**, department of music, York University. $30. Registration and information, 416-449-3880.

CALLING ALL TEENS!

Join Jewish teens from across the GTA for "T2-Tikkun Toronto: Jewish Youth Repairing the World One Day at a Time," an afternoon of hands-on community service sponsored by BBYO, Bnei Akiva, Tzofim, Habonim Dror, USY and Young Judaea, and earn four community-service hours. Sunday, April 23, 12-5:30 p.m. 4700 Bathurst St. Register online at www.bbyo.on.ca or call 416-398-2004, ext. 221.

END-OF-LIFE DECISIONS

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents the End-of-Life Decision Symposium: Ethical Dilemmas, a program for health-care professionals, Sunday, April 23, 12-6 p.m. Speakers include **Rabbi Reuven Bulka**, **Rabbi David Feldman**, dean of the

Continued on page 37

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What's New

Continued from page 36

Jewish Institute of Bioethics, **Arthur Fish**, lawyer, **David Novak**, Centre for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto, and **Laurie Zoloth**, professor, medical ethics and humanities, Northwestern University. Topics include "Advanced Directives and Transplantation," "The Halachic and Secular Implications of Organ Donation," "The Theological Implications of Advanced Directives," "The Legal Implications of Advanced Directives," "Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Withdrawal of Support in the Comatose Patient," "A Halachic Perspective on the Issues Facing Families in Crisis," "A Secular Perspective on the Issues Facing Families in Crisis," and "The View from a Palliative-Care Perspective." Physicians $50, others $35. Medical accreditation pending. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 34, or e-mail mlaba@bethtzedec.org.

LEAGUE CONFERENCE

The Canadian Seaway branch of the Women's League for Conservative Judaism holds its spring conference on Sunday, April 30, at Beth Tzedec Congregation. The theme of the conference is "Kindle the Light Within You, Your Sisterhood and the Community." For information, call 416-493-6447.

FAMILY-IN-ISRAEL DINNER

Emunah Women of Toronto honour **Edie Kalb** at their Family-in-Israel Dinner on Tuesday, May 9, at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue. The evening is dedicated to the memory of **Sharon Rosenblum Leff**, a longtime Emunah member and volunteer. For tickets, call **Janice** at 416-636-0036.

HEBREW CLASSES

Keren Hatarbut Institute offers Hebrew-language classes for adults, teenagers and preteens at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Beginners will speak, write and read Hebrew in 14 sessions. Classes are Wednesdays and Thursdays beginning the week of May 17, 788 Marlee Ave. For registration, call **Joseph Klinger** at 416-787-0197.

REGISTER NOW FOR 2006-07

Shaar Shalom Religious School is accepting registration for 2006-07 school year. The school is located in Brownridge Public School, behind the Promenade Mall. For a visit or to book an appointment, call **Hava Greenberg** at 905-889-4975.

ISRAEL INK PROJECT

Bring your used ink-jet cartridges to Toronto synagogues, day schools, Jewish organizations, BJCC, Miles Nadal JCC and Israel's Bookstores, and help a struggling kibbutz. For information, call 416-221-6263 or visit www.israel-ink.com.

JVS VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

JVS Toronto seeks volunteer mentors for a new employment program, PATH 2 WORK. It helps people with developmental disabilities move into paid employment. Once a week for four months, mentors offer support and problem-solving ideas for barriers clients may be facing. Contact the JVS Toronto's volunteer co-ordinator at 416-787-1151, ext 259.

JEWISH INFO TORONTO

Jewish Information Service of Greater Toronto has information on community events, holidays, shuls, camps, kosher restaurants, etc. They can be reached at 416-635-5600 or on the Internet at www.jewishtoronto.com. Click on "Doing Jewish In Toronto."

JIAS TORONTO

Jewish Immigrant Aid Services, 4600 Bathurst St. #325. www.jiastoronto.org. 416-630-6481.

Family to Family: Volunteer to connect to a newcomer family.

JIAS weekly activities for youth aged 8-12, and 14-18. For both, call **Allison** at ext. 28.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. For information/registration, call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215, or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Adult Children Losing A Parent: a 6-session group for those who have recently lost a parent. Topics include coping with grief, loss and legacy, and resolving unfinished business. Begins Tuesday, April 25, 7:30-9 p.m., at 4600 Bathurst St.

Today's Woman: A 6-session group for women who want to make changes in their lives. Topics include time and stress management, building self-esteem, assertiveness and improving communication skills. Begins Wednesday, April 26, 7-9 p.m., at 4600 Bathurst St.

Effective Parenting: A 4-session group to help parents learn what they can do to raise a happy, motivated and well-behaved child. For parents of children aged 3 to 11. Topics include how to nurture self-esteem, encourage problem solving, increase communication and set limits. Begins Wednesday, April 26, 7-9 p.m., at 4600 Bathurst St.

Happiest Baby On The Block: A workshop for parents of newborns and infants who wish to learn an extraordinary approach to having a calm baby, based on the principles of **Dr. Harvey Karp**. Wednesday, April 26, 7-9:30 p.m. at the Family Resource Centre at the Promenade Mall. Registration required; fee includes a parent kit.

Infant Massage: A 6-session group for parents, grandparents or caregivers and their babies who want to learn infant massage techniques to help relax and stimulate baby. Each session includes time for finger play, dancing, and discussion of infant development, routine, and nutrition. Begins Thursday, April 27, 11 a.m.-12 p.m., at the Family Resource Centre.

Teens and Depression: A one-evening lecture by psychiatrist **Dr. Amy Cheung** on how to recognize teen depression and current treatments for it. Thursday, May 4, 7-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St. Registration required. Limited number of spaces available.

FOR SENIORS

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Sunday dance, April 16; Casino Rama, Wednesday, April 26; Casino Niagara, Wednesday, May 24. Call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. Call 416-630-9444.

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club closed for Passover April 20.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Diabetes Clinic, April 18, 9 a.m.-noon by appointment, ext. 126.

Shabbat Dinner with Hillel university students, April 21, 5:30 p.m. Tickets on sale.

Yom Hashoah Memorial, Israeli Etrog Club, Tuesday, April 25, 6 p.m.

Spend Thursday, April 27, at Betel: "Stories From the Heart," 12-1 p.m.; "Fun With Yiddish," 1-2 p.m.; and "Nafty Naftolin's Komedy Kabaret," 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Trip to Tulip Festival in Ottawa, May 16-17. $200/$250 includes bus, hotel, tours and casino.

No classes April 19-20.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Annual Pesach tea and cantorial concert by **Shlomo Sufferin**, Tuesday, April 18, at 1:30 p.m. Free. Register in advance at the service desk or call ext. 2267.

Bagels and jam, a post-Pesach treat, Friday, April 21, 10:30 a.m.-noon in the Wagman lobby.

Smile Theatre performs *Popcorn Princess*, a musical about the life and career of **Deanna Durbin** on Friday, April 21, at 1 p.m. For information, call **Melissa**, ext. 2297.

Registration has begun for the next fitness session. Begins Monday, April 24.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Women's Passover Seder: Sunday, April 16, 2-5 p.m. Members $20, non-members $30. Reserve at ext. 0.

Intermediate Hebrew II: 6-week course, Tuesdays, April 25-May 30, 8-10 p.m. Members $154, non-members $186, + $10 materials fee.

Hebrew Conversation II: An 8-week course, Thursdays, April 27-June 1, 7-9 p.m. Members $154, non-members: $186, + $10 materials fee.

Klezmer Players' Workshop: a 10-week course for instrument players, focusing on the klezmer style. Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Beginning May 2.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Registration starts now for all fitness and recreation programs. Call ext. 235 or register at BJCC.

BJCC seniors online computer lab workshop and mini-course event, "Buying a Computer: How and What?" Friday, April 21, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Register at ext. 235.

New mah-jong classes start Wednesday, April 26, 1-3 p.m. For information, call **Janet**, ext. 259.

Luncheon with entertainer **Rhonda Silver**, Tuesday, May 9. Tickets on sale at the reception desk or call ext. 235.

"Blue Republic: Nostalgia for the Present" at the Koffler Gallery through April 30.

Casino Niagara, Wednesday, May 17. Tickets on sale at the reception desk or call ext. 235.

The Koffler Centre of the Arts Gala presents *Stars of the 21st Century* on May 7 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. If you wish to attend, call ext. 271.

Bathurst JCC has a special block of tickets to *Golda's Balcony* with **Valerie Harper** on Thursday, May 25, 8 p.m. at the Elgin Theatre. Proceeds from the evening will help send disadvantaged children to Centre Camp at the Bathurst JCC. For tickets, call ext. 271.

Be part of the Toronto Maccabi Team. Tryouts for boys basketball, baseball and swimming and girls soccer and swimming, ages 13-16. Contact **Grant Smith**, ext. 257.

Help support Maccabi athletes, at the JCC Maccabi Spin-a-thon, Sunday, May 14, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call **Grant** ext. 257.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 44

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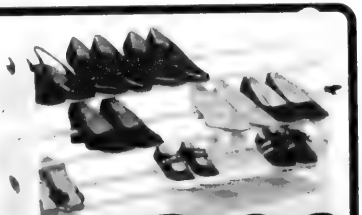

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Goldenberg, Esther	Mar 23/06	243 Montiel Rd.
Berman, Celia E.	Mar 24/06	28 Almington St
Kingstone, Lily	Mar 24/06	10 Senlac Rd
Ennis, Rita	Mar 24/06	9 Deer Park Cres
Kirshen, Joseph	Mar 24/06	9 Baintree St. E
Shteynberg, Aron	Mar 24/06	6250 Bathurst St
Melnick, Bertha	Mar 25/06	3560 Bathurst St
Kahansky, Dorothy	Mar 26/06	Private
Zaldin, Arthur	Mar 26/06	2075 Bayview Ave
Kerbel, Joel Jay	Mar 27/06	50 Shallmar Blvd
Coffin, (Protes), Eve	Mar 28/06	Private
Shulman, Pearl	Mar 29/06	645 Castlefield Ave
Shear, Meyer	Mar 29/06	39 Pannahill Rd
Rose, Alexander	Mar 30/06	90 Fisherville Rd
Gilis, Benjamin	Mar 31/06	Private
Tiker, Semen	Mar 31/06	Private
Maryasin, Alexander	Apr 1/06	Private
Ammar, Miriam	Apr 2/06	46 Franklin Ave
Elfan, Leon	Apr 3/06	3303 Don Mills Rd
Gold, Fred	Apr 3/06	19 Whitley Ave
Bezmozgis, Mendel	Apr 4/06	56 Robingrove Rd
Lieberman, Joseph	Apr 4/06	Private
Ryczke, Mike (Moshe)	Apr 5/06	Private
Kahn, Barnet	Apr 5/06	100 Antibes Dr
Soroksky, Jefim	Apr 5/06	29 Northern Heights Dr

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Irene Greisman	Mar 24/06	330 Spadina Rd.
Betty Pelly	Mar 24/06	62 Artreeva Drive
Sid Pollock	Mar 24/06	20 Shallmar Blvd.
Rae Appelton	Mar 25/06	541 Finch Avenue W.
Simon Traub	Mar 25/06	2 Royal Oak Drive
Florence Rosen	Mar 25/06	147 Elder Street
Benjamin Stern	Mar 25/06	11 Townsgate Drive
Salomon Lulka	Mar 26/06	55 Skymark Drive
Willy Holtzman	Mar 26/06	70 Covewood Street
Edward Burstein	Mar 27/06	4160 Bathurst Street
Lillian Joltin	Mar 27/06	282 St. Clair Ave W
Helen Shore	Mar 28/06	133 Torresdale Ave.
Claire Feldman	Mar 29/06	21 Mayfair Avenue
Molly Cohen	Mar 29/06	155 Balmoral Avenue
Jean Rose	Mar 29/06	3560 Bathurst Street
Alex Tobias	Mar 30/06	343 Clark Ave. West
Joseph Sidney	Mar 30/06	35 Touraine Avenue
Harry Cohen	Mar 30/06	29 Regina Avenue
Jeri Teplitz	Apr 2/06	44 Tamarack Drive

HEBREW BASIC BURIAL

Sarah Nash	Mar 31/06	48 Sandfield Rd
Maurice Carr	Apr 1/06	2075 Bayview Ave

IN MEMORIAM

JASON EINSTOSS ז"ל

It has been 6 years since you left us Jason.
You are missed more every day
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You are in our hearts forever.

Dad, Mom, Philip, Allan, Karen, Jake

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Obituary

Auschwitz escapee succumbs to cancer

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Rudolf Vrba, one of only five Jews to escape from the Auschwitz death camp, died on March 27 after a battle with cancer. He was 82.

Rudolph Vrba in 2000

Born in Topolcany, Slovakia, as Walter Rosenberg, Vrba is credited with saving 100,000 Jews, thanks to the information he revealed following his escape.

Vrba spent nearly two years in Auschwitz-Birkenau, where his jobs as part of Kanada Kommando – a work detail that collected and sorted prisoner's belongings – and later as a camp clerk gave him first-hand knowledge of the death toll of incoming Jews. By the time of his escape in spring 1944, Vrba and the camp underground estimated that 1.75 million Jews had been killed a figure far higher than accepted today by most historians.

In early 1944, Vrba and others in the camp learned that preparations were under way to receive hundreds of thousands of Hungarian Jews. He and a fellow prisoner, Alfred Wetzler, decided to attempt an escape to warn them of the fate that awaited them.

On April 7, they left the camp and ventured into an area manned by guards at an outer perimeter known as Mexico, where temporary wooden structures were being prepared for the influx of Hungarian Jews. With the help of other prisoners, they hid inside a lumber pile for three days, covering themselves in a mixture of tobacco and petrol to mask their scent from guard dogs.

When the search for them ended, they left the woodpile and headed south toward Slovakia. When they arrived, they met with members of the Judenrat, the Jewish community council, in Zilina and told their incredible story, warning that Hungarian Jewry was in danger. They provided detailed information about camp operations and a sketch of its layout.

Their testimony became the basis for the *Vrba-Wetzler Report*, also known as the *Auschwitz Protocols*, which found its way to the highest political leadership in the western world.

However, 60 years after the liberation of Auschwitz, Vrba told *The CJN* he felt the information had been buried, leaving Hungarian Jews in the dark as to their fate. Instead of being warned and either resisting deportation or hiding, the community meekly boarded the trains that brought them to Auschwitz.

Vrba believed the Jewish community leadership used the information to bargain their way to safety in a special sealed train that left Budapest just as the wholesale slaughter of Jews was reaching a fever pitch.

When interviewed by *The CJN* for an article marking the 60th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, Vrba said historical documents confirm that Jewish leaders in Slovakia, Hungary, Switzerland and elsewhere knew by May 1944 what was happening in Auschwitz, but they did not warn Hungarian Jews.

Instead, they used the information to "organize a train of 1,700 that travelled to Switzerland."

Vrba acknowledged that conclusion was controversial and not accepted by many mainstream historians.

"A situation developed and that is my contention, that a small group of informed people deprived others from making their own decisions in the face of mortal danger. This is my opinion," Vrba said.

"Certainly they should not have negotiated the departure of a small train and let 437,000 land in Auschwitz, not knowing anything."

Continued on page 39

Coast to Coast

Stopping 'genocidal' Iran a priority for Cotler

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

Montreal MP now public security critic

MONTREAL — MP Irwin Cotler, now the Liberals' public security critic, said he will be sounding the alarm over the "clear and present danger" posed by Iran and the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority during this Parliament.

The former justice minister said in an interview he could not overstate how serious the threat is to Israel and the Jewish people of "an explosion of state-sanctioned genocidal anti-Semitism whose epicentre is Iran."

He said he takes Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at his word when he says that he wants to "wipe Israel of the map," and Hamas as well, as long as the same intention remains in its covenant.

Cotler said it's imperative that Iran not be able to develop nuclear weapons capability, but he stopped short of calling for sanctions against the country.

He compared Ahmadinejad's denial of the Holocaust and "demonizing of Jews as evil incarnate" as a threat to Jews worldwide.

Canada should have nothing to do with a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority unless it "repeals its covenant, renounces violence, recognizes Israel and adheres to the road map [peace plan]," Cotler said.

He also adds to those conditions ending "anti-Semitic incitement" and a "culture of impunity" in which Palestinians attacking Israelis are hailed as resisters, not criminals.

While pleased with the Harper government's decision to cut aid to the Hamas administration, Cotler said the Tories "had no choice" because Canadian law prohibits providing assistance to groups on Canada's list of terrorist groups.

Cotler is the sole Canadian on the steering committee for a forum of world Jewish leaders being convened by Israeli President Moshe Katsav in October to discuss the future of the Jewish people.

As for matters closer to home, Cotler said he will be advocating strict adherence to the Charter of Human Rights and the rule of law in any counter-terrorism measures that Canada institutes.

Cotler met with Muslim leaders in Markham, Ont., last month to reassure them that the anti-terrorism law, enacted in the aftermath of 9/11, is not a "threat" to them. He said he told them that there can be no discriminatory application of the law, including racial profiling.

Cotler defended the use of security certificates to detain suspected terrorists indefinitely without charge, noting that this did not begin with the anti-terrorism act, but has, in fact, been legal for close to 30 years. He said it has earlier been used to detain suspected war criminals. All democracies have in place a similar remedy, he added.

"It's a Hobbesian choice between indefinite incarceration or deportation, which is not always possible because no one will take them or the person would be in danger if sent back," Cotler said. The Federal Court of Appeal, in December, 2004, ruled that security certificates are constitutional, he noted.

Nevertheless, Cotler believes alternatives should be studied, such as supervised release or house arrest.

As for the criticism that detainees are not given access to all the evidence against them, Cotler said the appointment of a "friend of the court," to whom evidence could be disclosed, might make these powers more compatible with democratic principles.

Now that he is no longer in the cabinet, Cotler intends to resume acting on behalf of Maher Arar, the Syrian-Canadian who was deported by the United States as a suspected terrorist to Syria, where he was held for a year in solitary confinement and allegedly tortured. Arar is seeking redress from the U.S. and answers on Canadian law-enforcement officials' role in his arrest.

Cotler said he is also going to work to find a made-in-Canada civil remedy for citizens who are victims of torture or terror abroad. He believes they should be able to sue in Canadian courts those states responsible. If a state found guilty does not pay up, Canada could seize any assets it has in this country or hold them accountable through various international justice mechanisms.

"This would be an important symbolic initiative," Cotler said.

Vrba moved to Canada in 1967

Continued from page 38

The *Auschwitz Protocols* prompted several world leaders, including Pope Pius XII, U.S. president Franklin D. Roosevelt and the king of Sweden, to appeal to the Hungarian head of state, Admiral Miklos Horthy, to stop the deportations. The requests and fear of postwar retribution led the Hungarian to stop the deportations on July 9, 1944.

After the war, Vrba, who changed his name from Rosenberg when he joined the Czechoslovak resistance in September 1944, settled for a time in Israel. He published his memoirs, *I Cannot Forgive*, in 1963. He moved to Canada in 1967 and became a Canadian citizen in 1972.

According to *Wikipedia*, an online encyclopedia, Vrba was named an associate professor of pharmacology at the University of British Columbia, specializing in neurology. He became known internationally for more than 50 research papers on the chemistry of the brain, and for his work on diabetes and cancer. In 1998, he received the title of doctor of philosophy honoris causa from the University of Haifa "in recognition of his heroism and daring in exposing, during the war itself, the horrors of Auschwitz, which action led to the saving of Jewish lives; and in profound appreciation of his educational contribution and devotion to spreading knowledge about the Holocaust."

Vrba appeared as a witness at the Frankfurt Auschwitz trial in 1964 and at the Zundel "false news" trial in Toronto in 1985, where his testimony helped lead to the conviction – later overturned on constitutional grounds – of the neo-Nazi propagandist.

He is survived by his wife, Robin, his daughter, Zuza, and two grandchildren.

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France's Jewish community fighting anti-Semitism: CRIF head

By ELIAS LEVY
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — The Jewish community of France is not going to give in to the scourge of anti-Semitism that is destroying the country.

"We have decided to fight. The Israelis set the example for us every day," says Roger Cukierman, president of the CRIF, the umbrella group for French Jews.

Cukierman is at the forefront of the battle that the Jewish community and the French state are currently waging against anti-Semitism.

The CJN recently interviewed Cukierman from his home in Paris.

Canadian Jewish News: *The assassination of Ilan Halimi in February plunged the French Jewish community into disarray.*

Roger Cukierman: The Jews of France are saddened, upset and nervous. The infamous murder of young Ilan Halimi was a terrible shock. It's the first Jewish death resulting from a horrible crime, one that was clearly anti-Semitic. This despicable assassination had a strong effect on the entire Jewish community of France.

There were large demonstrations on Feb. 26 – almost 100,000 people in the streets of Paris and several thousand in the country. You would think that this abject murder would have served as a lesson to everyone and we would finally become aware of how anti-Semitic prejudices can lead to catastrophic situations. But, instead of having the calm period we were all hoping for after this drama, there was an outbreak of violence. It was as if this vile assassination had given sick ideas to many simple minds, to the point where someone recently told me that there had been signs in some areas calling on people to donate money to pay for the defence of the gangster chief who planned the kidnapping and murder of Ilan Halimi.

CJN: *For French Jews, it must be a difficult situation.*

Cukierman: It's a disturbing situation for all of France, not just for the Jews. I recently sent out a communiqué in which I asserted that France is in danger. In it, I reminded people that the CRIF and the French Jewish community had been relieved to note a decrease in anti-Semitic acts in 2005. But the first statistics for 2006 have shown an increase again, which is cruelly illustrated by the assassination of young Ilan Halimi and the anti-Jewish violence in Sarcelles and Lyon. In some areas where there the authorities don't have much control, groups of racist, anti-Semitic hoodlums are spreading terror. In many suburbs and in the heart of some cities, Jewish citizens are afraid to go out, and Jewish parents worry about their children.

Despite the many steps that have been taken, especially by the police, things are getting worse. We keep warning the French authorities: this very serious situation may well lead people to react in self-defence and we will have no control over their actions. We must recall that since the beginning of the wave of anti-Semitism that started in September 2000, there has not been a single Jewish act of retaliation.

We are asking the French president to officially declare war on anti-Semitism and to restore a feeling of confidence in all of the country's citizens. We ask parents, teachers and the media to mobilize against this scourge. Because, make no mistake! The Jews are the guardians of the republic. Violence against them today will strike the rest of the population tomorrow. The unity of the French nation is in danger.

CJN: *Are you saying that if they have no other choice, Jews may undertake their own defence? Isn't that surprising in a democratic state such as France?*

Cukierman: There is great uneasiness and a feeling of helplessness in the Jewish community. Since the beginning of this wave of anti-Semitism, small Jewish groups have been forming. But until now, there have not been any acts of self-defence. With my communiqué, I wanted to put the government on guard against the fact that the current situation is in danger of exacerbating things and promoting actions that we would not be able to control.

> ***The Jews are the guardians of the republic***

CJN: *Is the French government aware that the situation is so serious?*

Cukierman: Absolutely. The French government is in the front line of the fight against anti-Semitism. It is even considering widely distributing video systems to check up on the streets and neighbourhoods that are the most dangerous. But we have to be realistic. You can't put a police officer beside every Jew.

CJN: *Is there a link between the riots in France last fall and this new outbreak of anti-Semitic acts?*

Cukierman: No, because curiously enough, the wave of violence last fall did not touch the Jews. There was only one incident involving a synagogue in one suburb. The Jewish institutions were not attacked. The rioters attacked primarily the symbols of the French state: public monuments, schools, public administration buildings… We saw this as a positive indication, but obviously, we were wrong.

CJN: *You recently returned from the United States where you met with the principal leaders of the American Jewish community. The American view of France has been getting increasingly negative for several years now.*

Cukierman: I attended the American Israel Public Affairs Committee conference in Washington. The Americans I met were all greatly affected by the death of Ilan Halimi. They knew about the case, and they all expressed their solidarity. This wasn't something that went unnoticed in the United States. It's true that this horrible incident and other recent anti-Semitic acts have tarnished the image of France in foreign countries, especially in America. It's somewhat unjust because the government and most of the French politicians are making a real effort and have shown complete solidarity with us in our daily battle against anti-Semitism.

CJN: *Doesn't France's traditional pro-Arab and pro-Palestinian policy indirectly contribute to the climate of anti-Semitism?*

Cukierman: France's Middle East policy has changed in the last year. Last year, at the annual CRIF dinner, I strongly criticized the warm welcome the French government had given [former Palestinian Authority president] Yasser Arafat when he was hospitalized in Paris, as well as the authorization that allowed the anti-Semitic network Al-Manar to broadcast in French territory for one month. This year, at the dinner on Feb. 20, I thanked the French authorities for the change in their foreign policy in the Middle East.

France, in close consultation with the United States, demanded and got the withdrawal of Syria from Lebanon. I think the motivating element was the Syrians' assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri, a close friend of French President Jacques Chirac. France showed that it could be very firm with Syria.

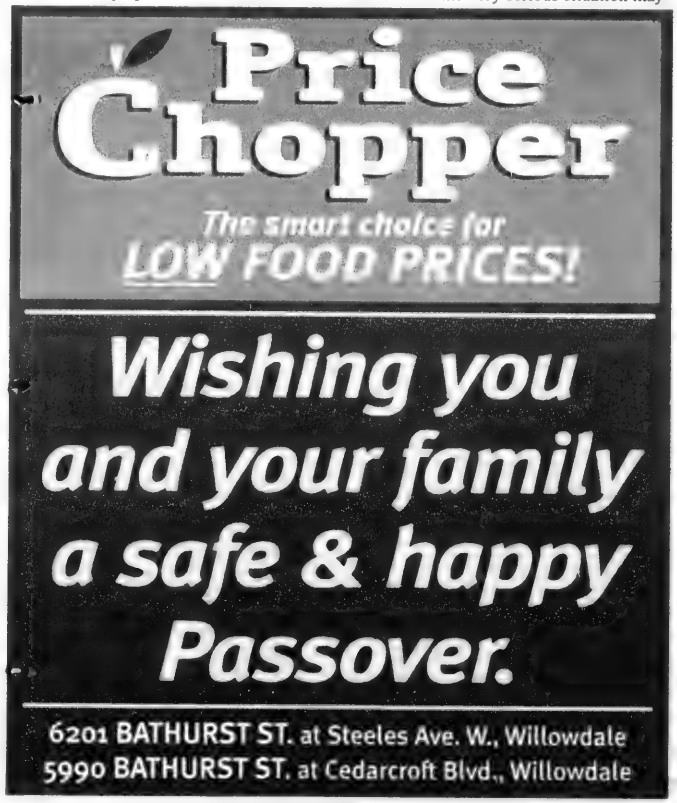
In the same spirit, at the end of July 2005, France warmly welcomed [Israeli Prime Minister] Ariel Sharon, for the first time in four years. France was also impressed with Israel's withdrawal from Gaza. For about a year, there has been a change in the direction of French policy in the Middle East. On the other hand, however, there continues to be a general atmosphere of anti-Zionism, especially in left-wing circles, which, in a way, justifies anti-Semitism.

CJN: *More and more Jews are leaving France. Some North American journals are even speaking of an "exodus." Does this phenomenon, which seems unavoidable, bother you?*

Cukierman: That is something that has been talked about a great deal, but has not actually had much impact. In recent years, the number of Jews who have left France for Israel is between 2,500 and 3,000 a year, which is 0.5 per cent of the Jewish population of France. It's a comparatively low number… It's ridiculous to talk about an "exodus." It's an alarmist expression that in no way reflects reality.

CJN: *How do you see the future of the Jews and Judaism in France? Are you optimistic or pessimistic?*

Cukierman: I am concerned, but we have decided to fight. We have to follow the example of the Israelis. When there are problems, we must face them and not run away from them. I am counting on our ability to face them. The communiqué we recently sent out – which I mentioned before – is a warning message addressed to all of French society. Anti-Semitism in France is not just a Jewish problem. It is a problem for all of French society. Today, French society is clearly in danger. If it allows *sharia* law to spread and organized gangs of hoodlums take control of certain neighbourhoods or suburbs, it is the essence of the democratic spirit that will be destroyed.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Coast to Coast

Post, Globe and *Star* agree on cutting off Hamas

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

On March 29, Foreign Minister Peter MacKay announced that Canada is ending its funding of, and diplomatic relations with, the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority, while continuing to provide humanitarian aid to the Palestinian people via non-governmental organizations and the United Nations. This decision was greeted positively on the editorial pages of most Canadian newspapers.

The *National Post* editorial "Cutting off Hamas," March 30, commended the move. It said that the demands MacKay placed on Hamas "are not new. Since the terrorist group won the recent Palestinian election, the United States, the European Union and even Russia have told Hamas that renouncing the exterminationist hatred embedded in the group's founding covenant is a pre-condition for normal relations. Yet Hamas has refused, betting that the world will not call its bluff."

The *Globe and Mail* ran two editorials on the topic.

In "Keep Hamas in the cold," March 30, the *Globe* said MacKay "described the situation succinctly. 'The stated platform of this government has not addressed the concerns raised by Canada and others concerning non-violence, the recognition of Israel and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the road map for peace.'"

The second *Globe* editorial, "Uh, Earth to Hamas," April 1, responded to the "injured innocence" of PA Deputy Prime Minister Nasser Shaer who, when interviewed about the Canadian cuts, protested: "We are a people under occupation. We need help. Did we do anything? Has something happened that was done by Palestinians?"

The editorial states: "The reason… is no mystery and Mr. Shaer knows it very well, despite his pantomime of puzzlement. Hamas is a terrorist organization. It has carried out something like 60 attacks against Israelis since 2000."

And in the midst of its current truce, Hamas continues to praise terror attacks carried out by others, while making no attempt to arrest the participants.

The *Toronto Star* editorial "Slam Hamas, not aid," March 31, approved of ending direct funding for Hamas, as long as humanitarian assistance continues. Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the *Star* said, "ought to send the Palestinian people a message of hope by turning over any suspended Canadian aid to the United Nations or relief agencies. The goal would be to maintain the overall level of our assistance to the 3.5 million mostly very poor residents of the West Bank and Gaza."

However, *Star* columnists such as Haroon Siddiqui and Linda McQuaig dissented.

In "He's aping Bush and seems too fond of secrecy," April 2, McQuaig took aim at the new Harper government, including the decision to cut funding to Hamas. However, she failed to mention that humanitarian aid would continue, leaving the impression that the Canadian government was being hard-hearted.

More seriously, McQuaig wrote that "according to John Sigler, professor of international relations at Carleton University" Hamas "has agreed to 'accept' Israel (within its pre-1967 borders) and to permanently honour any peace agreement the two sides work out" which "is as good as 'recognition.' It should at least be regarded as an opening, to be encouraged by governments like Canada."

This is fatuous. When some in Hamas refer to the 1967 borders, it is clearly only a temporary step toward the goal that's clearly stated in the Hamas covenant – destruction of the Jewish state. Even this temporary situation must be accompanied by the "right" of Palestinian refugees to return to Israel, thereby ensuring the elimination of Israel as a Jewish state.

The new PA Foreign Minister Mahmoud al-Zahar at least is more straightforward about Hamas's aims. On April 2, he told the Chinese news agency Xinhua that "there is no place for the state of Israel on [Islamic] land." Al-Zahar is only reiterating the Hamas covenant. McQuaig, and others who defend Hamas, ought to take the time to read it.

On April 2, *Sunday Edition* host Michael Enright sat down with three young Palestinian activists in Bethlehem to discuss the Israeli elections and Hamas's new role, but, with some exceptions, he failed to ask tough questions on critical issues.

When he raised the issue of the "right of return," Enright did not question how this could be reconciled with his guests' declaration that they favoured a two-state solution – a position that became all the more confusing when a couple of the activists, including one who voted for Hamas, indicated that they favoured what appeared to be a bi-national solution.

Following this 45-minute interview, Enright probed Israeli journalist Isabel Kershner, an editor at *Jerusalem Report* and author of *Barrier: The Seam of the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict*, about Israel's security barrier. He asked her some hard-hitting questions – what listeners might have expected during the whole show.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Coast to Coast

Dutch-Jewish diplomat plans to emigrate

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Dutch Consul General Albert Moses and his wife, Simone, have decided to make Montreal their home, having fallen in love with the city and especially its Jewish community.

Moses will complete his four-year term as envoy to eastern Canada in August and the couple has begun the process of applying for permanent residence. Moses, 60, who has been in the diplomatic service for more than 30 years, said he may accept one more assignment from his native country, but their intention is to settle in Montreal as soon as possible.

Moses made the surprise announcement at a "farewell" reception in his and his wife's honour, held by the Westmount Chabad Centre, where he davens regularly.

The couple describe themselves as being "neo-Orthodox," and have tried to maintain an observant life style throughout their numerous postings abroad.

Keeping a kosher home has been challenging in some locales. When sent to Ivory Coast, for example, they brought with them a supply of frozen kosher meat. To make things easier – their job, after all, does entail attending innumerable functions – they have become virtual vegetarians in recent years.

Moses, an Amsterdam native, has also served in Copenhagen; Hong Kong; Washington; London, England; Stockholm; Rabat, Morocco; and Australia. He was posted twice in The Hague, including immediately before coming to Montreal, when he helped lay the groundwork for the new International Criminal Court.

The Moseses, who grew up in non-religious families, became fascinated with the Chabad movement while living in London from 1987 to '91. "I like their openness – they are non-judgmental, non-prejudiced," said Moses in an interview.

He is especially captivated by Westmount Chabad because it attracts such a "remarkably eclectic" group of people, many of them professionals and academics. It's also a welcoming place for newcomers, thanks to director Rabbi Yossi Shanowitz and his wife, Deborah, he said.

Moses described being Jewish in Montreal as "a feeling of lightness" unlike other places he has lived where the outside world may be "indifferent or even inimical."

The plaque Moses was presented with from Chabad reads: "Your integration of a strong, proud and noble Jewish identity together with a distinguished diplomatic service is an inspiration to all."

They find community life in general here "vibrant," certainly compared to Holland. And they like Montreal for its diversity, culture and ambience. They had no prior connection to the city or Canada, and had regarded coming here as "just another posting, a career matter," and were pleasantly surprised.

Moses travels to the Atlantic provinces once or twice a year, and a letter of congratulations was sent to the Chabad affair by Nova Scotia's lieutenant-governor, Myra Freedman.

Moses' father escaped deportation during the Nazi occupation and fled in September 1943 to England, via a long overland trek to Spain. His mother was hidden in Holland. Like most Dutch, Moses, who was born in 1946, grew up keenly aware of the Canadians' role in the liberation of the country, and heard stories from his grateful grandparents of opening their homes to Canadian Jewish soldiers.

Moses said he entered the foreign service out of curiosity and because it's "a very nice way to see the world." Simone is a child psychologist by training, but has not had much chance to practise.

Moses' only family in Holland today is his mother. The country has about 11,000 Jews, and Moses is convinced Jewish life is, for all practical purposes, over in Holland. A growing Muslim population and the cultural clash that is developing over their integration is not a factor in the Moses' decision to leave the country, he insisted.

"There are tensions, and certainly there is a radical fringe, but it is not as bad as people think," he said.

Two of the Moseses' four children also plan to settle in Canada, their sons Meir and Benaiah, who are now in London, as is a third child. The fourth lives in Jerusalem. Meir and Benaiah will probably go to Vancouver. The Moseses have three grandchildren.

Moses considers a highlight of his tenure as consul general in Montreal to be last year's 60th anniversary of the liberation of Holland and the end of the war, which included a visit by Princess Margriet of the Netherlands and an exhibition on Anne Frank, among other events.

On June 12, Moses will be in New York to serve as honorary chair, along with the Dutch ambassador to the United Nations, of the 10th annual Spirit of Anne Frank Awards ceremony in New York. Each year, outstanding individuals are cited for contributing to combating racism and discrimination.

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MITZVAH BRIGADE: Twenty five kids from Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am's bar/bat mitzvah program met one recent Sunday morning at the offices of Ve'ahavta to hear Avrum Rosensweig, Ve'ahavta's executive director and founder, speak about the homeless. Afterward, the children, assisted by parents and members of Ve'ahavta's Vaughan chapter, helped pack 150 tote bags for homeless clients and guests at the Ve'ahavta Second Seder at Congregation Habonim. The kids wrote notes of hope and inspiration to place in the bags.

TZEDAKAH EVENING: Yona Bernstein, left, Kayla Goldman, centre, and Sarah Turk, the heads of Ulpanat Orot's chesed committee, celebrate the success of the high school's recent Mother-Daughter evening. The annual event raised about $7,000 for the Aleh Foundation, an Israeli organization that helps children with learning and developmental challenges. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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Grafstein distributes world-class Israeli wines in Ontario

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

The Grafstein family shares a passion for Israel and a passion for wine.

Owners of Grafstein Wines, Ontario wine distributors, they have one of the largest selection of high-quality Israeli wines in the world, "even in Israel," says Neil Grafstein, who started the firm – then known as the Sacramental Wine Company – in 1983, with his wife, Rachel.

Their daughter, Tovah, one of the couple's four children and currently a student in Israel, is now involved in the marketing of their products.

They take pride in their wine, which is highly rated in the wine world, says Grafstein.

He said that the editor of *The Wine Spectator*, a wine website, ordered two cases of Tabor Mescha, a dry, red, full-bodied wine, "and he had the choice of every wine in the world. It's a world-class wine, and we're the only exporter in the world to carry it.

"We were the first client of Tabor Winery in the upper Galilee, so they still allow us a small quantity for export."

The winery has grown grapes since 1901, he says, and they are all hand-picked. "The grapes are picked at 2 a.m. when it is still cool, and they are crushed within the hour. That is the secret."

Grape picking is a community event, he says. "Kids get together and pick."

They are also the exclusive agents for an organic grape juice produced on Kibbutz Sde Eliyahu.

"The grapes are grown on chemical-free earth, and then it is bottled in Jerusalem, again with no chemicals, and no sugar or water. It is 100 per cent grapes."

The family is partial to products grown on kibbutzim, says Grafstein, because the kibbutzniks dedicate their life to the land. "They're into quality, not quantity."

Tovah Grafstein says that they have seven new wines from Tzora Vineyard, north of Beit Shemesh.

"The quality of the grapes grown on Kibbutz Tzora is phenomenal. It is boutique winery, so the grapes are picked by hand and get hands-on care.

"It's a whole different way of making wine. The grapes are precious to them, so they make sure they're picked at exactly the right time."

Ronnie Jaimes picks grapes at Tzora winery.

Grafstein Wines are also exclusive agents for the Golan Heights Winery. Products at the LCBO, distributed by Grafstein's, include Golan Cabernet Sauvignon, Golan Emerald Riesling, Yarden Blanc de Blancs, Yarden Sauvignon Blanc, Yarden Mt. Hermon Red, Yarden Mt. Hermon White.

Other products at the LCBO, distributed by Grafstein's, include Yarden Cabernet Sauvignon, Hafner Welschriesling, Hafner Zweigelt, Hafner Ice Wine Chardonnay, Kleine Draken Sauvignon Blanc, Kleine Draken Pinotage, Nobile Prima Chianti.

The Grafsteins send along the following recipe:

FRUIT SABAYON

6 egg yolks
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup Yarden Blanc de Blancs or Yarden Muscat wine
1 cup raspberries or 1 cup pomegranate seeds

With electric hand mixer, beat egg yolks with sugar until mixture is thick and creamy, about 7 to 10 minutes.

Place mixture in top of a double-boiler pan over gently simmering water. Whisking constantly, slowly pour in wine. Whisk until mixture is thick and frothy and triples its original volume, and is pale yellow in colour, about 5 to 8 minutes. Remove from heat.

Divide raspberries or pomegranate seeds into four serving cups, pour mixture on top. Serve immediately.

To prepare ahead: Refrigerate wine mixture. When ready to serve, fold in 1 cup heavy cream, whipped. Serve with fruit as above. Serves 2.

For more information about Grafstein's products, call 416-257-0440.

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We missed the eggs!

The following is a corrected version of a recipe that appeared in The CJN *March 23.*

CONFETTI VEGETABLE KUGEL
From Healthy Helpings /MealLeaniYumm!

3 medium zucchini, unpeeled (1 lb.)
3 carrots, peeled
2 sweet potatoes or 3 large potatoes, peeled (about 1 lb.)
2 medium onions
2 cloves garlic
½ cup parsley leaves
3 to 4 tbsp. chopped fresh basil (or 1 tsp. dried)
4 eggs plus 4 egg whites (or 6 eggs)
½ cup potato starch or matzah meal
1¼ tsp. salt (to taste)
½ tsp. pepper (to taste)
2 tsp. olive oil

Preheat oven to 375. Grate zucchini, carrots and sweet potatoes. (Can be done in the food processor.) Finely mince onions, garlic, parsley and basil. Combine all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and mix well. Spray a 3-qt. rectangular or oval casserole with non-stick spray. Add vegetable mixture and spread evenly. Bake at 375 for 1 hour and 10 minutes, or until golden brown and firm. Makes 12 servings. Freezes and/or reheats well.

101 calories per serving, 2.7 g fat (0.7 g saturated), 71 mg cholesterol, 4 g protein, 15 g carbohydrate, 315 mg sodium, 280 mg potassium, <1 mg iron, 2 g fibre, 35 mg calcium.

Variations: Mixture can be baked in sprayed muffin tins at 37 for 25 to 30 minutes, until golden brown.

Recipe may be halved. Bake in a 1½-qt. greased casserole for 45 to 55 minutes.

Side dishes will complement the main course

By SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

Side dishes help pull a meal together and can really enhance the Passover table. They add to and complement the other menu items, and are a welcome contribution for those who want to bring a dish to help the hostess.

Many years ago, my family used to get together with a few other families for a joint seder. I always offered to bring whatever no one else wanted to make, which was invariably the side dishes.

Many traditional Passover dishes – kugel, roasted potatoes or gefilte fish, for example – are delicious but give the Passover table a dull beige look. The side dishes can add colour and eye appeal. It also helps if the dishes can be prepared ahead and heated up at the last minute, or served cold.

CAULIFLOWER WITH AVOCADO SAUCE

1 large cauliflower or 2 small ones
1 small bottle Italian dressing
3 avocados
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste

Remove leaves from cauliflower heads and cook the heads in boiling water until fork-tender yet still slightly crunchy. Cool in a colander under cold running water.

Place the cauliflower in a zip-top plastic bag, fill with bottled dressing and let marinate overnight.

Place cauliflower on a plate. Mash the avocado with enough of the marinade to make a spreading consistency. Taste and correct seasoning with salt and pepper. Spread avocado with a knife over the cauliflower. Makes 8 servings.

Break or cut cauliflower into florets to serve.

MARLENE SOROSKY'S ASPARAGUS WITH LEMON MATZAH SAUCE

4 lb. asparagus
¼ lb. butter or margarine
2 tbsp. plus 2 tsp. lemon juice
2 cloves garlic, peeled and crushed
4 tbsp. matzah meal (see note)
salt and pepper, to taste

Wash, trim and peel asparagus. (Pencil-thin spears do not need to be trimmed.)

Fill a large saute pan or skillet with water. Bring to a boil and add the asparagus. Simmer uncovered until asparagus are tender but firm. Timing will depend on the size and age of the asparagus and individual preference. Remove spears with tongs to a towel-lined tray. (If you cook the asparagus ahead, the spears should be refreshed in ice water before you place them on the towel-lined tray. Then place them in a microwave dish and reheat.)

To make sauce, melt the margarine or butter in a small saucepan. Stir in the lemon juice, garlic and matzah meal. Simmer gently or sauce will separate. Remove from heat. When ready to serve, reheat sauce and pour over hot asparagus. Makes 10 to 12 servings.

Note: Bread crumbs can be substituted for matzah meal at other times of year.

BUTTERNUT SQUASH STUFFED WITH TZIMMES

5 butternut squash (divided use)
4 large sweet potatoes
4 medium apples
7 to 8 oz. pitted prunes (about 24)
½ cup sweet red Passover wine or orange juice
½ cup water
about ½ cup white or brown sugar, or to taste
1½ tsp. ground cinnamon
½ tsp. ground ginger

To prepare squash shells, cut four of the squash in half lengthwise. Place face-down in a baking pan and pour ½ in. of water into the pan. Cover with foil and bake at 350 until squash is fork-tender yet firm enough to hold its shape. Time will vary from 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the size of the squash.

While squash is baking, grease a 9x13-in. baking dish. Peel the sweet potatoes and cut them into ¼-in. cubes. Do the same with the remaining butternut squash, discarding all seeds and fibres. Cut the apples into quarters and remove the seeds. Peel apples if desired, then coarsely chop them.

Put the sweet potatoes, squash and apples into a large bowl with the prunes. In a small bowl or glass measuring cup, combine the remaining ingredients. Pour the mixture over the fruit and vegetables and mix everything very well so all is coated with the liquid.

Turn the mixture into the prepared baking dish. Cover tightly with foil and bake at 375 for about 1 hour, or until the sweet potatoes and squash are tender. Stir the tzimmes before serving to evenly distribute the sauce and slightly mash the apples. Taste and add more sugar if needed.

Spoon some of the tzimmes into each squash shell. Serve any remaining tzimmes in a bowl. Makes 8 servings.

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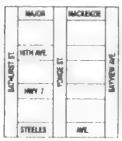

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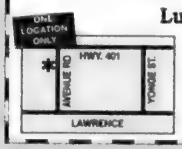

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Israel deepens fight to thwart Hamas

By DAN BARON
JTA

JERUSALEM — Even before he formed Israel's new governing coalition, Prime Minister-elect Ehud Olmert was fighting a two-fisted campaign against Palestinian terrorism – military and political.

As representatives of Olmert's Kadima party opened formal talks with potential partners Sunday, Olmert convened top officials to decide on ways of increasing the international isolation of the new Palestinian Authority (PA) government under Hamas.

Israel cut ties with the PA after Hamas won the January elections in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, Israeli officials announced the country would shun foreign dignitaries who maintained ties with the radical Islamic group – a rebuff to Russia and China, countries that have already weakened U.S.-led isolation efforts by courting senior Hamas officials.

"We need to press the policy already in place and get the world to close ranks and understand that a terrorist government, even if it is democratically elected, is no interlocutor," Olmert confidant Ze'ev Boim told Israel Army Radio.

But Israel left the door open to potential diplomacy with PA President Mahmoud Abbas by not including him in the blacklist.

With international mediators complaining of an economic crisis in Gaza, Olmert also authorized the siphoning off of funds from withheld PA tax levies, in order to pay Israeli electricity and water companies to keep supplying the coastal strip.

On the ground in Gaza, matters were far from conciliatory. After months of mounting cross-border rocket barrages, Israel stepped up its military response over the weekend.

At least 17 Palestinians, most of them combatants, were killed by shelling from the air, sea and land.

The offensive prompted Islamic Jihad, the most violent Palestinian terrorist group since Hamas turned its attention to politics, to announce it was suspending rocket launches for a week. But the decision was reversed within hours.

With Olmert proposing to evacuate swaths of the West Bank as a follow-up to last year's Gaza Strip withdrawal, Israel believes it cannot afford to allow any spread of Palestinian terrorist tactics.

In what security sources called a blow to Palestinian capabilities in the West Bank, troops killed a top fugitive who was said to have set up a base in Bethlehem in a bid to import rocket-making techniques.

Olmert has emphasized that his "convergence plan" would bolster Israel's hold on major West Bank settlement blocs while evacuating more isolated and hard-to-defend enclaves.

"The idea is that most of the settlements that would have to be removed [will be] converged into the blocs of settlements that will remain under Israeli control," the prime minister-elect told *Newsweek* in his first interview with a foreign publication since winning last month's elections.

"The blocs of settlements, which include Ma'aleh Adumim, the Etzion bloc and Ariel, will be augmented by more settlements," Olmert added. "The rest of the territories will not have any Israeli presence and will allow territorial contiguity for a future Palestinian state."

Olmert said he would set Israel's border more or less along the route of the West Bank security fence, and seek U.S. endorsement for the move.

Ehud Olmert

"The time has come for a change, and I am absolutely determined to accomplish it. It's been discussed and debated and argued in Israel for decades. I think that there is an opportunity now which never existed before. This is a combination of the position of the public opinion of Israel, my commitment and the understanding and hopefully future support of President George W. Bush," Olmert told the magazine.

But with Kadima holding only 29 seats in the Knesset, Olmert needs a broad coalition.

The Labor party, which was the first to enter government-building talks with Kadima, looks likely to come aboard.

So does the Sephardi religious party Shas, which has tentatively backed territorial concessions to the Palestinians in the past.

Another party viewed as a coalition shoo-in is the Pensioners party, which focuses on the rights of senior citizens. Its leader, former spymaster Rafi Eitan, has voiced support for Kadima's diplomatic efforts.

The only wild card is the hawkish, immigrant-rights Yisrael Beiteinu under Avigdor Lieberman, who garnered a strong Knesset showing on the promise of rejecting any further unilateral withdrawals in the face of Palestinian violence.

But since the elections, Lieberman has assumed a more accommodating stance, allowing it to be known that Kadima's platform could be acceptable to Yisrael Beiteinu.

"We want permanent borders that are recognized by the international community. If this is within Olmert's platform, we will support it. If not, we won't be a partner," he told Israel's Channel 2 television Saturday.

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Applications due by May 5, 2006. Scholarships will be awarded in June

Stopping Qassams may mean Gaza invasion

By YAAKOV KATZ
Jerusalem Post

Analysis

"This is a war," a high-ranking member of the Israel Defence Forces General Staff said Sunday. Not just a war against the Qassam, he explained, but a full-fledged war the State of Israel is waging against Palestinian terrorism.

But while the IDF has talked tough for months, issuing declarations every so often that it will "crack down" on Qassam launch cells, only over the weekend did the army really begin to put its fire where its mouth was. The results were evident – 15 Palestinians dead and dozens of others wounded.

The army, like any business enterprise, operates on the principles of cost-benefit analysis. In the current case, the equation is quite clear: the Qassam instills fear in the Negev, but it causes minimal damage, and so far not a single Israeli has been killed by the primitive rocket in a direct hit since disengagement some nine months ago.

On the other hand, senior officers say matter-of-factly, the IDF would definitely pay a heavy price with soldiers' lives were it to conduct a ground operation in Gaza.

With that formula in mind, IDF chief of staff Lt.-Gen. Dan Halutz is not rushing to enter Gaza and will continue doing everything possible from the air, sea and ground (outside Gaza) before he gives the invasion orders.

But other IDF officers say that "Southern Arrow" – the name of the IDF operation against the Qassams – is taking a natural course that will inevitably lead to a massive ground operation inside Gaza.

"We have no problem entering Gaza tomorrow," one high-ranking officer said. "It's all a matter of when we feel that we have fully utilized this current stage in the operation and we need to escalate our action to continue creating deterrence for the other side."

So while the army says it's satisfied overall with the IAF air strikes in Gaza over the weekend, officers predict the current intensification will last for a few weeks, after which another escalation or "step up" will be required – eventually culminating with troops on the ground in Jabalya and Khan Yunis.

That is exactly how the IDF's anti-Qassam campaign began. At first, the army set up artillery cannons that fired hundreds of shells a day at empty fields in northern Gaza. The next stage brought back targeted killings of Palestinians involved in the manufacture, deployment and launching of the rockets. The third stage, which began over the weekend, was the bombing of terror training camps in Gaza and the integration of navy warships in the daily barrages.

The army also didn't take seriously Islamic Jihad's reported offer of a cease-fire on Sunday in exchange for a halt to the IDF operation. Islamic Jihad, officials explained, is not a movement that Israel is open to negotiating with. The people who are really responsible for the Qassam fire, they said, are Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas and his new Hamas-led government.

But the Qassams might turn out to be the least of the IDF's problems in Gaza. While only one Katyusha rocket has been fired at Israel so far (on election day), military intelligence believes the Palestinians have at least 100 more.

In addition, the army suspects Palestinians may have also gotten their hands on anti-aircraft missiles and other new weaponry. Iranian and Syrian terror and bomb experts, officers say, have also entered Gaza through the Rafah crossing with Egypt and are setting up new terror cells with the goal of duplicating them in the West Bank.

So while the army for now might be comfortable watching the Qassams take flight from outside Gaza, Halutz may soon need to order troops into the territory to curb the terror flow and stop the rocket fire once and for all.

Scandal threatens top rabbi

By DAN BARON
JTA

JERUSALEM — With scandal threatening the tenure of one of the top rabbis, some Israelis are asking whether Israel's Chief Rabbinate is needed.

In a move unprecedented in the Jewish state, Attorney General Menachem Mazuz issued a public call last week for the Ashkenazi chief rabbi, Yona Metzger, to resign.

Mazuz, an anti-corruption crusader, cited suggestions that Rabbi Metzger illicitly accepted discounted rates for himself and his family at a luxury Jerusalem hotel during High Holy Days in 2003 and 2004. He is also accused of staying at hotels at the taxpayers' expense despite having been provided with an apartment by the state.

"It would be appropriate if Rabbi Metzger took personal responsibility and decided on his own to step down," the Justice Ministry said in a six-page statement.

Rabbi Metzger, 52, denied wrongdoing and vowed to petition the High Court of Justice against Mazuz.

"The attorney general has sentenced me without giving me a chance to defend myself," Channel 2 television quoted Rabbi Metzger as saying.

A police probe against Rabbi Metzger did not come up with enough evidence for formal charges.

There is already plenty of irritation with the Chief Rabbinate, a government-backed institution that many believe has little relevance.

Secular Jews in Israel turn to local rabbinates for Orthodox services, while more religious Jews generally have their own community sages to turn to.

After the secular Shinui Party had the Religious Affairs Ministry dismantled under Israel's previous government, many now wonder if the Chief Rabbinate should be next.

"The rabbinate is entirely superfluous," said Nitzan Chen, religion reporter for Channel 1 television. "The post has no impact in terms of Jewish law or spiritual authority."

Rabbi Metzger's Sephardi counterpart, Rabbi Shlomo Amar, has already lost much of the public's trust. His son was jailed in January for kidnapping and assaulting his sister's suitor. Rabbi Amar himself was not charged in the case, but the apparent involvement of his wife, and the fact that the attack took place in the rabbi's home, are widely remembered.

Mazuz has said that if Rabbi Metzger does not resign of his own accord, the Justice Ministry will act to have him removed.

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Israel & the Jewish World

Olmert to form government

Ehud Olmert has been asked to form Israel's next government. The interim prime minister, whose centrist Kadima Party won last month's general election, was formally asked last week by President Moshe Katsav to construct a coalition. That cleared the way for Olmert to negotiate with other parties. "I hope to form a government with the broadest possible support as quickly as possible," Olmert told reporters. By law, he has six weeks to secure a coalition, but a deal could be in place within days.

Sharon undergoes surgery

Ariel Sharon underwent surgery to reattach a piece of his skull that had been removed in previous surgeries. Jerusalem's Hadassah Hospital in Ein Kerem reported the comatose Israeli prime minister was in stable condition. He remains in a coma from his Jan. 4 stroke. The skull fragment had been removed following Sharon's stroke due to the swelling resulting from the stroke. The decision to operate resulted from a lack of signs of improvement on any front. "Given the fact that there hasn't been an improvement in quite a long time," a hospital official said, the surgery was "something that might have [led] to a more favourable condition." No immediate improvement in Sharon's condition was reported.

Pope may visit Israel

Pope Benedict XVI may visit Israel early next year, former Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres said. The longtime Israeli politician made the comments last week after meeting with the Pope at the Vatican. Peres was repeating an invitation issued by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon last year.

'Mini-tornado' hits Israel

A "mini-tornado" tore through northern Israel on April 4. The twister, a phenomenon almost unheard of in the Mideast, caused major damage in several Galilee villages. Up to 200 Israelis were lightly hurt by debris.

Turkish water deal frozen

Israel froze plans to import Turkish water. Israeli officials said the 2004 deal with Ankara, under which 1.75 million cubic feet of water was to have been shipped annually, was shelved due to high fuel costs. As an alternative, a water pipeline may be laid from Turkey to Israel. Pressure for a deal has been alleviated as a drought Israel experienced in the early 2000s is largely over.

Israeli bank cuts ties

Israel's largest bank severed ties with Palestinian banks. Bank Hapoalim, the main Israeli bank dealing with the Palestinian Authority, shut down all ties, citing international laws criminalizing dealings with terrorists. The Bank Hapoalim move could herald other private sector cutoffs for the Palestinians. Officials at the Arab Bank in Jordan, which handles some PA business, are considering their next move.

Drug makers target Israel

Some U.S. drug companies want Israel to be kept out of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, which made the request in writing to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, says Israel doesn't give adequate intellectual property protection to U.S. pharmaceutical firms operating there. Joining the OECD is a key Israeli foreign policy goal. Last November, the U.S. Congress passed a nonbinding resolution backing Israeli membership in the OECD.

Pesach food for the needy

Passover food has been distributed to needy Jews in Israel. The Claims Conference, together with the Humanitarian Fund of the International Commission on Holocaust Era Insurance Claims, began distributing Passover food packages to more than 12,000 needy Nazi victims in Israel. The distribution was co-ordinated by the Ministry of Welfare and Employment. The basic package includes matzah, wine, fruits and vegetables, oil, chicken and fish. More than $540,000 (US) was allocated by the Claims Conference and ICHEIC for the food.

JTA and Jerusalem Post

WE MUST STOP THE HUGE LOSS OF JEWS!

In the Diaspora **- we lose more than 200 Jews per day to inter-marriage and assimilation.**
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In 2004, the 'Jewish People Policy Planning Institute' in Jerusalem, comprised of the world's leading Jewish demographers, released their latest findings in a 672 page report called 'Between Thriving and Decline'. It was the most comprehensive study ever undertaken of all world Jewry. They conclude that in the absence of new and innovative concepts, "the future of the Jewish people is in doubt". Updated 2005 edition figures show a further 17% increase of inter-marriage and assimilation.

All Currently existing Jewish programs (education, sponsored trips to Israel, building projects etc.) are having minimal effect to change this massive decline.

This continual loss of Jews will not stop unless...."New concepts are initiated"

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- The Jewish Tribune – Featured story
- Professor Leo Davids-Professor of Sociology (Emeritus) – York University
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The UJA Federation also acknowledges the need of this project, but heavy commitments to their present mandates, limits their assistance to this program.

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Jewish Singles planning is the most ignored area in all Jewish communities.

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Tehran Jews insist there's Jewish future in Iran

By LEV KRICHEVSKY
JTA

MOSCOW — Russian Jewish organizers of a trip earlier this month for 15 Iranian Jewish women in Russia said they hope it will lead to links between the two communities.

"We have not had any contacts with Iranian Jews," said Adolph Shayevich, one of Russia's two chief rabbis. "We have heard various rumours lately that there is no Jewish community in Iran, that things are bad for Jews there. We are happy to see it for ourselves that this isn't the whole truth."

The group is a 15-member women's amateur folk dance group that came to Moscow this month to take part in the Light a Candle Jewish children's arts festival.

The trip was a rare group visit abroad by Iranian Jews, who live in an Islamic country virulently opposed to the State of Israel – and they visited Russia, where Jews lived under tight restrictions until the fall of Communism.

The Iranians, aged 14 to 30, came to Russia thanks to diplomatic efforts by Arkady Gaidamak, a Russian Jewish leader and businessman, and with a special permit from Iranian authorities.

Russia is a major supplier of nuclear technology to Iran, which is under strong international pressure to halt its alleged nuclear weapons program.

In addition to general tourist sites, the delegation visited a synagogue and a Jewish day school in Moscow, as well as the Jewish community of Yaroslavl.

The women were expected to be joined by Harun Yeshayaie, the chairman of the Iranian Jewish community, but he had to cancel his visit at the last minute because of health reasons, according to members of the delegation.

All the members of the group live in the capital of Tehran, which is home to 15,000 Jews, the majority of the estimated 25,000 Jews who still live in the Islamic Republic.

This is only a fraction of the 100,000-strong community that lived in Iran before the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

But the Jewish women who visited Russia said the community has a future in Iran, despite the militant anti-Zionism of Tehran's current political regime.

"After the revolution, problems began for the community," said Elham Abaei, 30, the leader of the group that came to Russia.

Abaei, who runs the Iranian Jewish community's website, www.iranjewish.com, said the community has adjusted to the political and social climate.

"We can now run cultural and religious, but not political, activities," she said, referring to anything related to Israel.

Opposition to the Jewish state has been a cornerstone of the Islamic revolution. In 1999, 13 Jews were accused of spying for Israel. Ten eventually served jail terms, with the last being released in 2002.

Most recently, Iran's president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, caused a wave of international condemnation when he suggested Israel should be wiped off the map and called the Holocaust a myth.

The statement about the Holocaust reportedly triggered a rare example of discontent from Iran's Jewish leadership. Yeshayaie, the community's chairman, wrote a letter to Ahmadinejad that said the remarks caused fear in the country's Jewish community.

But on the issue of Israel, these Iranian Jews would not speak out against Tehran's official policy.

"You can be Jewish and not associate yourself with Israel," said Sarah Hay, a 21-year-old computer engineering student from Tehran.

Even far away from Iran, members of the group tried to distance themselves from any reference to Israel when visiting Russian Jewish institutions.

In Yaroslavl, a city in central Russia, the local community baked two cakes for the Iranians. But group members were visibly shocked when they saw the cakes were glazed with the design of the Israeli flag. Their hosts only served them cake without the flag design.

But a member of the delegation who asked not to be identified due to fear of repression back home said she had been to the Jewish state, visiting her family there. She added that she was not unique.

Some Jews use their foreign travels to meet with their Israeli relatives in a third country, usually Turkey or western Europe.

The members of the group said they were participants in the cultural activities of the Tehran Jewish community.

The communal activities range from day schools – half of Tehran's Jewish children are said to attend Jewish day schools – to synagogues, youth clubs and summer camps, and even a Jewish hospital in Tehran.

One of the members of the group described her community as having "everything a Jewish community should have," except for an Israeli connection.

Iranian Jews are an officially recognized minority and are generally free from discrimination – although all women in Iran, regardless of their faith, must cover their faces in public.

Privately, some women said it's impossible for Jews to enter some sectors of the government, but they said they don't want to leave Iran.

"We are Iranians first. We share our country's history," Hay said.

Abaei said her parents are too old to leave, and generally those who stay in Iran after all these years feel comfortable there. "There are no ghettos. You can live your life," she added.

She said some Jews "were slightly offended" by the Iranian president's remarks about the Holocaust.

But years of state-run propaganda show themselves in the Jewish community members. Abaei said some Jews may disagree that the Holocaust was a myth, yet they are inclined to think the number of Jewish Nazi victims may be "an exaggeration."

The main problem the community has, she said, was lack of rabbis and teachers of Judaism. There are no yeshivot in Iran, and only one ordained rabbi is serving a Tehran community that has 16 active synagogues.

A Moscow Jewish leader said the Russian community should take advantage of Moscow's good relations with Tehran to benefit Iran's Jews.

"Maybe we can invite a group of Iranian Jewish boys to study in a Moscow yeshiva," said Pinchas Goldschmidt, Moscow's chief rabbi.

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The following is a summary of an Announcement for certain persons who made an application to the Claims Conference's Program for Former Slave and Forced Laborers. Additional information can be found at www.claimscon.org

The last day that payments from the German Foundation, "Remembrance, Responsibility, and the Future," may be made to eligible Holocaust survivors and heirs of survivors, **according to the German Foundation law**, is September 30, 2006.

No new applications for payments from the German Foundation can be made. Only claims filed before the deadline that remain open are being processed.

You must contact the Claims Conference if you are a Holocaust survivor, or heir of a survivor, who submitted a timely application to the Program for Former Slave and Forced Laborers **and**:

- have been approved for payment, but have not received the full payment, OR
- have not received notification about the status of the claim, OR
- have received an Heir Application Packet and have not yet returned the required forms.

If a person eligible for payment dies, heirs of the deceased person must notify the Claims Conference within six months of the death of the eligible person or by September 30, 2006, whichever is sooner, in order to receive payment

All time limits related to appeals and to heirs that have not expired as of September 30, 2006, terminate on that date

All communications to the Claims Conference described above (other than as regards appeals or heir deadline notification) must be postmarked by May 15, 2006 and must arrive at the Claims Conference no later than June 1, 2006

These deadlines also apply to the German Foundation Fund for Medical Experiments and Other Personal Injuries

The US Court supervising the Swiss Banks Settlement Slave Labor Class I has adopted the administrative deadlines of the German Foundation. Please note: In any case where the result of a timely appeal for a payment was negative but documentary proof of eligibility was located by the applicant subsequent to the appeal decision, it may become possible to review the earlier decision. Applicants must contact the Claims Conference Appeals Office in communication postmarked by May 15, 2006 and that communication must arrive at the Claims Conference Appeals Office no later than June 1, 2006. Please keep written proof of the date of mailing, fax or email communication

NO NEW APPLICATIONS CAN BE MADE.

For more information:
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Claims Conference
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SOPHIA LOREN IN TEL AVIV

The Italian film superstar Sophia Loren arrived in Israel Sunday to participate in the birthday celebrations of her longtime friend maestro Zubin Mehta. Mehta, who is the musical director of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, will be 70 on April 29. Loren, 71, was greeted with much enthusiasm as she entered the foyer of her Tel Aviv hotel. She is no stranger to Israel. Apart from having made a number of films there, she has many friends in the country.

[Israel photo]

Assessing motives of Muslim, Jewish and Christian terrorists

Terror in the Name of God **by Jessica Stern, HarperCollins.**

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Be they Muslims, Christians or Jews, terrorists invariably kill, maim and wreak havoc out of a deep sense of religious conviction.

This phenomenon interests Jessica Stern, a lecturer at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government. In her illuminating book, *Terror in the Name of God*, now available in a new paperback edition published by HarperCollins, she analyzes the motives of individuals who have plotted murder and mayhem to achieve their objectives.

Before introducing a reader to her cast of variegated characters, whom she interviewed in field trips, Stern wisely defines her terms.

Religious terrorists tend to feel pain, loss and impatience, and are trying to find a clear purpose in what is manifestly a confusing world. They see problems in black and white.

Particularly in the case of Muslims, they are usually recruited from extremist religious seminaries. Their mentors and/or teachers hold out the promise of heavenly rewards.

Some terrorists become involved for adventure or friendship. Still others consider guns and violence appealing. But for all of them, martyrdom – the supreme act of heroism and worship – provides the ultimate escape from life's dilemmas and alienation, humiliation, anger and confusion.

The Palestinians, Stern observes, are engulfed in "an epidemic of despair." Fleshing out her thesis, she visits Hamas officials in the Gaza Strip after Hamas functionaries in Jordan refuse to meet her because she is Jewish.

Gaza is revolting. "The sidewalks are uneven and covered with garbage," she writes. "Mingled smells of sewage, sweat, spices and rotting meat – assault us as we walk."

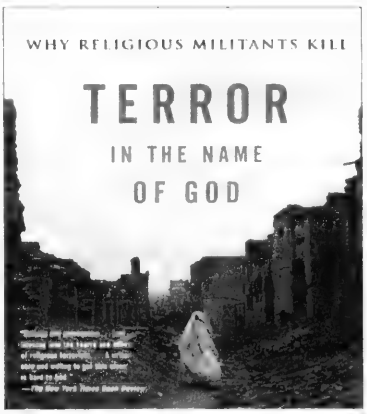
Recognizing that poverty and hopelessness among ordinary Palestinians are factors accounting for its popularity, Hamas enhances its appeal by providing essential social and medical services and harping on the corruption rife in the Palestinian Authority.

(No wonder Hamas defeated Fatah in recent parliamentary elections and went on to form a government in Gaza and the West Bank).

Stern discovers that social pressure induces young Palestinians to become terrorists. She learns that the typical suicide bomber is mentally immature, cannot find a job, feels lost, seeks refuge in God and attends mosque.

Eerily enough, death notices for suicide bombers often take the form of wedding announcements. Life and death are thus conflated.

Expecting to be soothed and comforted by black-eyed virgins once they reach heaven, some of the bombers wrap protective toilet paper around their genitals prior to undertaking a mission.



JESSICA STERN

Stern, in her analysis of Jewish extremists, focuses on those who have attempted to bomb Muslim holy sites. Their radicalism stems from a belief that the land Israel captured in the Six Day War cannot be relinquished under any circumstances.

As Stern puts it: "The biblical promise of Eretz Israel... to God's chosen people makes the concept of land a key component of religious doctrine to fundamentalist Jews, who believe that possession of the land... is part and parcel of the Jews' covenant with God."

One of her interlocutors, Yoel Lerner, says, "It begins with the assumption that nobody – from the individual Jew up to the most powerful government you could imagine – has the moral right to give up any significant territory making up part of the Land of Israel."

Justifying former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin's assassination by Bar-Ilan University student Yigal Amir, Lerner claims that his death "was coming" and "had to come."

Carmi Gillon, the head of the Shin Bet, Israel's internal security service, under Rabin, argues that the radical right poses a grave threat to Israel's national security. Much like Hamas, he claims, Jewish extremists use a selective reading of history as a powerful tool for mobilizing members.

In her discussion of Christian fundamentalists, Stern focuses on Kerry Noble, a Protestant pastor and lapsed neo-Nazi who regrets his involvement in a dangerous American cult known as the Covenant, the Sword and the Arm of the Lord (CSA).

Downright anti-Semitic, CSA believes that humanists, Communists, socialists and Zionists have taken over the U.S. government and created a monster it refers to as ZOG ("Zionist-occupied government").

White supremacists of this ilk applaud Al Qaeda's goals and actions, and may eventually link up with Islamic radicals, she warns.

Writing of jihadists in Pakistan who fight in Kashmir, Stern says that religious fervour is but only one of the reasons why their ranks are filled by new recruits.

Financial inducements, in the form of cash bonuses for recruiters and trainers, are of the utmost importance in organizations like Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and Hizb-ul-Mujahideen. Stern cites the case of a foreign-languages teacher who was paid twice as much by one of these groups as compared to his own school.

Status in the community plays a role, too. "One becomes important due to his work," a trainer told Stern. "Successful operations make a militant famous and glamorous among his fellow men."

Her visit to a madrassah, or religious seminary, sheds further light.

"I am allowed to wander around and speak with the students," she writes. "The students sit on the floor, their Korans and their elbows resting on long, narrow tables. Twenty students at each table sway as they recite the words of the Holy Korans."

Speaking to a 12-year-old boy whose secular education ended in the fifth grade, she asks what he wants to do when he grows up. "He tells me he wants to be a *mujaheed*, to kill the non-Muslims who are oppressing Muslims."

By Stern's reckoning, 70,000 to 110,000 Muslims had graduated from Osama bin Laden's training camps in Afghanistan by Sept. 11, 2001. She identifies other Al Qaeda camps as having been in Yemen, Somalia, Indonesia and Chechnya. Recruits are steeped not only in the military arts, but in Islamic doctrine.

The terrorist groups under Stern's purview are convinced that they are creating a more perfect world – purifying the universe of injustice and cruelty.

Anti-Americanism has gained ground in their circles due to U.S. support for Israel and the presence of repressive regimes in the Middle East, she notes.

Stern believes that terrorism should be countered not just with guns, but by psychological warfare. "In the end, however, what counts is what we fight for, not what we oppose. We need to avoid giving into spiritual dread, and to hold fast to the best of our principles, by emphasizing tolerance, empathy and courage."

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TRAVEL TALK

BY BILL GLADSTONE

PETRA, LOST CITY OF STONE, HIGHLIGHTED IN OTTAWA-AREA EXHIBIT

The Swiss explorer John Lewis Burckhardt made a rather momentous discovery while travelling in the Transjordan region in 1812. Coming within range of the spot where the biblical Aaron was allegedly buried on Mount Hor, and having heard tales of a lost city in the vicinity, he told the local Bedouin he wanted to sacrifice a lamb and this was his motive for entering the area. The ruse allowed him to become the first European to visit Petra, the legendary lost city of stone.

Because of the vast hoards of hidden treasure it was wrongly supposed to contain, Petra was long off-limits to outsiders. Burckhardt was threatened with a firearm; Henry Layard, discoverer of Nineveh, was robbed by nearby villagers in 1840. As orientalist Charles M. Doughty observed in 1888, travellers "commonly lament the robber violence" that was prevalent in the region.

Petra was still considered off the beaten path when I rode on horseback through its famous rocky canyon in 1988. A decade later, after a fresh peace had been struck with Israel, I returned to find that the Jordanians had pumped millions of dollars into the tourist infrastructure and pressed a fleet of motorized carts into operation.

Petra's sinuous canyon, known as the Siq, winds for several kilometres before opening onto El Khazhan Faroun, the Treasury of the Pharoahs, a spectacular two-story façade carved into the rock. The ancient Nabateans carved thousands of tombs, temples and dwellings within this stronghold, which the Romans nonetheless conquered in 106 CE, making it the hub of their province of Arabia Petrae.

A new exhibition at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Hull, Quebec, (across the river from Ottawa), recalls this fascinating archeological wonder carved into the red sandstore cliffs of the Jordanian desert. "Petra: Lost City of Stone," which opened last week, highlights the city and its ancient inhabitants through display of 170 artifacts such as sculptures and reliefs, ceramics and metalwork.

The travelling exhibition is on view until Jan. 2, 2007. Admission is $15. For details, phone 819-776-7000 or visit the website www.civilization.ca

* * *

An exhibition that opened last week at Cleveland's Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage marks the first time various biblical-era artifacts from Israel have been shown in North America. Included is the Temple Scroll, one of the most important Dead Sea Scrolls.

Curated by the Israel Museum, "Cradle of Christianity: Treasures from the Holy Land" also includes the burial ossuary of Caiaphas the High Priest, an inscription bearing the name of Pontius Pilate, evidence of an actual crucifixion, a graffito of a menorah, and a stone inscription from the Temple Mount, reading: "To the place of trumpeting."

The exhibition explores aspects of early Jewish life and the concurrent birth of Christianity in the final days of the Second Temple era and from the 4th to 7th centuries CE. It remains on view until Oct. 22 and subsequently travels to two more museums, as yet unnamed. 216-593-0575, www.MaltzJewishMuseum.org

* * *

Toronto travel professional Harriet Morton is offering a Jewish tour of China accompanied by Canadian artist Ian Leventhal. "China – A Journey through Jewish Eyes – in the Year of the Dog" takes in Jewish sites in Beijing, Harbin, Kaifeng and Shanghai.

The itinerary includes visits to Shanghai's Ohel Moshe synagogue and the famous Tong Ji University to view an exhibition of artifacts and photographs from the World War II era. The terra cotta warriors of Xian, the Great Wall, the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square and the Three Gorges valley of the Yangtze River are also on the tour.

Travel dates are Oct. 9 to Nov. 2. For details, please call Morton at 416-928-3113, ext. 273 or e-mail her at hmorton@ newwavetravel.net

* * *

The Jewish National Fund and the Israel Baseball League are jointly hosting a week-long Israel Baseball Fantasy Tour in which participants may play baseball in Israel, including games against the Israeli National Baseball Team. The tour runs from July 2 to 9.

The tour coincides with the two-week Israel Baseball Festival, which includes a baseball clinic for kids and the First Annual Israel Baseball Expo in Jerusalem. For details, please contact Shirley Shchory at 877-JNF-Tour, ext. 366, or visit www.israelbaseballleague. com.

* * *

An exhibit of contemporary Israeli photography and video opened last week at San Francisco's Contemporary Jewish Museum. "Art of Living: Contemporary Photography and Video from the Israel Museum" is on view until July 30.

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Arts & Travel

Lawyer writes lyrics for a song with hit potential

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

It's not every day you come across a a wills lawyer who writes song lyrics and scripts, and is just as concerned with mending broken families as he is with splitting up their inheritances.

Les Kotzer, a Toronto-area wills and estates lawyer, said that in all his years of practising law, he has witnessed too many families fighting over inheritance and hopes that through the lyrics he has written, and the movie script he hopes to write, families can learn to communicate better with one another.

"I'm seeing a lot of fighting over money – baby boomers fighting after the death of their parents. So my partner [Barry Fish] and I originally wrote a book called *The Family Fight: Planning to Avoid It*."

Kotzer, 50, said he is proud of the book that was featured in the *New York Times*, as well as other North American media outlets, but added that he is passionate about writing song lyrics and scriptwriting.

"The songwriting part of my life really started to take off in the last couple of years. After my mom died, I basically closed my practice down for a little bit and started writing and I wrote for love."

Kotzer, who is regularly invited to speak about families fighting over inheritance on Citytv's *Breakfast Television* and Rogers' *Money Line*, said that during his time off in 2001, he wrote a book of lyrics.

But it wasn't until he met Canadian musician and composer Lewis Manne, who wrote the theme music for television programs such as *Degrassi Junior High*, *W-Five* and *Studio 2* with his partner Wendy Watson, that the idea to put music to his lyrics was born.

"Through bashert, we met, and Lewis fell in love with my lyrics, and what we liked about it was that today, you don't find a lot of songs that touch you. I write about family, about love, with messages in the lyrics," Kotzer said.

Manne wrote the music and sang the first song Kotzer wrote, *Photos in a Drawer*.

Manne wasn't the only Canadian icon who encouraged Kotzer to turn his lyrics into music. Alan Frew, lead singer of Juno-winning, Grammy-nominated 1980s rock band Glass Tiger gave his lyrics "rave reviews."

"Alan Frew came into my office, and having him here, I said, 'Would you mind reading my stuff?'"

"He read my lyric book, and he said, 'You have some really great lyrics here.' Now that he has heard the music, he just loves the song. For me, to have a Canadian icon say that is a dream."

Frew seemed confident that the songs Kotzer has written are going to bring him success in the world of pop music.

"Les has done a wonderful job. He never ceases to amaze me. He is an internationally renowned lawyer and now he's going to be a pop star as well," Frew said.

After *Photos in a Drawer* – a song inspired by and dedicated to his late mother – got airplay on FOXY 88.5 FM in Toronto, Kotzer was stunned by the reaction he got from listeners and by the popularity of the song.

Les Kotzer holds a copy of his single *Photos in a Drawer*. [Sheri Shefa photo]

"I get a tremendous response and it means a lot to me. I wasn't trained as a songwriter. It came naturally to me. To be able to touch people through music, means a lot to me, to my life, in terms of being a lawyer."

Kotzer said that after doing an interview with a San Francisco radio station, after which they played *Photos in a Drawer*, he received hundreds of phone calls.

"One woman said she had pulled over to the side of the road because I had touched her so much with that song. She called me her emotional lawyer and said I had touched an emotion that no one had ever touched before. She said she wanted to call her sibling who she hadn't spoken to for a long time," Kotzer recalled.

Despite the local popularity of the track currently sung by Manne, Kotzer said he has yet to find the person who can take this song to a national audience.

"We haven't found the person yet to who really wants to take this nationally. It's really more local, but we've been told by a number of people that this is a hit waiting to happen with the right person singing it," he said.

His newest track, *These Are Our Heroes*, which can be heard on 88.5 FM, and can be downloaded through his website www.familyfight.com, is about "the people in our lives who we've admired who are not here anymore," Kotzer said.

As if settling familial disputes and writing inspirational music was not time-consuming enough for a busy wills lawyer, Kotzer is also in the midst of writing a script for a movie based on what he sees in his practice.

"I have a script about two people fighting over their mother's assets. I have spoken to people in the industry and they really love my story," he said, adding that he is looking for someone to work with on the project.

Regardless of whether his songs or screenplay propel him into stardom, Kotzer said he will never turn his back on his practice and on helping people rebuild relationships with their families.

"I love law. I am passionate about my practice. I am passionate about wills and estates, but I'm always trying to encourage people to talk to their family before hiring me to talk to their family. I believe in family."

Although Kotzer won't let himself get caught up in the lure of the music business or in Hollywood, he still fantasizes about accepting an award in his mother's honour.

"My mother always said her greatest assets were not in her bank. Her greatest assets were in pictures, in the faces of her children. That is why I did this. To honour my mother," he said.

"One day, I'd love to be able to stand on a stage and say I wrote that song for my mom. That I did it for her."

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Engaging documentary criticizes Gaza pullout

By JOSEPH SERGE
Arts Editor

During last summer's Gaza disengagement, many on the Israeli left surprisingly opposed Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's pullout plan.

Although traditionally supporters of the land-for-peace argument, they felt the way the disengagement was handled violated basic human rights.

This is the premise of confrontational Canadian filmmaker Igal Hecht's latest documentary, *Disengaging Democracy*.

The documentary follows the pullout from Gush Katif, a 30-year-old settlement of 8,000 Israelis in the Gaza Strip, before, during and after the unilateral withdrawal.

Although the pullout was ratified by the Knesset, it was a "dictatorial decision" one of the settlers says. Critics say Sharon's decision was a 180-degree turnaround from his traditional policy and his dismissal of key cabinet ministers was a ploy to stuff the Knesset with supporters of his policy. "It might be kosher, but it stinks," another settler says.

Hecht and his co-producer Talia Klein of Chutzpa Productions – whose previous films include *Not In My Name* and *Y.I.D.* – are fast becoming veterans of the "in-your-face" confrontational documentary style.

An IDF soldier removes a settler and her daughter.

Scenes include one of Israel Defence Forces soldiers chainsawing through the settlement's gate as it falls with a resounding clang, and one of soldiers stopping busloads of protesters on their way to a demonstration. Another scene focuses on a harmless little girl as the narrator recounts how scores of soldiers had been called in to put down a potentially violent protest.

Hecht clearly knows how to make his point.

Although the documentary is strongly anti-Sharon, it rarely criticizes IDF soldiers, who were merely doing their job. Even the settlers accept this as they're being dragged out of their homes.

Hecht, always able to find emotional scenes amid the chaos, shows a female solder playing with a little girl settler. Another poignant scene is of a rabbi being led out of a synagogue in tears as he carries out the Torah scroll.

Sometimes criticized for being unbalanced in his films, Hecht interviews Rabbi Michael Melchior, a Labor MK and cabinet minister in Sharon's government, as the sole defender of the Gaza disengagement in the film.

"A democracy has the right and obligation to defend itself," Rabbi Melchior says. "Overall, [the pullout] was done democratically."

He added that he feels strongly that the opposition "plays strongly into the hands of the haters of Israel," by comparing the withdrawal to the Holocaust.

'It might be kosher but it stinks'

One of the film's arguments is that little thought was put into the aftermath of the pullout. Five months after the disengagement, we see many settlers living in tents and in what one settler calls "a mobile shanty town."

But whether the disengagement was right or wrong, even Hecht should admit that being able to film this documentary with little or no apparent government interference is not a sign of an anti-democratic state.

Like Chutzpa Productions' other films, *Disengaging Democracy* is well worth watching. It's an engaging documentary that sets us up for the possibility of a new battle in Israel's future, one in which the conflict is not between right and left but between religious and secular Jews.

Disengaging Democracy premieres April 18 on the digital i-channel (197 on Rogers, 514 on Bell ExpressVu). Further screenings are planned for the summer and in the fall on the CTS show *Israel Today*.

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

TORONTO'S 'INDIANA JONES' DECODES THE EXODUS IN TV DOCUMENTARY

Toronto filmmaker **Simcha Jacobovici**, in conjunction with Ontario-born film producer **James ("*Titanic*") Cameron**, has produced a slick new two-hour television documentary about the biblical Exodus that has more offbeat theories than *The Da Vinci Code* and more wizardry than anything you've ever seen in *Harry Potter*.

The Exodus Decoded, which is scheduled for viewing on the Discovery Channel on April 16 at 8 p.m., would probably make international headlines if even one of its many sensational claims could be certified as scientific fact.

Emmy award-winning Jacobovici, whose productions have included *Deadly Currents* (1991), *Hollywoodism Jews, Movies & the American Dream* (1997) and *Quest for the Lost Tribes* (1999), enacts his favourite on-screen persona as a filmmaker-detective-archeologist on a mystery quest – a sort of reconstituted Indiana Jones from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.

This image of Hebrew slaves, and this 3,500-year-old artifact supposedly depicting the ark of the covenant with the altar in background, are some of the evidence presented in *The Exodus Decoded*.

Seeking physical traces of the biblical Exodus narrative is a difficult task, of course, mainly because the trail has grown rather cold after some 3½ millennia. But imagine Jacobivici and crew going where so many others have gone before and claiming astonishing discoveries at almost every turn.

He manages to turn up the mummified remains of the hard-hearted Pharoah of the Exodus; a hieroglyphic inscription telling the story from the Egyptian point of view; a signet ring once worn by the biblical Joseph; and for the glittering finale, a 3,500-year-old golden image of the lost ark. It's great theatre, if not great science

"Until now, most experts have contended that there is not a single archeological artifact supporting the story of the Exodus," Jacobovici said. "The truth is, that authenticated archeological artifacts have been gathering dust in the basements of various museums around the world.

"What we were able to do was juxtapose the biblical tradition with the Egyptian dynastic list and geological evidence to come up with a new date for the Exodus and a new Pharoah. Once we established that, the archeological heavens opened up."

The Exodus Decoded also shows us where the true Mount Sinai has been all these years and hypothesizes that the 10 plagues and the parting of the Red Sea were the result of natural calamities following a massive volcanic eruption on the Mediterranean island of Santorini.

The usual talking heads, so common in old-fashioned documentaries, have been banned from this film. Instead the storyline progresses through a multitude of marvellous high-tech computer simulations that seem to offer a three-dimensional representation of cyberspace. "Visually, it's *The Matrix* meets Biblical archaeology," Cameron jokes.

Three years in the making, the 90-minute documentary (two hours including commercials) is very well made, with many outstanding special effects along with its smoke and mirrors. If you have an interest in the subject, it's certainly guaranteed to challenge your assumptions and get you thinking.

Jacobovici, whose company is called Associated Producers, has signed a deal with St. Martin's Press in the United States and Key Porter in Canada to present his "groundbreaking discoveries" as a book.

* * *

Arts in Brief

• American comedian **Jackie Mason** presents his *Freshly Squeezed* routine here next month. $39.50 to $79.50. Roy Thomson Hall, Saturday, May 6, 8 p.m. 416-872-4255

• The Scarborough Choral Society, now in its 54th year, presents *Fiddler On The Roof* with a 12-piece orchestra and a 42-person cast that includes **Bryan Thomas** as Tevye. $25 to $18. Armenian Youth Centre Theatre, Victoria Park Avenue and the 401. April 21, 22, 28 and 29 at 8 p.m. and April 22, 23, 29 and 30 at 2 p.m. 416-293-3981

• The 14th annual Toronto Jewish Film Festival is scheduled to screen more than 75 feature films, documentaries and shorts from more than 15 countries. At the Bloor Cinema and the Al Green Theatre (Nadal JCC), May 6 to 14. 416-324-9121

• *Written in Stone*, an exploration of the design conventions and decoration on Jewish cemetery monuments, features the photography, painting and sculpture of **Susan L. Brown**. It's at the Market Gallery, South St. Lawrence Market, through May 14.

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Depression more common than you think, panel told

Once considered 'a terrible, dirty, vicious secret'

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

By 2020, depression will be the No. 2 cause of disability worldwide, says a professor of psychiatry at University of Toronto.

It is far more common than most people realize, Dr. David Goldbloom, who is also a senior medical adviser at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), told a recent panel discussion sponsored by Beth Tikvah Sisterhood.

"The reality is that no one can stand up and say 'It's not in my family,'" Goldbloom said.

Also on the panel was Karen Liberman, executive director of the Mood Disorders Association of Ontario, who spoke about her struggle and eventual recovery from depression.

Goldbloom said that a survey of 30,000 Canadians showed that in the 12 previous months, about five per cent were diagnosed with depression. "One in five women and one in 10 men will be diagnosed in their lifetime.

"[Those in the biggest risk group] are between 15 and 24, and this age also has the biggest suicide risk."

Included among a great number of public figures who have suffered from depression, he said, are Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill.

A cognitive disorder as much as a mood-related one, depression can attack and erode skills and capacities.

"The personal costs are beyond measure," Goldbloom said.

"Depression causes a profound loss of pleasure. Sleeping [suffers], energy is sapped, sexual drive plummets, the ability to concentrate goes, and making decisions becomes impossible."

People who are depressed carry a double burden, he said.

"As well as the symptoms, they carry the stigma of being depressed."

And those who appear well off carry a triple burden, he said. "People want to know how they can be depressed when their life is going so well."

Liberman said she was eight years old when her mother began getting depressed. "There was no cataclysmic event, but slowly something started happening to her. She just started fading away."

Her mother attempted suicide three times, Liberman said, and she found her on two of those occasions.

What she remembers clearly about those years, she said, was that no one talked about what was happening. "I learned that it was a terrible, dirty, vicious secret."

Her mother was eventually diagnosed with manic depression and prescribed lithium, Liberman said. "She is now 90 and lives on her own."

Her own "descent into madness," as she called it, began in the mid-1980s, when she was married with two children.

"In the 10-year acute stage of my illness, I was hospitalized 17 times, tried 27 different medications and had electroconvulsive therapy 24 times," she said.

"Most people think depression is sadness, but what I felt was numb. I also [felt] the same shame I internalized as a child."

At one point, after her husband heard her talking to friends, he "told me not to air our dirty laundry. A change in the neurochemistry of my brain had rendered me dirty laundry. Would diabetes render me dirty laundry?" she asked rhetorically.

"That [incident] began my journey from patient to consumer to advocate to loudmouth." (She is now divorced.)

The postscript to her illness, she said, was that while at Sunnybrook Hospital "on suicide watch" in August 1997, a doctor asked her to be part of a clinical trial.

"He gave me a pill, and when I woke up the next morning I saw some colour. I knew [the illness] was over. I walked out of the hospital the next day, and every day since has been a blessing."

Goldbloom said that having a family history of depression does put people at risk, "but biology is not destiny. Adverse environments do have an affect, but people are resilient."

There are also multiple types of treatment for depression, he said. "Even though the cause remains elusive, there is treatment."

Asked about what someone can do if a family member is depressed, Liberman replied: "Be there. If this is a serious depression, your loved one is in a battle for their life. Be there and help them fight."

Symposium will address end-of-life dilemmas

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Despite his experience dealing with end-of-life issues professionally, cardiologist Dr. David Borts has no ready answers when it comes to issues such as withdrawing life support and what to say to patients faced with end-of-life decisions.

Nor is he expecting participants in an April 23 End-of-Life Decision symposium to leave with answers, although he is hopeful there will be a "lively debate."

As adult education chair at Beth Tzedec Congregation, he is heading up a steering committee organizing the Sunday afternoon event being held at the synagogue.

The six-hour symposium, which is geared for health-care professionals but open to all, features five speakers including Rabbi Reuven Bulka of Ottawa's Congregation Machzikei Hadas. Rabbi Bulka, a longtime proponent of organ donation, is affiliated with Trillium Gift of Life, Ontario's organ and tissue donation agency.

Joining him is Rabbi David Feldman, author and dean of the Jewish Institute of Bioethics in Teaneck, N.J.; lawyer Arthur Fish; David Novak, a professor at the University of Toronto's Centre for the Study of Religion; and Laurie Zoloth, professor of medical ethics and humanities at Northwestern University.

Rabbi Bulka, Novak and Fish will discuss the halachic and secular implications of organ donation, the theological implications of advanced directives (decisions made in advance by the patient on issues including resuscitation and organ donation), and the legal implications of advanced directives, respectively.

Following that segment, Feldman and Zoloth will address halachic and secular perspectives on issues facing families of critically ill patients.

"I'm hoping that when [participants] leave, they will be able to say that whatever their own personal belief is, there is religious support for it," Borts told *The CJN* last week.

Continued on page 59

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Grapefruit may keep heart disease away

By JUDY SIEGEL-ITZKOVICH
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Eating grapefruit, especially the red variety, or drinking its juice daily can significantly minimize "bad cholesterol" (low-density lipoprotein or LDL) and triglycerides that are major factors in cardiovascular disease, according to a study published in an online edition of the American Chemical Society's *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*.

The study, which also appeared in the journal's March 22 print edition, was conducted by a group of researchers headed by Shela Gorinstein of the Hebrew University School of Pharmacy's department of medicinal chemistry and natural products, and in co-operation with Abraham Caspi, head of the Cardiology Institute at Rehovot's Kaplan Medical Center. Scientists from Poland and Singapore also took part in the project as participants in lab work.

To test the benefits of consuming grapefruit, Gorinstein tested 57 patients at Kaplan who were suffering from hyperlipidemia (high levels of LDL) and had recently undergone coronary bypass surgery. None of them took statin drugs – commonly prescribed medications that lower cholesterol but in some patients can have harmful side effects.

The group was equally divided into three subgroups. For 30 consecutive days, one group received a daily single serving of fresh red grapefruit, a second received white grapefruit and a third – the control group – received none. All the participants ate balanced meals over the course of the month.

The patients who received either red or white grapefruit showed significant decreases in blood lipid levels, while the patients that did not eat grapefruit showed no changes in lipid levels. In addition, red grapefruit was found to be more effective than white in lowering lipids, particularly triglycerides – a type of blood fat whose elevated levels are often associated with heart problems.

Red grapefruit consumption reduced total cholesterol by 15.5 per cent and white grapefruits by 7.6 per cent; the red cut LDL by 20.3 per cent and the white by 10.7 per cent; and the red reduced triglycerides by 17 per cent and the white by 5.6 per cent, compared to no change in the control group.

Grapefruits contain antioxidants, Gorinstein said, noting that the red variety generally has a higher level of antioxidants than the white. It's possible that red grapefruit may contain currently unknown chemicals that are responsible for the observed triglyceride-lowering effect, she added.

Fresh grapefruit and its juice are believed to be equally beneficial, Gorinstein and her associates said. One cup of fresh grapefruit is roughly equivalent to half a cup of juice.

The researchers cautioned that grapefruit is known to interact with certain medications – sometimes adversely – and advised people on prescription medication to consult with their doctors or pharmacists before consuming grapefruit products. A delay of several hours between eating grapefruit or drinking its juice and taking medications can eliminate the problem.

In December, Gorinstein, who immigrated from Russia more than three decades ago, received the Cavalier Cross of the Polish Order of Merit, becoming the first Israeli ever to receive this Polish government honour. Gorinstein, who has achieved renown for her many research projects on the health benefits of various beverages and fruits, has worked closely with a number of Polish researchers.

INTER-GENERATIONAL PESACH: Habayit Shelanu, a supportive housing building for seniors affiliated with Circle of Care, recently held an inter-generational Pesach celebration. Grades 4 and 6 students from Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School (PPDJDS) performed Passover songs for the seniors. The program was organized by Jackie Cohen and Naomi Cornfield, social workers at Circle of Care, along with Debbie Cohen, a teacher at PPDJDS. This is the second year that the students performed at Habayit Shelanu.

Hope to address issue of organ transplants

Continued from page 58

"My hope is that when the physicians leave, they will know that experts are struggling with it just like they are."

He also hopes that participants will be motivated to address the issue of organ transplantation more frequently than they do now. "In Canada, we have a very poor rate of getting transplants. Very often, people don't want to fill out cards [indicating that they wish] to donate their organs."

The main issue facing families in crisis, said Borts, is determining the right thing to do for "a loved one who is not expected to recover, or is not expected to recover with a meaningful quality of life, and is being kept alive by machinery."

Challenges for physicians include addressing their personal perspectives and dealing with families who may be in conflict, he said.

"Families find this extremely difficult," Borts said. It may, however, be easier in one way for a patient's spouse than for other family members, he noted. "Often, spouses talk about these things."

As of last week, organizers were working on getting the event accredited for medical professionals.

For further information or to register, call 416-781-3514, ext. 34, or e-mail mlaba@bethtzedec.org. The symposium runs from noon to 6 p.m., and registration is $50 for physicians, $35 for other participants. It will be possible to register at the door, but organizers would prefer advance registration.

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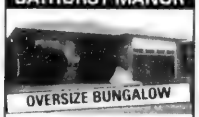

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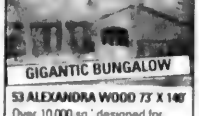
35 SANDALE GDNS. Eat-in kitchen, double garage, full rentable basement

ONE OF A KIND



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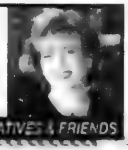

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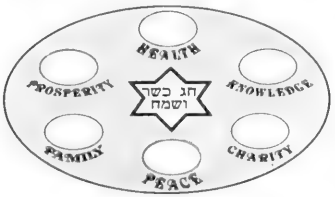

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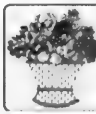

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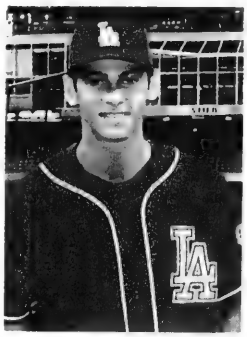
Jewish boys of summer ready for another season

By HARVEY ROSEN
Special to The CJN

WINNIPEG — The Jewish boys of summer who have managed to survive the six-week spring training ritual are charged and ready for the 2006 campaign.

The Arizona Diamondbacks' outfielder and sometime first baseman, Shawn Green, 33, has reached that vulnerable stage in his career when younger prospects in the Arizona organization will likely be giving him a run for his money. Perhaps by the High Holy Days they may transform him into trade bait for contending clubs looking to shore up their lineups.



Shawn Green

Green's once-ample skills – power, average, running and fielding – have declined a bit. Mind you, he was error-less in 317 chances in 155 games in the outfield in 2005. Yet, while his batting average rose last season to .286, his home-run totals fell to 22 and his RBI total was only 73 – not the kind of numbers expected of a player who hits in the middle of the batting order and commands a handsome salary.

However, the lanky 6-4, 210-lb., former Blue Jay should rebound and enjoy a more than respectable season – for a man of his advanced age.

Gabe Kapler

At the opposite end of the spectrum, at least age-wise, is Kevin Youkilis, who will be spending more time this season at first base for the Red Sox, as opposed to the hot corner. Boston management hedged their bets on that arrangement in the off-season by signing veteran first baseman J.T. Snow, 37, a former Giant, to platoon with the 26-year-old Youkilis, who is quickly losing his "prospect" tag.

In AAA last season, Youkilis hit an impressive .322 and smacked eight homers in only 152 at bats. Riding the bench in Boston, he hit .278 and hit one ball out of the park. Despite a decent on-base average, the next base he steals will be his first in the majors.

Also in Boston is Canadian outfielder Adam Stern, 26, who appears to have caught on with the Red Sox as a fourth or fifth outfielder who can run the bases and be used as a pinch runner. The former Braves' prospect didn't hurt his major league chances with his performance at the World Baseball Classic in March with Canada's team, as well as by carrying a hot bat in spring training.

The left-handed-hitting native of London, Ont., coming off shoulder surgery in the off-season, had only 15 at bats with the Red Sox in 2005, with only one home run. In AAA, in only 81 plate appearances, he hit .321 with a pair of taters. The versatile Stern can play any outfield position.

There will likely be a third Jewish player with the Red Sox before the 2006 season gets too old. Thirty-year-old outfielder Gabe Kapler is still recovering from a severe Achilles injury sustained in mid-September while running the bases on what turned out to be a home run by teammate Tony Graffanino.

Team broadcaster Jerry Remy said Kapler took it slowly at spring training as an unsigned non-roster invitee. The lifetime .271 hitter, with occasional power, can't play for Boston until May 1, since the Red Sox didn't tender him a contract in December. He hit only .247 with one homer in only 97 at bats last season.

In a rare occurrence for Jews in Major League Baseball, Youkilis, Stern, and Kapler were all on the field in a game at the same time last season.

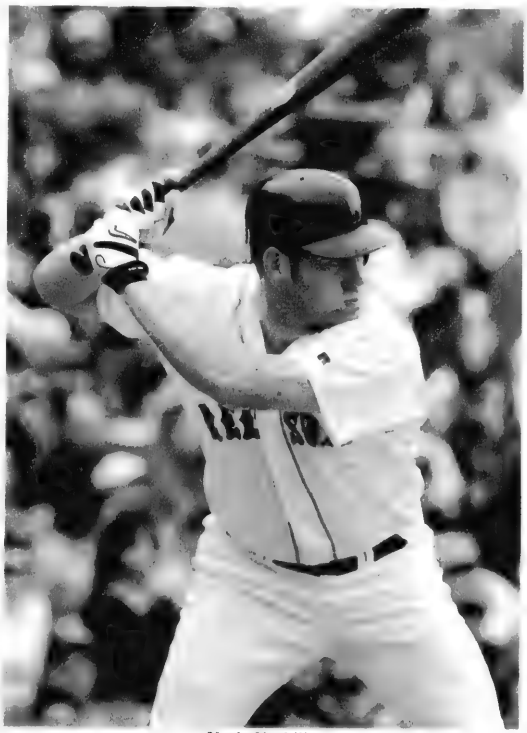
Veteran Astros' catcher Brad Ausmus, 37, seems to improve with age. Primarily an outstanding defensive catcher, the $3-million (all figures US) receiver is especially respected by pitchers, since few others take control better behind the plate than the lifetime .255 hitter. Last season, he hit .258 and drove in 47 runs. Ausmus is best remembered for his dramatic ninth inning home run in the playoffs last fall against Atlanta that resulted in a marathon 20-inning game.

Twenty-seven year old right-hander Jason Marquis of the Cardinals was signed last season to a one-year pact for $3 million. He was a workhorse in 2005, laboring 207 innings while compiling a 13-14 record and a 4.13 ERA.

As a result, the Cardinals rewarded him with a one-year contract this year for $5.15 million. That doubtless helped to assuage any disappointment left from last year in the playoffs, when St. Louis management relegated him to the bullpen.

Entering his seventh season, Marquis is an aggressive pitcher who throws a sinking fastball in the low 90s. Added to his repertoire is a crisp hard slider and an occasional changeup. He is also a good athlete who can hit and run the bases. Last season, Marquis recorded a .310 batting average with 10 extra-base hits, the most by a pitcher since 1986.

Pirates' left-handed reliever John Grabow, 27, was a workhorse in the Pittsburgh bullpen last season, appearing in 63 games while finishing at 2-3 with an ERA of 4.85 in his second full major league season. He has a fastball in the low 90s, a sharp, late-breaking slider, a good changeup and is equally adept at getting both right and left-handed batters out.



Kevin Youkilis

March 27 saw Diamondbacks' right-hander Mike Koplove, 29, assigned back to the team's minor league camp. The 5-10 hurler saw his season end early last August with arm trouble. The veteran reliever was 2-1 with an ERA of 5.07 in 44 appearances. Doubtless he'll be striving to pitch his way back to the majors as soon as possible.

On the cusp is Milwaukee Brewers' highly regarded third sacker out of the University of Miami, Ryan Braun, the fifth-overall selection in the 2005 amateur baseball draft.

Also watch for outfielder Brian Horwitz, a Giants' farm hand who in Class A ball at Augusta last season had the sixth-highest batting average in the minors at .349.

Scott Radinsky, a relief pitcher who retired in 2001, is now a pitching coach with the Indians. For the past several years, he has been a musician in a punk rock band known as Pulley.

Also watch for the likes of minor leaguers Brian Rose, Frank Charles, Tony Cogan, Adam Unger and Adam Greenberg, who all aspire to find their place in the sun.

Inside Back

Hey kid! Turn down that iPod!

ARTS IN FOCUS

BY OREN SHEFA

We've all heard it at some point or another on the bus, in a coffee shop or walking along the street. It's that tinny muffled sound of someone else's music escaping from the ear buds of their portable MP3 player.

The occasional disruption of blaring music may be irksome, but that minor annoyance pales in comparison to the lifelong frustration of coping with permanent hearing loss, a possibility that avid listeners voluntarily subject themselves to on a daily basis. Making matters worse, however, is the realization that while this irreparable affliction may be easily preventable, the incentive to protect one's hearing is seemingly less important than having unrestricted access to the latest modern conveniences.

Last month, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) commissioned a poll on symptoms of hearing loss reported by high school students and adults related to the use of portable media.

According to the results, students report symptoms associated with hearing loss with more often than adults. A dramatic 51 per cent of high school students have admitted to either needing to turn up the volume on the TV or radio, asking "what?" or "huh?" in a regular conversation, or experiencing tinnitus (ringing in the ears), compared to just 37 per cent of adults polled.

The survey also found that even when armed with the knowledge of the potential dangers, both teens and adults have little interest in limiting their listening time, although they do become more inclined to lower the volume. But perhaps even more disturbing is the admission from parents that while most of them (59 per cent) are concerned about their children's hearing loss, less than half are willing to limit how long their kids listen.

The preventative measures the average listener would need to make are simple enough. Purchasing aftermarket headphones that cover the entire ear to replace the cheap, plastic, earbud-style ones that come with most players would help to block out external noises and allow listeners to keep the volume turned down to a more comfortable level. Audio levels should not exceed 85 to 90 decibels, and users should limit listening time in order to give their ears a chance to rest.

This isn't the first time technological convenience has clashed with public health. From microwaves to computer monitors to cellphones, advancements in consumer products that make life easier have, in some cases, had the disconcerting side effect of being potentially harmful in the long run. In these cases, convenience has always prevailed over well-being.

Cellphones are a perfect example. Concerns about cancer-causing radio frequencies emitted by cellphones became widespread at the turn of the millennium. While it may be too early to draw conclusions about the long-term effects of prolonged cellphone use, numerous health agencies around the world have been consistently appealing to the public to limit usage as much as possible. Yet, despite these repeated warnings, since 2001, the number of wireless telecommunication devices sold in Canada has increased by roughly 65 per cent, according to Statistics Canada.

If the threat of cancer is not enough to discourage consumers from using potentially harmful products, what hope does the risk of hearing loss have in acting as a deterrent?

Given how quickly the latest gadgets are absorbed into our daily lives, it seems consumers will always be playing catch-up when it comes to understanding the potential health risks associated with these products.

But what has become even more apparent is that when it comes to the conveniences of modern technology, the risks of being left behind in a connected world are far more crippling than the debilitating alternative.

DECADENT PASSOVER FUDGE BROWNIES

2 c granulated or brown sugar
1 c (2 sticks) unsalted butter or margarine, melted and cooled
3 eggs
1 tblsp brewed coffee
3/4 c unsweetened cocoa powder, sifted
1/4 tsp salt
1 scant c matzoh cake meal
1/2 c finely chopped toasted walnuts (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease a 7"x10" baking pan, a 9" square pan, or an 8"x9" springform pan. In a bowl, mix sugar into the melted butter, then the eggs, coffee, cocoa, salt, cake meal, and toasted walnuts, if using. Spoon batter into prepared pan; bake about 25 mins. Do not overbake. The brownies should be set and seem dry to the touch, but there should not be a crust around the sides. Cool in the pan. Cut into squares or wedges. Yield: 30 squares. Source: *A Treasury of Jewish Holiday Baking 1998* by Marcy Goldman

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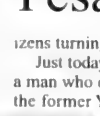
The ovens in Jerusalem have been on for long hours these past weeks as bakers have been producing shmurah matzah for the seders this week all around the world.

[RNS/Reuters photo]

Pesach far from Clark Avenue

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER



It is difficult to imagine a Jew walking through the desert, protected by a cloud sent by God, and relying on a diet of manna, a food supplied by the angels. The source of our peoplehood seems so far off that it appears to be fictional

Yet, according to the Torah, we were indeed slaves in Egypt, suffering at the hands of angry taskmasters. Consider this: If we had the benefit of video footage from those days, as we do from the Nazi era, we would see Jewish men, women and children whipped, beaten and marginalized over a long period of time.

Imagine! Our Jewish family! Spat upon. Kicked. Beaten. How removed this reality is from Clark Avenue, Old Forest Hill Road and Broadview and Danforth. Most of us can't fathom what it means to be under the thumb of another person, or another nation. My generation and afterward can't possibly understand the cruelty of a host nation and its citizens turning on neighbours or immigrants.

Just today, I sat in my office talking with a man who endured the hardships of war in the former Yugoslavia. I listened to him as he told me about friends becoming enemies, ethnic cleansing in nearby villages (a sanitized phrase that refers to the execution and persecution of an unprotected group), and his fear that his little children would be harmed.

Think about that statement, "My little children being harmed." What if when we left our homes in the morning – whether we lived in Thornhill, Forest Hill or downtown we would be terrified that a fellow Torontonian would push and shove our children? The thought is terrifying, almost impossible to consider. The picture is so blurry. Can you see it?

But that's our history, at least in part. That describes the beginnings of the Children of Israel. Our ancestors were worked to the bone as they build Pitom and Ramses, the storehouses mentioned in the Torah. They were weak and demoralized. Their sense of self had withered away.

Recline at your seder table on Pesach like a king or queen. How lovely it is to sip four cups of wine, to partake in storytelling and a feast fit for royalty. But remember, too, that Pesach is a holiday full of opposites, mostly focused on slavery versus freedom. In that light, remember that the wine we use must be red, so as to represent the blood that runs through our veins and gives us life. But it also symbolizes the blood spilled at the base of the pyramids as Jews died from exhaustion and brutal thrashings.

If you are able to see our family sweating under the desert sun as they escaped the Egyptian army, use that as the central image in your mind when you recount the story of *Yetziat Mitzrayim* – the Exodus from Egypt.

If you can't, then try remembering a time not so long ago when our brothers and sisters stood shoulder to shoulder in cattle cars as they were transported to concentration camps, where most of them were murdered men, women and children.

Concentrate. See our history. See yourself within it. Pesach is a brilliant opportunity to do so and the chance to appreciate the challenges we have grappled with, as well as to know the bravery exhibited by millions of Jews; the ingenuity that has allowed our people to survive; and the appreciation we should show to God.

If you manage to visualize where you came from, your Pesach will be rich and worthwhile. The Jewish people were not born out of affluence and peace – quite the opposite. Debate, discuss and consider that point with effort. It is the heart of Passover.

Chag Samayach! Happy Pesach!

Avrum@yeahavta.org. Sudan?

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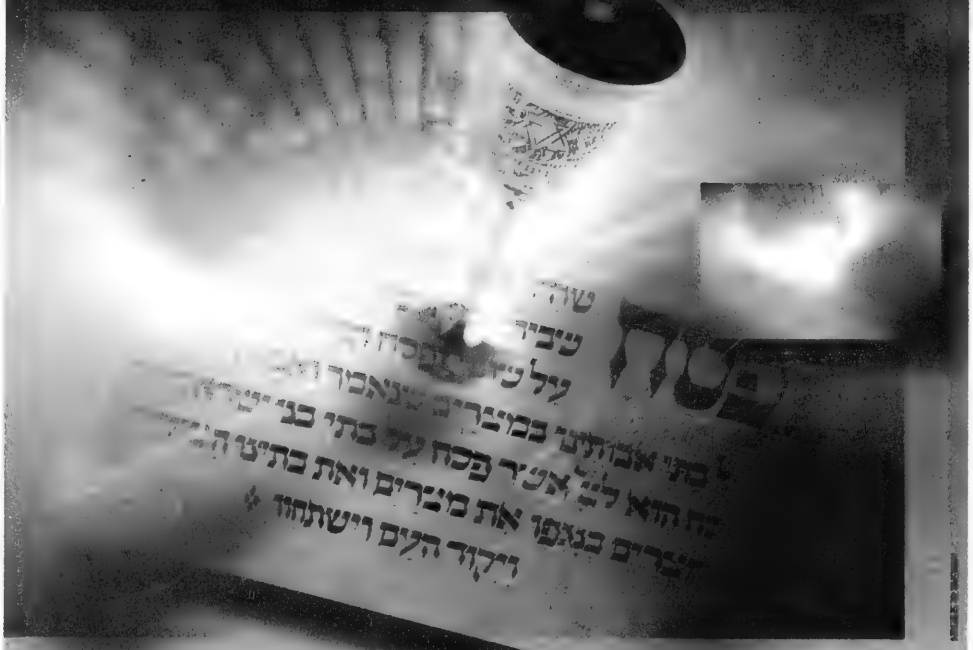

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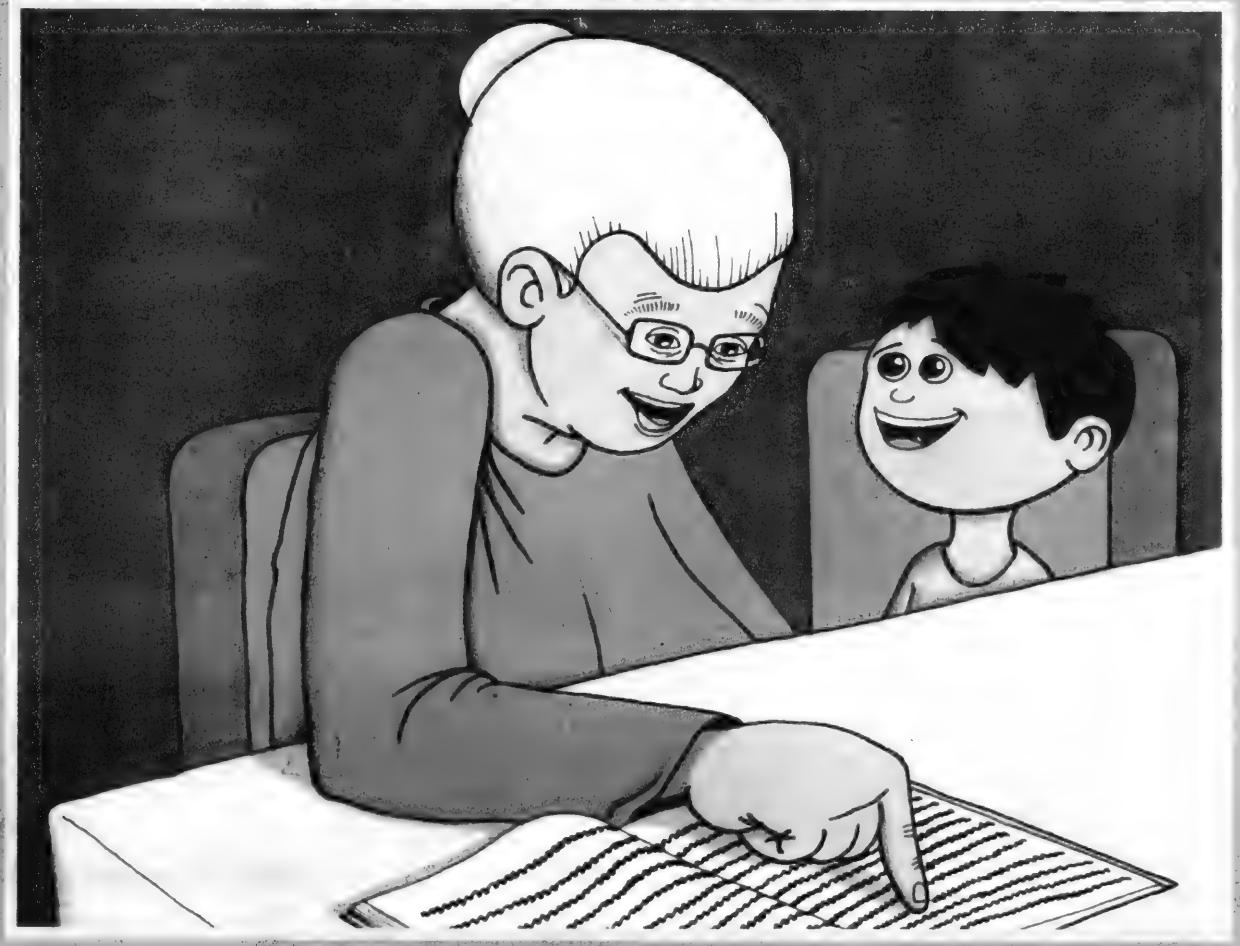
Passover Greetings

The Canadian Jewish news
SECTION B



Feltmarker rendering by Michael Nisimov 2006

POETRY:

Ner Tamid
By George Bernstein

Four Years Later
By Bruce Brown

To Golda
By Donia B. Clenman

Kol Hakavod to the Older Men at Shul
By Andrew Fainer

The Old Synagogue
By Mandy Lirit Ginzburg

Ode to an Israeli War
By Dana Gold

The Holocaust Inferno
By Leon Krym

On My Birthday
By Sam Lewkowict

Gates of Heaven
By Ted Miller

At The Kotel
By Sandy Bye Richler

Rebecca's Soliloquy
By Rose Romberg

Israel
By Joseph Rubenstein

Fire and Wine, Jewish Quarter
By Israel Sarna

Somewhere
By Pamela Scher

Upon Reading "A Case for Peace"
By Jesse Schwartz

Thought a Soldier
By Jason Stein

Whither Our Tzadik?
By Lorne Switzer

Poland
By Stanley Weisberg

PROSE:

The Rabbi Had a Sense of Humour
By Alvin Abram

Barbara
By Ruth Almon

Yitz and Rebecca
By Helaine Becker

Barmaid
By Lynn Gold

How To Make Bubie Annie's Chicken Soup
By April Laufer

Kristellnacht
By Marina Mashaal

Fasika 1988
By Judie Oron

The Passover Dishes
By Miriam Preszow Weiner

PROSE:

Lunch with Izzie: A tribute to Irving Layton
By Shel Krakofsky

Tenth Annual Passover Literary Supplement

2006 Literary Supplement

Passover Greetings

Jewish history and culture influence both young and old

Editorial

As I reflect on the more than 100 submissions we received this year for our annual Passover Literary Supplement – many more than last year – it's encouraging to see the range of themes and topics explored, as well as the different age groups of the writers themselves.

This year's collection of poetry, prose, art and photography reflects our rich culture, timeless traditions and the future of the Jewish community, as seen from the perspective of both young and old.

Poems written by a university student who was inspired after reading Alan Dershowitz's *A Case for Peace*; by a teenager who was overwhelmed by the beauty of Israel; and by a 10-year-old boy who compared his life to that of a young Holocaust victim all complement the poetry and prose written by older Jews who are eager to share their wisdom and experience with younger generations.

While some of the pieces featured are meant to provoke thought and stir the emotions, a deliberate effort was made to balance the more serious entries with fun and light stories that display the sense of humour Jews are famous for. From a story about a dim-witted couple who try to catch a cold to a story about a rabbi who teases one of his congregants, the common thread these entries share is the influence of Jewish history and culture, whether overt or subtle.

Along with the written works, this supplement also offers captivating photography and artwork by Michael Nisimov, a talented student of animation and graphic design at Sheridan College.

As is always the case, space was limited and we regret not being able to publish more of the submissions we collected over the past two months. To say we are pleased by the overwhelming response and the number of first-time submitters is an understatement, and we look forward to receiving even more next year.

We hope you enjoy our 10th literary supplement.

Chag Kasher v'Samayach.

– S.S.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ISRAEL: A little boy proudly waves an Israeli flag to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut. [RNS/Reuters photo]

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A Very Happy Passover

Faigie & Rubin Zimmerman and Family

Kristallnacht, November 1938

By MARINA MASHAAL

Every day a tree lives, it's dying. Inside its vast shell, its cells transform in the same moment that its leaves are drinking up sun. It doesn't matter what form the season. A firestorm can come along and even that cannot damage seed. The trees may burn, the leaves curled to black ash, while on the ground the husk will burst open by the air's weight of storm and the sky's sulphuring heat.

A fire rages with fangs of an asp. The ground is pulled, the trunk slab scored to charred form, a generational dining table dug out, the identifying marks of age torn and splintered, the limbs of forest people ravaged like a helpless crying and reaching to the blue pockets of clean space behind a black lined sky. The seeds will spread, and, like a love-made blanket, impregnate the dry smoulder of silent fields. The heat of fire bursts the husk and spreads out all the seed.

The fire comes. It rages. It storms. And still it cannot burn out a tree's identity. A fire cannot take a tree's identity away. It may take 100 years for the forest to return to its original state, and even then, a forest knows the subtle changes of moving with its wandering exodus and origins. Even in the rage of heat and drummed down trees, the heat of life is never extinguished. Memory is hardy, spirit indivisible, and one with each cell. A hardy shrub will stay rooted, another will fly with the air and take root in the memory of a piece of land somewhere else; another will incubate and flower into slow healing in a different trajectory of time.

And so the books got burned in an evil man-made night, and pages upon pages of a people's culture and sanctimony in living went up into flames. The windows shattered, the glass spread into the air and cut at the faces of people standing. The haunting of the image stilled, and for all bearing witness, the liturgy of a people's knowing would not char in the hollow swirl of broken panes of spitting glass. Any man-made silence cannot silence nor sever a soul.

How does a forest know itself in the fire of unspeakable stillness?

A people's alone-loneliness became a resistant forest of togetherness in watch of the rising lamentation. On that very night of muting and madness, in a distant headquarter, the brute path to the Final Solution was chosen. And yet, against the ravagers, the fiery exterminatory of breaking glass working to will away all remnant, all memory, willed itself instead into a full-blown chorus of chosen witness, thereby sealing the illimitability of life over the brutality of fate. With lightning speed, a shock bolted through the wave of the gathered people. How does a forest know itself in the fire of unspeakable stillness? Know thyself, and so they stood.

They stood as one desisting the taunts hurtling. In countless years of blessed memory, the ash-blown pages sprouting from a burning tree of knowledge furled to unspoken heights above the lip of hellish-bent circles. Each gathered memory as shards of unseemly sight, unseemly smell, unseemly sound. The gathering stood, but not in a silence you can think. They stood in watch like a wiser herd listening for the memory of the blueprint irrefutable carrying the way back home.

A fire remembers. A fire, some say, is hate gone mad. A fire, another cultural life knows, is inverse love. A fire is as much emotion as it is an event. A forest fire cannot take the identity of that which is burned away. A soul is life, and so is fire.

The silence forced upon a learned people that stormed night, it is said, blew upwards into the open fields of sky like a trajectory of stars. The glass cut, the air thickened, the flames burst like 10,000 falls. A fire can never stamp out the forest memory of reclamation. The stars burning atop the flames of all of a people's gathered life, gathered knowledge, fell back onto the earth in glitters of broken light, and continued to do so over the course of many unspeakable days.

With renewed promise, a new language making shape of raw crystals of collected memory will slowly find the speech of its way back home. A forest is a harbour of the secret of promise. It understands intuitively what it means to plant a life of light beyond the dark, above the ashes, and save all souls.

The bleat of togetherness called in those millions upon millions of broken stars an anthem and the many, before a timelessness outstretching, became one soul. The glass cut, the books blackened, the hearts rose with the flames. The glass cut, the mouths that give speech splintered, the books in rising chimneys blackened to bare traces of indecipherable bone and this you will not remember, but remember it we forest will.

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Yitz and Rebecca Catch a Terrible Cold

By HELAINE BECKER

Rebecca Hellman was a presser in a shirt factory. Her husband of just six short weeks was a tailor there. The factory was owned by Mr. and Mrs. Chin, who, like the Hellmans, had come to Canada from far away.

Rebecca and Yitz worked hard and were happy. At night, when they snuggled in bed, they would talk about their day.

"Mrs. Chin looked just awful today! Her nose was red and her eyes were puffy. I asked her, 'What's the matter?' She said, 'Ay, ay, ay, I have caught a terrible cold!' Tell me, Yitzy, what is this 'cold' she is talking about? And what is so terrible about it that it makes her cry?"

Yitz snuggled closer to his wife. He didn't recognize the word "cold." But admit to his sweet new bride that there was something he did not know? Never! His grandfather, after all, had been chief rabbi of Chelm.

"A cold? Oy! It is a fearsome creature," bluffed Yitz, using his best rabbi voice. "Let's not even think of one now, my love."

But Rebecca was not finished with the "terrible cold." The next morning, as the newlyweds walked to work along Baldwin Street, Rebecca said, "Yesterday, Mrs. Chin's nose was running, and she was sneezing. My nose runs and I sneeze whenever I'm in a room with a dog. Is a cold a kind of dog? Has Mrs. Chin caught a terrible wild dog?"

Yitz didn't know if a cold was a kind of dog. But admit he didn't know? Not Yitz!

"I didn't want to frighten you, my blossom," he said, handing Rebecca a cone of warm roasted chestnuts. "A cold is a fierce dog, with a hide as hard as an oak, and fangs as sharp as a hawthorn's spines."

Rebecca shivered in her thin coat.

"Then why would Mrs. Chin want to catch one?"

"Oych," replied Yitz, shrugging. "Why don't you ask Mrs. Chin?"

When she arrived at work, Rebecca did just that.

"Do you still have your 'terrible cold'?" she asked.

Mrs. Chin only said, "Ay, ay, ay," and blew her nose.

"So tell me," Rebecca prodded, "why did you go and catch a cold?"

"Why? Why, she asks? I just not lucky," Mrs. Chin scoffed.

Rebecca began to iron wrinkles from a shirt's collar. As she worked, her brow furrowed with thought. If Mrs.Chin wanted to catch a cold because she had bad luck, Rebecca reasoned, then a cold must bring good luck! Rebecca pressed on.

"What do you do when you have a cold, Mrs. Chin?"

"What do you think, you silly girl? I try to get rid of it! Now why don't you worry about doing your ironing, and let me worry about my cold."

Rebecca decided the only way to learn the truth about this "terrible cold" was to see it for herself.

"Mrs. Chin, one last question. Where is your cold?"

"Ay, the things you ask! It's in my head."

Now what kind of foolishness was this? Rebecca wondered. A terrible, wild dog? In her head? Back and forth, back and forth the iron went, along with Rebecca's troubled thoughts.

That evening, as they bought an onion and two potatoes for their dinner, Rebecca repeated the puzzling conversation to Yitzy.

"Ahhh!" exclaimed Yitz, "She did like this, *nu*?"

Yitz tapped his temple. Rebecca nodded.

"It is not the cold that's in her head, but a secret!" He tapped his temple again to demonstrate his point.

Rebecca crossed her arms. "Why is where she keeps her cold such a big secret?"

Yitz waggled his finger in the air like a chief rabbi about to give a sermon. "Here's why: you said yourself the cold brings luck, yes? Now that's an object of value, eh? Even a *schlemazel* knows you must hide your valuables!"

Rebecca waved his words away. "Valuable shmaluable. Why does she want to get rid of it, then? Answer me that!"

Yitz had no idea. But admit it? Never! After all, his grandfather had been chief rabbi! Of Chelm!

So Yitz puffed himself up and declared, "I think Mrs. Chin is trying to trick you into thinking this cold is a big nothing! So you won't try to steal it."

"Oh dear!" exclaimed Rebecca. "As if I would ever do such a thing!"

Yitz began to stroke his chin, the way the chief rabbi had done when he was thinking.

"How terrible can a cold really be – if Mr. and Mrs. Chin can catch one? They are not young and strong like us anymore.

"If they can do it, so can we! If we only knew how!"

Continued on page B5

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'I think we will be lucky, my Shayna Maydeleh'

Continued from page B4

"We could use a little luck, too," said Rebecca wistfully. "I'll see what I can find out."

The next day, Rebecca got to the shirt factory early and waited until Mrs. Chin arrived to unlock the door.

"Good morning, Mrs. Chin. How is your cold today?"

"Just as bad as ever," Mrs. Chin croaked, taking off her muffler and hat.

"I don't mean to pry," said Rebecca, hanging her scarf on its peg. "But may I ask, how did you catch such a 'terrible cold'?"

"By going out at night without my galoshes!" she said, then plunked her boots emphatically into the boot tray. "Now let's get to work. It's practically 8 o'clock already."

Meanwhile, Yitz was sewing downstairs. In came Mr. Chin with puffy eyes and a nose as red as a radish. He had a raspy, growly cough, too. Apparently, the cold, like the factory, belonged to both Mr. Chin and Mrs. Chin together!

With a sharp smile, Yitz said, "Good morning, Mr. Chin! I see you have caught a cold."

Mr. Chin merely grunted, "Yes, a terrible cold."

In and out went Yitz's needle. "Where is your cold?" he asked, pointedly.

"Deep in my chest."

Yitz's needle eased through the fabric. Gently, gently, he probed.

"So how did you catch this 'terrible cold'?"

"Fishing last Sunday. At Lake Scugog," Mr. Chin growled, settling himself at his account books.

"Did you catch many fish?"

"No, just my luck. I only caught the cold."

That evening, Rebecca and Yitz could barely contain themselves.

"You'll never believe what I learned from Mr. Chin today!" crowed Yitz. "You can catch a cold at Lake Scugog! And the Chins keep their 'lucky cold' in a chest!"

Rebecca chirped, "I learned how to catch one! It must be dark, and you must be barefoot!"

"So should we try and catch our own lucky cold, Rebecca?"

"Oh, yes! Why shouldn't we have some good luck for a change? With a cold, perhaps we can own our own shirt factory!"

Rebecca and Yitz danced around their tiny parlour. "We will catch ourselves a cold! We'll be lucky! We'll be rich!"

The next day, Yitz and Rebecca bought a steamer trunk with solid brass clasps and a stout lock. They bought a map and studied it to find the best route to Lake Scugog. How long it seemed until they could leave – on Saturday, after Shabbos ended!

At last, it was time. They took a train to Port Perry, then walked from Port Perry station to the lakefront, carrying the trunk between them. It was a very cold night, but the moon was full and bright.

"I think we will be lucky, my *shayna maydeleh*," said Yitz.

"I feel lucky, too," said Rebecca. But inside, she was frightened. How terrible was the cold going to be? And how would they wrestle the beast into the trunk?

"This is the place," said Yitz.

Gratefully, Rebecca let down her side of the chest. The lake gleamed like a cold, dark eye. Rebecca removed her galoshes, and wiggled her toes in the night air.

"When will we know a cold is here?" she asked.

Yitz was nervous, too. But let Rebecca know he was afraid? Never! After all, his grandfather had been the chief rabbi of Chelm!

"We will know," he said in his deepest grandson-of-a-rabbi voice.

They waited. The moon hid its face behind some clouds, and still they waited. The moon peeped out from behind the clouds, and still they waited. They waited. And waited. Suddenly, Rebecca heard a dog howl. She clutched Yitz's arm. At the same time, the moon burst forth. And there, in the water, they saw it – a cold!

The shadow of a tree cast on the surface of the water, and looked vaguely like a giant hound. Quick as a needle, Yitz plunged into the icy water. Rebecca pressed her hands together and called out, "Be careful, Yitzy!"

Yitz swam to the "terrible cold." He grasped it in his arms, but it slipped away. He reached for it again, but every time he thought he had it, the cold escaped. Rebecca could see her husband's struggle. But then the moon dimmed behind the trees. The cold disappeared!

"Yitzy! Yitzy! Are you all right?"

Yitzy was too worn out to reply. He dog-paddled to shore and threw himself at Rebecca's feet.

Rebecca wrapped her coat around her shivering husband. She pressed him to her heart.

"It was too powerful for me," sputtered Yitz.

"I thought you might drown! But Yitzy, you were so brave!"

"I will catch that cold, Rebecca, even if it kills me," Yitz vowed.

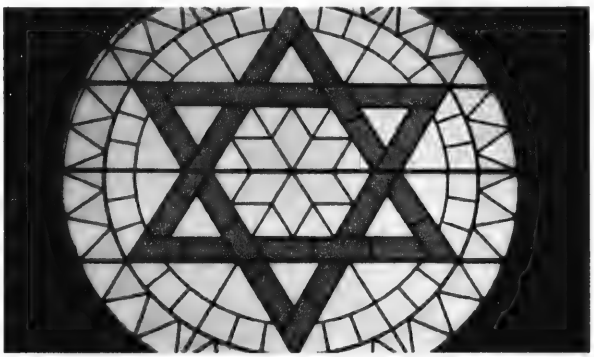
"No!" gasped Rebecca. "You are the only luck I need!"

Rebecca and Yitz hugged and kissed and shivered at the edge of the lake. The sun was starting to rise in the east. Arm in arm, the chilled, bedraggled newlyweds limped to the station. By 9 a.m., Yitz's nose had begun to run. By 10 a.m., Rebecca's throat had begun to tickle. When the train reached Richmond Hill, Yitz was blowing his nose. When the train reached Thornhill, Rebecca was sneezing into her hanky. That night, in bed, Rebecca and Yitz snuggled together for warmth.

"We may not have caught a cold," coughed Yitz, "but we came very close to getting one. Perhaps that will be lucky enough."

"Who needs luck," replied Rebecca, sniffling and sneezing, "when we have love?"

Inspiring



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The Gates of Heaven

By Ted Miller

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Not at all
Like the Potemkin stairs
Of my childhood
Climbing heavenward
Like Jacob's ladder
Up from St. Clair

And even less
Like Herod's Temple Mount
Whence man and beast
Ascend beyond the stars

As for me
I've grown wary
Of monuments and real estate
And now prefer
My heaven's gates reversed

The celestial portals
Through which all souls
Descend to earth

Whither Our Tzadik?

By Lorne Switzer

Life is fleeting
not to be wasted
says the Book that he opened.
Love is a fugitive sharply bitten
says the Experience forever unwritten.
Always in a sprint
Passing as shadows
Forgotten memories and
dried-up tears.
No more farewells and embraces
No reason to pilgrimage from faraway places
The weaver and the woven are no longer tethered
No more friends true and fair-weathered
No more enemies, all unsought
The last battle was already fought
On Tisha b'Av, not a time for words
Not for laughter at the absurd
Approaching the meaning of the crowns
Finding them at last
He left us
Only silence
Broken by an afternoon hamseen
carrying a lifeless tune;
a Righteous gasp,
an unfinished song

***Jerusalem, oil on canvas* by Gustav Bauernfeind (1848-1904)**

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2006 Literary Supplement

Passover Greetings

Four Years Later

By Bruce Brown

Four years later
So many dead
Innocents
In the wrong place
At the wrong time
Such is the price of terror
Unleashed to rid the Jews from
their land

Four years later
We're still here
Innocents – Stronger and more
resilient than ever
In the right place – our country
Here to stay forever
No amount of terror
Will chase us from our home

Three Israel Defence Force soldiers are on guard during a training session. [Israel Sun photo]

Thought a Soldier

By Jason Stein

Where no clangs of steel
ring out over lonely fields

Where no soldier dies with a
lie on his shield

Where no brute men by
strength of arm
Reach out and slay stilled
swords not drawn

Where peace majestic flies
high unfurled

Will you find a warrior's
paradise
But no warrior's world

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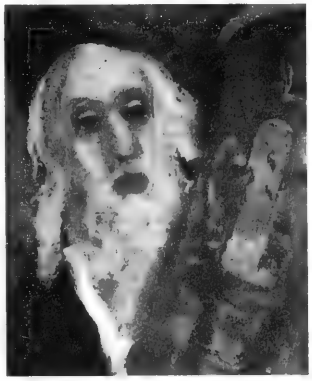
The Rabbi Had a Sense of Humour

By ALVIN ABRAM

For 20 years, I would often discuss religion and its place in Jewish life with the late Rabbi Albert Pappenheim of Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Synagogue in Toronto. I came from a non-religious background, had not gone to Hebrew school and was unaware of the religious procedures of a Jewish way of life. The rabbi decided to subject me to a first-hand involvement.

I received a note from him asking if I would make myself available in two weeks for Sabbath services to receive an honour. My attendance at Sabbath services, as Rabbi Pappenheim was well aware, usually depended on need and persuasion. To be singled out to perform a religious function in front of hundreds of people, especially many who knew me, was frightening. I quickly declined.

When I told my wife Marilyn of the rabbi's request and my refusal, I was met with a stern look of displeasure. It didn't take long before my two daughters, Lisa and Lori, became aware of my refusal, and they also gave me no peace.



***Rabbi with Torah*, oil on canvas by Mané-Katz (1894-1962)**

After being subjected to their continuous hounding for several days, I reluctantly relented and I telephoned Rabbi Pappenheim to tell him that I had changed my mind. I made him promise that I was not to have a speaking part. He told me that he had the right honour for me. My participation would be painless and my performance flawless. I was to take the Torah from within the Ark and hand it to the cantor.

I accepted with trepidation.

On the day in question, I reluctantly found four vacant seats by the centre aisle. Rabbi Pappenheim's instructions were to come early and to take an aisle seat in the middle of the sanctuary. Those who knew me could not hide their look of disbelief when they saw me enter. From where I sat, I could see some of them whispering to their spouses and motioning in my direction.

The front of Beth David's sanctuary has two levels. The first set of steps leads to two lecterns where the cantor and the rabbi stand. Behind them are a half-dozen ornate chairs, spaced equally along the back of the platform. A spiral staircase winds its way upwards to a second level where the Ark, with its decorative gold enclave and two sliding doors, conceals several velvet-covered scrolls, each with a silver or gold engraved plate attached

I heard the processional enter the sanctuary. The cantor came first, chanting, as the small entourage approached me, with Rabbi Pappenheim behind him, followed by senior synagogue officials. I could feel the perspiration running from my forehead. I suddenly realized that the rabbi hadn't told me which scroll to pick up. This made me uneasy. I just knew that I would foul things up and make myself look foolish. I prayed that the rabbi would pass me without acknowledging my presence, but when he came along side of me, I heard him say, "Follow us," without moving his lips.

I joined the procession. Marilyn had a wide smile on her face and the girls were beaming. The cantor and the rabbi mounted the steps and went to their respective lecterns. The synagogue officials sat down in the chairs along the back. As I approached the rabbi, my heart pounded a tattoo in my chest and my eyes were frantically sending out a Morse code informing him of my dilemma. The rabbi ignored my facial pleading and faced the congregation. He whispered from the corner of his mouth, "Sit down." Since there was only one vacant seat, that became an easy objective.

The services continued unabated while I sat nervously holding a prayer book upside down in my lap. Suddenly the congregation stood up and the cantor, rabbi and officials headed toward the spiral staircase. I immediately jumped to my feet, almost toppling my chair. I kept my eyes on the rabbi, hoping that he would give me a signal. He did not.

The cantor and the rabbi stopped in front of the Ark. Two people from the processional stood at opposite sides of the doors, and I hesitantly moved to the centre. Slowly the two doors slid open. The rabbi was not looking at me. My eyes flashed from side to side hoping someone would give me a clue, but I was ignored. When the doors were open, I stepped forward. Leaning against one of the scrolls was a printed white card with the words, "THIS ONE."

A groan of relief escaped my lips. I stepped forward, raised the scroll and handed it to the cantor. He took it and proceeded to the lower level. Rabbi Pappenheim winked at me as he passed. I knew he was laughing to himself. There were other times when he asked if I would participate in Sabbath services. I declined. He said he understood, but he had a smile on his lips

Jewish Quarter

By Israel Sarna

Square stones brightly bleached by the sunlight of three thousand years
Glossed with the moisture of lips and tears salting away the oversized rock surface
The optimum kingdom has itself eroded much over time
Wrinkled like a dry raisin through the ages from its original grape cluster
Cane-dependent inhabitants hobbling along cobbled meandering alleyways

The harp replaced by the haunting wail of sorrows tallied in collective sufferance
The walls of the calcified capital rose and fell like a seesaw abused by hyper children
Things have not gone as planned for the People of the Book
If you take a good look
As if Heaven disengaged from the Chosen unilaterally long ago

So it rests with the competent curious to excavate dirt and rubble
Praying in ancient languages to discern the way back to a time of favour
When towering Temples stood seemingly forever
And the greatest enemies of Israel were not established innately within
tanned Hebraic skin

The sabra has again and lately lost its prickly exterior for all but its own
As the arch nemeses stitch rival flags and rally victory's chants
Readying the conclusive strike against a hopelessly divided tribe
Lost to its initial saviour shepherd

In the faded jaded Jewish Quarter
The slumbering number of an ancient age
Ratifies itself another day by virtue of its ongoing degeneration
While its prospects dissipate like a city gate before Roman siege machinery

It seems more and more that not for long
Will Zion's song have a throat to horn it proudly
Only sad violins will contemplate the painful dirges of what might have been
Had kin stuck by kin
Planting modern shoes in dusty sandal prints of impassioned
ancestors
Instead of surrendering to imperial pressures in contemporary guise

Here stand Jacob's progeny at truth's moment with eager foreign eyes aglow
Straining across continents for a better view of self-immolation on Jehovah's cracking altar
A taunting refrain looping in resenting minds
Mellah, mellah, mud-brick and wall
Who's the eldest of them all – but soon historic relic!
An ironic revenge enacted before their seedy sight
The Israelite people on its sacrificial deathbed carefully laid out
Finally headed the natural way of the fossilized Philistine
The pounds of patrimony too burdensome for shekel-seeking
slacking shoulders
Collapsing at the first capricious waft of world opinion's irresistible breeze.

***Praying at the Wailing Wall*, oil on canvas by Charles Robertson (1844-1941)**

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Fasika 1988

By JUDIE ORON

Pushing through the doorway of our family's *tukul*, I come up against the morning fog. Thick, cold and mysterious, it forms a protective barrier that cuts our village off from the outside world. Spiky mountains, rolling hills dotted with grazing horses, scattered villages – all are hidden today. Every morning it is so. It is a sight that greets me day after day, a view that reminds me once again of what will, very soon, be lost to me.

The sun has not yet begun to rise but already our small village has been turned upside down. My young sisters rush to the stream to wash our clothes. Mother is breaking and burying the cooking utensils, coaxing last night's embers to life and preparing to create new, unsullied dishes and pans for *fasika*, the Passover feast. When all this is done, my father and young brothers will gather around the sheep that are to be slaughtered and soon smoke and cooking smells will blanket the village.

All this activity is making my heart's beating resonate throughout my whole body. I can feel it in my hands, in my aching head, in the soles of my feet as they tread on the cold, hard ground.

As I near the object on the ground I realize that it is Mehari and he is both bloody and alive

Escape is the only way. Whenever I feel that I will explode with the pounding of my heart, running has always calmed me. No matter what my punishment will be I know that I don't have the patience to stay and work with my mother and my little sisters.

A few short months after *fasika*, I am to be married. My mother says that I simply must prepare myself for the wedding. "This is how things are, this is the way we live," my father tells me, trying to be patient with my entreaties. But I know that this is something that I just cannot do, no matter how binding a contract my father and Dawit's father have written.

My situation, in some ways, is better than that of other girls my age. I have seen my intended, actually spoken to him, and he is pleasing to speak to, pleasing to look at. My father explains that Dawit is from a good family, that his mother is a loving person who will treat me like a daughter and that I will be coddled and cherished until we are old enough to consummate the marriage and live in a separate *tukul*. But what good is all that if I must leave my family, my home, my new baby sister, whom I just know will not grow to be as sturdy as she would if I were there to guide her?

Dawit's family lives far away, in Lasta province. There are *shifta'och*, brigands, and rebels in Lasta; this I have heard. "That is exactly why you must marry," my father says. "So many people have left for Jerusalem. Only a few of us Beta Israel have stayed here in Debre Behar. Those that are left are like me, blind or old or ill, too feeble to make the trek to Sudan. You must be married to a man whose village is still full of men, to a family that can protect you."

I hear with sadness the pleading in my father's voice. Before his accident would he have pleaded with me?

"Come, Lemlem," my mother says with a rare impatience, as I stare at the tendrils of fog, now floating away in gentle trails where only moments ago there was a wall of pure milk. "In a moment, *enutie*," I call, moving purposefully toward the edge of the village. Let her think that I have gone beyond the fog to relieve myself. I start to run as fast as I can toward the fields where my brother, Mehari, will be tending the animals. I can always talk to Mehari. He has been to school in Ambover and he is very wise for his years. He has lived among the Christianos, and although he has kept himself pure, he has learned things that others in our village have never even imagined. And, even if he cannot change my father's mind, perhaps he can help me to stop this terrible beating of my heart.

I run and run and finally I break through the last wisps of fog and come out at the top of the rise. How beautiful it is here, I think. But this is not our land, I remember, thinking of what we have been told by the *kessoch*. We are here only temporarily, the rabbis say, and some day we too will go to Jerusalem. If only I could run as far as Jerusalem, I think, and not have to marry. But then I would have to leave everyone behind and that's nearly the same thing. My head aches with trying to find a solution. Mehari will help me, I think, hurrying to find my brother. But, something is wrong. I should have found him long ago.

"Mehari," I shout, running to the lookout hut and clambering up the slats to search in all directions. The cattle are nowhere to be seen. Mehari would never leave the cattle, I think. Unease fills my soul as I turn this way and that to look for my brother. In the distance, near the church, I spot a bundle of clothes on the ground. Hurrying down the slats, nearly tripping in my rush, I run up the slope, and as I near the object on the ground I realize that it is Mehari and he is both bloody and alive.

"*Ayee! Minden neuw*, what happened?" I shriek, bending over my brother and trying to help him in his futile efforts to rise. His leg appears to be broken, his head is bleeding and he is crying – how odd, I think, I have never seen him cry.

"Go to the village, *ahutie*, my sister," he says quietly. "Go, it will be all right, bring the men back here to help me. Run, Lemlem."

Continued on page B11

2006 Literary Supplement

Passover Greetings

'Now is the time, you must go to Sudan and from there you will be taken to Israel'

Continued from page B10

That evening, after we have prayed and feasted and sung the *fasika* songs – a bit sadly since our numbers have been so depleted – we huddle around the dying fire to listen once again to my brother's story.

"I was gathering the animals to bring them back to the village," Mehari began. "Steeped in my thoughts, I forgot that it was Timket, Easter, and that we are not supposed to work on the Christianos' holy days," he confessed, lowering his head in shame.

"I was just gathering the last stray into the herd, when a crowd of people spilled out of the church and began running toward me, shouting, 'This is how you defile our holiest day, killer of Christ!' I could not run away, fearing that they would steal our animals, so I faced them and began to apologize. I hoped that I would get away with a light beating. But their rage was terrible. They thrashed me with their sticks, breaking my leg. I closed my ears to their curses and eventually, the priest said, '*Baka!* Enough! We must stop now. What if we were to kill him? His father is an ironmonger. Everyone knows that they are *buda*, devils, with terrible powers. He could strike us all dead with just one glance if we were to kill his first-born son. Let us leave him here and go back to our prayers.'

"To my relief, they all left and I tried to get up, but I could not. I must have fallen asleep because when I woke up, all the animals were gone, all our tools as well, and Lemlem was leaning over me. I am so sorry, father, for causing this terrible loss," Mehari said.

"What is more troubling," my father answered, "is that you cannot work until your wounds heal and we must now find a way to survive until you can. My blindness prevents me from making tools. Your brothers are too young to provide protection from the Christianos. All my own brothers are gone, gone to Jerusalem. What shall we do?" he asked, looking toward the stars for answers. "Shall we move from our village to a place where there are more of our people?"

We sit in silence. "Can we not carry Mehari to Jerusalem?" I ask respectfully, fearing my father's anger. He remains silent, thinking. "This is what we will do," he says, and for the first time since his accident blinded him, I hear the decisive voice of my father of old. "We will all go to Lasta. We will join Dawit's family and try to persuade them to go with us to Jerusalem. The way will be difficult, but I think that with things as they are we can do nothing else."

* * *

My story does not end here, as you might imagine. Believe it or not, I am writing now from Korea. You might well wonder how I got from a village in Ethiopia to this place in only a few short years. The answer, like the rest of my story, is filled with small miracles and fortuitous circumstances.

The way to Lasta was, indeed, a difficult one. We crossed the line of fire, evading both the rebel and the government forces with many near catastrophes, carrying Mehari and the remainder of our property. We arrived in Dawit's village just as they were preparing to send a runner to us saying that they had had emissaries from Jerusalem. Their message, "Now is the time, you must go to Sudan and from there you will be taken to Israel."

Well, the road to Sudan was long and harsh, and fraught with trials. The refugee camps where we waited to be redeemed were terrifying and filled with death. But by the grace of God we made it onto a flight to Israel, all of us safe and healthy – a very unusual outcome in that devastating place.

Dawit and I are the best of friends, and perhaps some day we will fulfil our parents' decree to marry. It would be a beautiful thing if we were to be married in Jerusalem, in a modern wedding hall, with all the family members who left Ethiopia years ago gathered around us. That would be good, but for now we are content to be friends and to finish our studies. Our parents are not happy with this decision of ours, but they understand that in Israel it is important to have an education.

My father's choice of a husband I can now see was a fortunate one, for Dawit is a man who understands my need to run. And this running has led to a profession – who would have thought? Later this morning I will be racing for Israel at the Olympics in Seoul, South Korea, and surely there could not be a stranger or happier ending to a story than mine.

I look out of my hotel room and admire the fog that floats over my balcony railing. It is not the thick impenetrable fog of Gonder, yet I know that it is a sign. For surely it is telling me that I will win my race and bring glory to my new land.

An Ethiopian-Israeli holds a little girl during the Ethiopian Jewish holiday, Sigad. It is a holiday that signifies the yearning for Zion, and its origin dates back more than 2,500 years. **[Isranet photo]**

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HAVING A WORD WITH GOD: An Israel Defence Force soldier is immersed in prayer at the Kotel. [Israel Sun photo]

At The Kotel

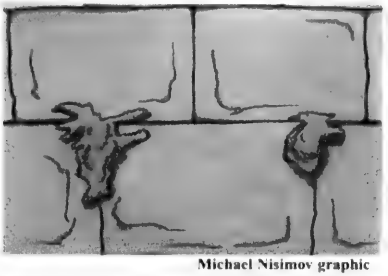
By Sandy Bye Richler

We are a circle praying
Breathing life into each sacred stone
Our feet fill the impressions
Of souls
unknown
Humble eyes gaze up with wonder
At this almighty sight
Filled with the hopes and fears we write.
This is not a wall that divides
It nurtures our faith
As we stand, side by side

This wall supports us, when we feel weak
Soothes the sorrow we dare not speak
Hope may crumble, but faith endures
In a world so insecure.
Promises were made in the sand
So dreams could flower in this Holy Land.

Rock of words
Who will be your voice?
So our stories are heard.
Tucked in a crevice at night
They lie untouched, under the moonlight.

Inspired
A gust of desert wind came along
Blowing the spirit of every note into a song
Hear o Israel
We all belong.



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Passover Greetings

Ode to an Israeli War

By Dana Gold

Sirens sounding
Children running
Soldiers shooting
The end is near
Yet it has just begun
Two sides
Two people
One country
Leader dying
People crying
Thousands of lives for the taking
Covering of the eyes
Shielding of the bodies
Holding on to those you love
Reciting of prayers
"Shema Yisrael HaShem Elokainu HaShem Echad"
Then it comes
Explosions
Fire
Blood
Tick tick tock
All is quiet
Wind is blowing
No one to be seen
No one to be heard
All is dead
All is fallen
The Israeli flag stands
Beauty in the wreckage
Blowing in the wind
Standing for freedom
For courage
For life
For the country that may be
For the country that will be
Forever tall
Forever standing
The Star of David stands free

Shalom, forever may you be in peace

A female Israeli soldier disguises herself with mud and twigs while training. [Isranet photo]

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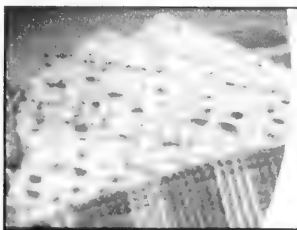

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Lunch with Izzie – November 1, 1994

A tribute to Irving Layton

By SHEL KRAKOFSKY

There are brightest apples on those
trees
but until I, fabulist, have spoken
they do not know their significance

With Dalia at the wheel, we pick him up on Monkland Avenue at his semi-detached, red brick house in the pleasant Notre Dame de Grâce neighbourhood of Montreal. He is charming to my wife, and during the ride to the trattoria, he asks if I speak Yiddish. Delighted that I do, he engages me in lighthearted banter and chitchat, obviously pleased and laughing that we are engaged in his earliest language. He refers to himself as Izzie.

As he gets out of his car, his Parkinson's disease is obvious, the short, hesitant strides diagnostic.

"Don't be so proud," I tell him. "Use a cane. The last thing you need is a broken hip."

"I don't need a cane," he says mildly. I hold him under the arm the rest of the way. He doesn't resist.

* * *

All this I saw through my improved
binoculars.

He has brought two books with him, his own, *A Wild Peculiar Joy*, and another called *Escape from Evil* by Ernest Becker. Almost as soon as we are seated, he begins to admonish me "not to write another poem, not to read another book, not to experience anything whatsoever until you've read Becker's book." Still exaggerating after all these years.

Irving Layton

He is distinguished, with stylishly long white hair, and despite gentle wrinkles and facial age spots, he looks completely appropriate with jeans, sweater and a pipe. When I tell him I recently received a letter from one of his former students telling me that he was the greatest teacher she ever had (she is now a neurologist), he is excited.

"No praise means more to me. Nothing good that has ever been written about me means more to me than to be told I was a good teacher."

I show him my small date book where I jotted down the name and address of the restaurant. Printed on each page is a saying or quotation. By happy coincidence, today's entry says: "By walking, I found out where I was going." — Irving Layton.

"You see," he declares, "I really am timeless!"

* * *

Spry and drugged with love
I pole-vault
over my grave.

He knows what I do for a living. He begins a diatribe against the medical profession. "You guys know about the body, but nothing about the soul. You have to deal with both when you're treating people. I've been asked by the medical school to give a seminar to the students on that very topic. The soul is very important, you know."

I tell him, "The soul you think you know about has nothing to do with the real soul. When you talk about pole-vaulting over your grave, that has nothing to do with souls. It has only to do with extending mortality, with delaying death. Fair enough, but it has nothing to do with the soul as a Jewish concept. You only think of it in a Dionysian way. Pleasure, passion, emotion,-esthetics. Your poetry only deals with your version of soul in this world. It's the soul that remains after the pole-vaulting is over that is significant. You don't mean *neshamah*, the soul that goes with you after life. The soul your father believed in."

"I try not to think about it, but now that you mention it, I now recall when I first comprehended your version of the soul. I was six years old and my mother was cupping her hands over and blessing the Shabbos candles. I distinctly remember thinking of that Jewish flame as something eternal."

Continued on page B15

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2006 Literary Supplement

Passover Greetings

'For reasons of rebellion, he never had a bar mitzvah'

Continued from page B14

"You were prescient and a poet at six! Are you familiar with the *ner tamid*? That's what you discovered over your mother's Sabbath candles. It's the flame over the ark in synagogues."

"Ah yes. What does it mean?"

"It means eternal light and it stays on all the time. It represents the continuity of mankind, the omnipresence of God and what we're talking about – the immortality of the soul."

"You mean the *neshamah*."

"Yes. Do you believe in it?"

A long pause as he returns to his food. "It's possible," he says without expression.

* * *

Whatever else poetry is freedom

He is complimentary about my writing and begins to recite some of my own poetry aloud to the amused and bemused customers. He then announces that he plans to attend the reading that I have been invited to give in Montreal that evening. "I'd be delighted to have you in the audience," I say with some understatement.

"I don't want to just sit there," he booms. "I want to give a reading too!"

"I'm honoured," I tell him, and don't mind at all sharing the stage with him.

He laughs, "Don't be so honoured. I'm not going for reasons of community. I'm going for reasons of vanity!"

* * *

It took me too long to perceive that
there is a God who doesn't exist
anywhere, not in the heavens or
in the hearts of men

He mentions that for reasons of rebellion, he never had a bar mitzvah. He is approaching his 83rd birthday. I tell him there is a tradition of having a bar mitzvah at that age, because 13 plus the proverbial three score and ten adds up to 83.

"But I don't know which portion of the Torah corresponds to my birth date."

It's easily looked up, I tell him, if he gives me his birth date. March 12, 1912, he writes on a piece of paper

"I'm not even sure if that's right. Coming from Romania, I was told later my birth date was either March 5 or March 12. Eventually, I decided on March 12. You know why?" He pauses with a dramatic grin. "That's the day Stalin died!"

"Do you want to have a bar mitzvah?"

"If you make me one, I'll be there. And I'll give a reading."

"You don't have to give a reading. But you would have to learn the proper blessings to say over the Torah."

"I know *broches* [blessings]," he boasts and rapidly recites in Hebrew the blessing over bread. "And I'll give a reading."

"You would have to learn the proper blessings."

"Easy. And then I'll give a reading. How much do I get paid?"

"Nobody gets paid for having a bar mitzvah."

"I know one isn't supposed to touch cash on the Sabbath, so pay me by cheque. And I'll give a reading."

"Sorry, no deal. Think about it some more and if you're still interested in having a bar mitzvah, let me know."

"And I'll give a reading."

* * *

I tread with them the selfsame
antique road
and seek everywhere the faintest
scent of God

He reminisces about David Lewis and A.M. Klein. "I used to love listening to them debate. They never lost to anybody. If David was ever boxed into a corner, he would devastate his opponents with a barrage of logic they couldn't handle. And Abe could pummel his opponents with brilliant and merciless wit. In private, the two of them debated often, but they were smart enough never to take each other on in public."

* * *

How to dominate reality? Love is
one way; imagination another.

He is wistful when he describes the relationship between David and Sophie Lewis.

"They taught me about love. I never knew what love was until I met those two. Completely devoted and infatuated with each other. Nothing I ever wrote, read or lived came close. I still haven't seen the kind of lasting love those two had."

Dalia would later note that despite his many relationships, poems and marriages, not ever finding the kind of love he saw in the Lewises has been the greatest tragedy of his colourful life.

* * *

Living is an affair for aristocrats

When it is time to leave, Dalia points out that if he were Picasso, it would only be necessary for him to sign the bill and we could have eaten for free. He playfully takes the bill, signs it and draws a cute self-caricature. The eyes are shaped like two question marks.

"Let's see what happens," he says.

The waiter doesn't even look at the bill.

* * *

And I, a singer in season observe
Death as a name for beauty not in
use

At the evening reading, the audience is very warm to his unannounced arrival. Gasps, hugs, good wishes all around. When he is introduced, he walks briskly and confidently to the podium. He is pole-vaulting over all his infirmities. He gives a superb reading, the voice sure, the cadences unmistakable, the emotion true. He reads some of his best and most famous poems and concludes with a moving version of *Keine Lazarovitch: 1870-1959*

To enthusiastic applause, he leaves the stage with the brio and walk of a much younger man. He takes his seat beside me and asks, "Well, how did I do?"

"You know what?" I tell him. "I think you have a future."

"My problem," he says with a toothy smile, "is that I have a past!"

* * *

but shall bring to you from time to
time my hot Hebrew heart

Will Izzie Lazarovitch have a bar mitzvah? The only thing I know for certain is that Irving Layton will give a reading.

Shel Krakofsky has twice received the National Jewish Book Prize for poetry. He practices medicine in London, Ont., and was the founding editor of Parchment.

Teltime watch

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Barmaid

By LYNN GOLD

Harry could do no wrong. Wild as he was, whatever tricks he played on his sisters, his mother, Malka, forgave and excused him, and acted as a buffer between him and his father's anger. He was the only son left of 14 babies, seven of whom survived infancy.

Even when he swapped a shoe brush for Papa's hair brush, she covered for him. Papa was already stone blind, but still very vain about his luxuriant beard and hair. That morning, he came to breakfast streaked with brown shoe polish from crown to collar. Malka glared at the children to stop them from giggling or commenting on their father's bizarre appearance. Later she warned them all, "Not a word to your father about this." Papa never learned of Harry's practical joke. Harry was Malka's darling.

By the time he was 20, he had run through and ruined two business enterprises funded by his father. They dissolved in bars and racetracks, and into the pockets of his drinking pals.

Papa refused to back this profligate son again. Malka pleaded, "He's only a boy. It was his friends that ruined him. Give him another chance."

When Papa proved immovable, she sneaked her savings to Harry.

"Jake Singer's putting up his haberdashery for sale. His doctor says his heart won't take it any more. It's a nice little business, and he'll accept this much as down payment."

It wasn't enough for Harry's grandiose schemes. He went back to the track and put it all on the nose of a long shot that never even made it to the finish line. He told his mother he'd been rolled in a bar.

Malka said, "My poor boy, you just don't have any mazel [luck]. But bars are no place to meet nice people."

His only recourse now was to marry money. With his good looks, curly black hair and magnetic charm, he had the pick of the girls in town. But his target was the 33-year-old spinster daughter and only child of the town's richest banker. He wooed, won and married Rose within a space of five weeks. Knowing that his security lay with his father-in-law, he impregnated her within a month. They brought forth three children in the first five years.

Malka fended off criticism of this May-December marriage. "Rose will make him a good wife. Yes, she's 13 years older. But she's steady – she'll be a good influence on him. She's a nice Jewish girl. And look at her father, the richest man in town!"

His timing was bad. The youngest child was a year old in 1929 when the market crashed and every bank in the state went under. Harry had no expectations and was saddled with a plain and querulous woman and three children. No more treating the boys at the bar. No more racetrack.

> ***With his good looks, curly black hair and magnetic charm, he had the pick of the girls in town***

For the next 20 years, he was a hard-working employee at the hardware store. Harry supported his family but became miserly, saving every dollar he could. He was a devoted father and a stoic husband.

Malka boasted, "You see? He's a good boy. He just needed to settle down."

When the youngest child went off to college, Harry walked out, taking only $10,000 for a new start. He bought a bar in Belle Glade, a watering hole in the heart of Florida's agricultural belt, where the rich soil yielded three crops a year to ship to the fruit-and-vegetable-starved north.

Malka said, "That Rose has a tongue like a whip. She's never had a sweet word to say to him. As long as he takes care of the children, I know he did the right thing to leave."

The farmers spent lots of money in Harry's bar. They liked his breezy bonhomie and enjoyed watching his pretty barmaid Claire. But not one of them tried anything. Harry had a fearsome temper, and they knew Claire was Harry's property.

In 10 years, he had enough to sell the bar and buy a motel on the Sunshine Coast. He did the yard work and cleaned the pool, and Claire made beds and scrubbed toilets. She was a good, fast-working chambermaid.

Malka said, "The hotel business is clean and steady, not like a bar. A bar is no place for him. What kind of people come to a bar? Goyim! Shikkurs! [Gentiles! Drunks!] He's smart; he'll make a fortune."

She even forgave him for living with a shiksah. "You know men. A man needs a woman. Just as long as he doesn't bring her into my house." She added, "He'll meet a nice Jewish girl, you'll see. He's not too old to get married again. Any girl would be glad to marry my Harry."

Continued on page B17

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'I have no son'

Continued from page B16

When he saw grey at his temples, Harry called his nephew, the attorney, to make him a will. The lawyer was appalled to learn that Harry had never divorced Rose or married Claire. His whole estate, by law, would go to his wife and children.

"You've lived with Claire and exploited her all these years. You have to take care of her. I'll file for the divorce and you marry her as soon as it's final, Uncle Harry. You have to regularize her status and rights." Harry agreed, and the divorce and remarriage were accomplished in record time.

Malka called her daughters together. "Your brother has broken the faith. He is no longer a member of our people or a member of our family. I have no son. We will mourn your brother together."

Her youngest daughter implored her. "Mama, mama, Harry's not dead. He's happy for the first time in years. All that time living without love, and now..."

Malka clenched her sodden handkerchief and closed her swollen eyelids. "She's a shiksah. Rose was a nice Jewish girl. My son is dead and I will sit shivah for him."

For a week, surrounded by her daughters, she sat in a hard chair in her bedroom slippers. She rent her garments. All that time she wept and mourned. This was not a typical shivah with many visitors eating the food spread on the dining room table. There was no gossip, no laughter, no family catching up on stories. They all knew that Malka would never again utter her son's name, to the day she died.

Her daughter watched her grow old before her eyes. "Mama, mama, you're hurting yourself more than you're hurting Harry."

"How can I hurt him? He's dead."

"Mama, why are you so hard on yourself?"

Malka sat rigid in the hard chair, the white hairs slipping from her neat bun, shoulders bowed and hands folded in her lap. She intoned the stock, standard phrase that the children had had drummed into them all their lives.

"It's hard to be a Jew."

NO MONKEY BUSINESS: Even the apes in Israel celebrate Passover by eating matzah. **[Israpet photo]**

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Upon Reading
A Case for Peace

By Jesse Schwartz

And from the flames of Auschwitz came the rage
The sadness and the loss, the grim desire
To understand why widow, orphan, sage
Were gassed and tossed like wood into the fire

But with the tears and ashes came a nation
And passion to fight off the final doom
We saved ourselves from annihilation
And with our sweat we made the desert bloom

But still this nation, harbour of my hope
Is treated like no other of the earth
Condemned by most as it attempts to cope
With those who would reverse its very birth

Before you judge, learn what we've won and lost
A hollow word can have a deadly cost

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Ner Tamid
'A lamp from the Lord is the soul of a man'

– Proverbs, 20.27

By George Bernstein

Neshamah, the soul's
eternal light, divine
spark from the Shchinah
flaming our holiness,
neshamah, our borrowed Kedushah

Even as the Celestial Gates of
Neilah are closing
Neshamah sends a messenger
pleading
before the Heavenly Tribunal

Neshamah planted at
birth, the seed
blossoming into our
first cry

And with
sighs
of a
spent leaf

Flutters
down
with our
last
breath

Ascending
through
galaxies
to Him

Returning as
Mashiach's
finger
touches
an
Olive Mount
stone

Neshamah
eternal
as
the
universe.

DANCING IN THE STREETS: Israelis celebrate Purim with a parade in Tel Aviv.

Israel

By Joseph E. Rubenstein

The pinch of constant bewilderment
captivated my senses –
immersed amongst the everyday life
of my people;
on their turf
in my homeland

The constant chatter humming
with birds and music in the background
the sun shining down on the Holy Land –
outdoor cafés in full swing
with endless activity bustling

The multinational mosaic
all members of the same culture
the Russian Jew on the organ
the Ethiopian Jews playing
with delight in the wonders of the street
the European Jew immersed in the crowd,
the born Israeli, busy, in love with their life, their country,
the elderly, who come at the end of
their lives, the closer to God
and me, the tourist from
Canada trying to figure it out only
to realize that it is unnecessary to do so.

Although at 21 years of age,
this is my first visit to
this land; I have realized
that it is my home

Was part of my soul
before I set foot on its
soil and inspired me during
my visit and I am
convinced that I will be drawn
here for the rest of
my life.

This land of my father's and his
this land of mine
this land belongs to my sons
to all the children of God

This land goes beyond
the magical into the realm
of the mystic
to a place not eroded by
time but improved – safer, and
stronger by the minute,
comfortable, beautiful and warm
this is the promised land.

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Passover Greetings

Interior of Bordeaux Synagogue with its Architect Corcelles, oil on canvas by Jean Lubin Vauzelle Angerville (born Engerville 1776)

The Old Synagogue

By Mandy Lirit Ginzburg

Where men bob heads under stitched prayer shawls
like buoys in the sea, where the eternal
flame fights with its flickering reflection
like boxers throwing punches in the ring,
where the chazzans' haunting voices sing,
trailing goosebumps on the congregants' skin,
where paint dulls the outline of swastikas,
scabbing the bricks by the hands of haters
remember the covenanted rainbow, oh Lord,
and do not flood our land with blood again,

where women sway, balancing babies on
their hips, and whisper lisped prayers, moving
slightly their lips, as Chana in Shiloh,
where the rabbi lowers his Brillo-
like beard, na na-ing and oy oy-ing into
the coiling mass, wrapping his tallis tighter,
tassels sweeping the floor, he stands beside
the Ark, smelling the oak where the Torahs
are chested, spilling God's words, where children
play in holiness, barefoot like Moses, answering Amen.

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On my Birthday

By Sam Lewkowict
(10 years old)

At my birth I was eight pounds,
At his birth he almost died.

When I turned one, my parents loved me,
When he turned one, his parents got taken away.

When I turned two, my parents carried me all over the house,
When he turned two, he was chased by the Nazis.

When I turned three, I went to bed without a fuss.
When he turned three, he wished he had a bed.

When I turned four, I got a tricycle.
When he turned four, he got a tattoo with numbers.

When I turned five, I ate chocolate,
When he turned five, he ate tar.

When I turned six, I broke my shoulder,
When he turned six, the Nazis broke his spirit.

When I turned seven, I dreamed about heaven,
He never turned seven, and his soul went up to heaven.

NOT STOPPING TO SMELL THE ROSES: Three Israel Defence Force soldiers in the Egoz unit blend in with their colourful surroundings while training. [Israel photo]

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Barbara

By RUTH ALMON

Barbara awoke each morning at exactly 7 a.m. and started the day with a cup of tea and three chocolate chip cookies – one of the few luxuries she allowed herself.

The first time she approached a supermarket in her adopted country, she stood a long while at the entrance, watching people enter and leave. Only the next day did she venture in to look at the high shelves packed with strange products that taunted her. She dared not buy anything for fear it would not be what she expected. Yet, if she left empty-handed, people would notice.

After walking along the aisles, after selecting and rejecting countless items, Barbara, with a fine line of sweat running down her back, settled on a bag of chocolate chip cookies. The sweat made her want to scratch, but she held back. Facing the gum-chewing cashier, Barbara reached into her purse and indiscriminately pulled out a bill, unable to make out the denomination.

"What country prints all its money in the same colour?" she thought.

Barbara occasionally wondered who she might have been had she not experienced the war. Certainly, she would have been less timid. But between work and raising David and Dina, life left her little spare time for such pondering. The fact was that a young girl named Sophie died and kept on living and assumed an American-sounding name – though it never sounded very American when Barbara herself pronounced it.

Whose fault is it if one survives?

She rarely allowed her mind to stray onto thoughts of how she would have lived her new life if she had not met Max. It was unthinkable.

Max found it difficult to suppress a slight smile when he saw her for the first time, battling with herself and the supermarket. He knew her even before they spoke. The second time he saw her there, he plunged straight into Yiddish, asking her if she needed any help. She opened her mouth, unable to speak.

"It's OK," he said. "I understand."

Max's passion was music. In Czechoslovakia, he played the cello, but since his fingers were injured during the war, he opened a shop for classical sheet music. He slowly taught his wife everything he knew about the business. For years, they worked side by side, and on Thursdays, they went to the supermarket to do their weekly shopping. And when, now and again, too many memories percolated to the surface, Max would hold her while neither of them said a word.

Barbara picked up her third cookie and took a bite out of it, leaving a small bit to go with her last sip of tea. She showered and put on a beige skirt and a cream-coloured blouse. Only rarely did she go into the music shop since David took over. Her son had remodelled and expanded it, and added a section for modern music. Barbara was pleased, but now that Max was gone, it was not her shop anymore. She would never think to advise David on how to run the business that she helped build for so many years – and besides, he would never ask.

Today was a Monday, which meant that Barbara would visit her daughter. Dina was named after Barbara's little sister, though no one knew. When her daughter was born, Barbara took a long look at the infant and stated, "This child must be named Dina."

Just like that. This display of self-assurance was so totally out of character that Max never thought to ask why she chose the name Dina. He knew that Barbara had once had a little sister named Helen. He'd never known her Hebrew name.

Dina was forever trying to encourage her mother to get out, try new things, join clubs. When Dina started one of her campaigns, Barbara found that the easiest line of action was to agree to think about it. She hadn't liked going to new places when Max was alive, and now, two years after his death, she liked it even less.

"Why don't you try some of the activities at the shul?"

"You know I'm not religious. What business have I to do there?"

Continued on page B23

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'Barbara's skin seemed to echo the grate of the barbed wire'

Continued from page B22

"C'mon… you don't have to be religious. They've got lots of cultural activities. And it's so close to home. It'd be good for you to meet new people."

Dina had spent a lot of time at the synagogue as a member of the youth group, as a camper and later a counsellor. It was so familiar that she found it difficult to see it as her mother saw it – a threatening place. But any unfamiliar place was a threatening place for Barbara.

"Yes, I'll check what they have. Maybe I pick up a brochure next week."

They both knew their lines well.

"I heard there's a concert at the synagogue. We could go together."

"I don't want to hear a klezmer band."

"Why are you so negative? I haven't even told you what it is yet."

Dina got up to take her son, Mark, out of his high chair and placed him on his grandmother's lap.

"It's a cantor. I heard he has a wonderful voice. You know you're a sucker for a great voice."

"When is this concert?"

"The day after tomorrow. I'll let you know what time."

"Fine," said Barbara, with seeping regret.

Dina arrived at her mother's apartment building just as the concert was starting. Barbara had been waiting in the lobby for 20 minutes.

"It'll be all right," Dina assured her, seeing how anxious she was to enter a darkened auditorium.

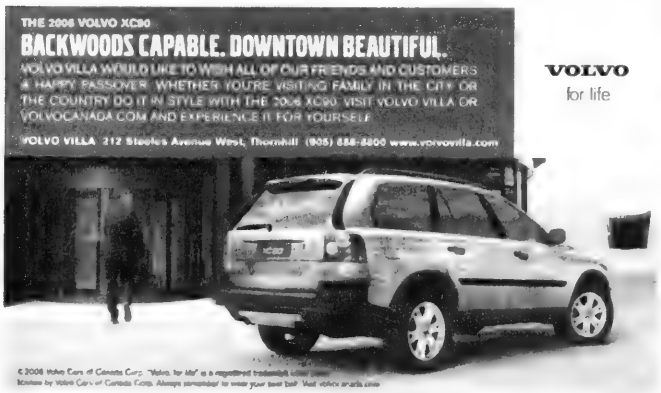
"It's only a little concert at the shul. There won't be many people. We'll go in the side entrance. We won't bother anyone. I'll pay Moshe for the tickets on the way out."

This unsettled Barbara even more. Entering without paying? She was lost. Out of her element. In her daughter's hands. She had no choice other than to trust Dina to navigate her through this predicament.

As planned, they slipped in quietly and sat down. Dina relaxed. She turned to her mother expecting her to be relieved, but Barbara was staring hard at the stage. She was taking in the black backdrop and the memorial candles. One corner of the stage was covered in barbed wire. The other had a large piece of black cardboard on which children, who were now filing in from the wings, had written the names of people they'd never known.

Barbara's skin seemed to echo the grate of the barbed wire. Dina realized her mistake. The synagogue was observing Holocaust Remembrance Day, as it did every

Continued on page B24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'No, they were not saints. They were not holy'

Continued from page B23

year. Teenagers stood solemnly on the stage, much like Dina had done herself 10 years ago, though her mother had not come to see her. Dina would have laughed at the mix-up if she had not seen the look on her mother's face.

A lens suddenly focused. Though Dina considered herself informed about the Holocaust, she never thought of it as something her mother had actually experienced. The look in her mother's eyes – eyes that reflected a multitude of untold stories – made the Holocaust more real for her at that moment than any ceremony could.

"If you want, we can just get up and go – simple as that," Dina offered. Her mother did not answer. She simply stared as the children came up, one by one, and read the names of their deceased relatives.

"Henrick Rosenblatt, my mother's grandfather, Sarah Fishenson, my mother's aunt and Yankel, her husband."

"Leo and Hilda Straus, my father's aunt and uncle and their son Shmuel…"

One after another, they gave testimony to nearly forgotten relatives.

"…and my mother's aunt, Freda, and my mother's uncle…"

"… my mother's grandfather, Isaac…"

Barbara sat transfixed by the proceedings. She followed every word, every nuance, as though making up for the attention she hadn't paid to Holocaust books and films, ceremonies and conversations – all so carefully avoided. Now, she was both fully there, yet somewhere else entirely.

"Joseph Cohen, my father's brother, Lea Cohen, my…"

Dina saw that her mother was watching, so she sat back to follow the proceedings. When the reading of the names finished, the sought-after cantor was introduced and appeared on stage.

He was a formidable man, wide-shouldered, bearded. He began to sing a memorial prayer. The roundness of his voice enveloped the listeners.

"Let us remember the six million…"

Barbara felt as if she could reverberate in resonance with his song.

"… to find eternal rest and…"

She could lose herself entirely, cease to exist outside his voice…

"…the holy and the pure of heart who met their deaths…"

"No," Barbara whispered.

"Let us remember the holy and the pure. The holy and the pure…"

"It's not right." Her eyes opened wide.

"Shhhh, what's not right?" Dina asked.

"No, it must not be said," Barbara continued, raising her voice. All heads turned to look at her, but for once she did not care.

"No. You must correct this. Stop!" Barbara shouted, standing up. Dina put her arm around her mother and tried to lead her out of the auditorium, but she would not have any of it.

'Do holy and pure tell jokes and make jam?'

Some members of the audience gave inquisitive looks, but most flashed nasty stares as though to say, "What right do you have?" Barbara was now advancing towards the stage.

The rabbi was moving in her direction, the cantor was reduced to a hesitant mumble.

"No, they were not saints. They were not holy," she cried out with a voice 50 years silent.

"I know! I was there!" she yelled to an old man whose arm she clutched for balance.

"They were people! People! The Nazis made them not people, but I know, I saw, I know they were not holy," she said to a woman who stared indignantly.

The rabbi tried to direct her out of the room but Barbara would not be directed.

"They read," she shouted, "and they spat and they played the cello and some smelled – yes, even before the war, and they argued and they loved each other, and sometimes they loved before the marriage, and they made laundry and jam. They always made jam in the spring. Do holy and pure make laundry?" she asked the cantor.

"Do holy and pure tell jokes and make jam?" she asked the rabbi.

He did not hear her cry. He was surveying the audience for a doctor.

Continued on page B25

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'The world had become a less frightening place'

Continued from page B24

"Do they?" she questioned, now poking a finger in the direction of the cantor. "Do they? Because," she said, now speaking in little over a whisper as she collapsed into Dina's arms, "if they are not people, then you can do anything to them, can't you? And they did – yes, I was there. In the camp they were not people, only skin and bones, skin and bones – holy, yes, holy…" she continued in a barely audible voice.

"Let me take you home," said Dina.

Barbara allowed herself to be ushered out, and a greatly abridged version of the ceremony continued without her. The cantor restarted his prayer after they left. No one in the room understood what Barbara had said. They were too taken aback by the passion of the outburst.

After what was referred to as "the incident" – when it was referred to at all – Barbara started going out of her apartment more often. The world had become a less frightening place. She even told Dina to stop doing her shopping for her. Mostly, she spent a lot more time with her grandson.

"And here is another big, big strawberry for you. Sweet boy," she said to her grandson.

"When I was little, everyone made jam at home. Bread too. Everyone thought making jam was hard work, but Dina, she loved it. We would eat half the fruit before we put in the jam. Oh yes, Marky, you would have loved my sister, Dina. She has the same name as your mother. Your Mummy was named after her, you know. Now help me to put all the strawberries into this big, big pot."

[RNS/Reuters photo]

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The Passover Dishes

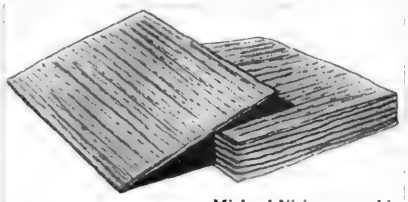
By MIRIAM PRESZOW WEINER

I can remember at the age of three standing on a chair at the sink in Mrs. Soifer's kitchen. This was where I would help my mother wash and dry all the Passover dishes in preparation for the seder night.

My parents had rented a room in Mrs. Soifer's house. We were only permitted kitchen privileges on Friday nights and religious holidays. All other times, we would have to eat in a small corner of the room my parents had rented.

The room was simple. It had a double bed where we all slept. Beside the bed was a counter with a small sink, and on the floor stood a small ice box. We had a small table and four chairs in the far corner of the room. This was where we would eat all our meals, often by candlelight, in order to save electricity. Mrs. Soifer was very strict about that.

My parents were Holocaust survivors. They arrived in Halifax harbour by boat with my brother and me back in 1950. Shortly thereafter, we travelled to Montreal and moved in with Mrs. Soifer. Daddy would often tell me the story of how all he had was five dollars in his pocket the day we arrived. They had also somehow managed to save a few precious belongings, which they had buried somewhere in Poland during their flight from the Nazis. Among the belongings were the Passover dishes and my father's treasured cup for Eliyahu.



Michael Nisimov graphic

That week, the Passover holidays were upon us, and it was my special job to help Mummy get the dishes ready for the seder night. I stood there and ever so carefully wiped dry each special, treasured dish. Being new immigrants, we did not have many material possessions, but at Passover time, when the treasured dishes graced our seder table, we all felt like royalty. The dishes were so beautiful. They had a pure white background, trimmed with pink, blue and purple Victorian roses.

Passover was my favourite holiday. After Daddy made all the brachahs, broke the matzah, hid the afikoman, and we asked the Four Questions, we could begin the Passover meal.

First came the eggs in salt water, placed in little bowls so we could mash them and turn it into egg soup. Then came the sweet gefilte fish in broth, again in little bowls, so we could dip the matzah. The horseradish always added a touch of zest and opened our nostrils. Then came the chicken soup with matzah balls. I felt like a real princess, sitting on a chair that had a soft pillow for extra comfort on the seder night, sipping the matzah ball soup out of those royal dishes. The roasted chicken and brisket, with potato kugel, which was always an extra special treat, tasted even more special when they were served on the Passover dishes. The dessert, fruit compote, was served in small dessert bowls, and on the side was a piece of Mummy's homemade sponge cake.

I loved the Passover seder, and my favourite part was welcoming Eliyahu the Passover prophet. It was my job to open the door as my dad would finish reading the Haggadah. Daddy always filled Eliyahu's cup to the rim. The cup had a beautiful hand-painted chicken and rooster on it. My brother Gerry and I would keep our eyes focused on the cup, to see if we could catch a glimpse of Eliyahu taking a sip. It was simply magical. The table always trembled, and the rim of the cup always seemed to drip ever so slightly.

After dessert, my brother and I would always search for the afikoman so we could get a prize. My brother, who was four years older than me, was always the first one to find it. I didn't care, because I was the one who got to help Mummy wash the Passover dishes.

Last year, my brother's mother-in-law passed away after a lengthy illness. I went to Montreal that week to be with the family. My mother, who was living in a seniors' residence, came to the shivah every day and stayed until way after the evening prayers. I stayed an extra day, as it was my birthday. My brother and mother and I drove to the cemetery to see my dad and other family members who were now long gone. Later that day, my brother and mother dropped me off at the train station. We hugged and kissed, and I got on the train.

One week later, one day before Chanukah, in her 90th year, Mummy passed away. She had her lunch, sat down in her chair to watch TV, and went to sleep. The rabbi said she passed like a righteous soul, with a kiss from God.

Continued on page B27

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2006 Literary Supplement

Passover Greetings

A little girl reads the haggadah at a Passover seder in Israel.

'I leaned against the wall and wept and prayed...'

Continued from page B26

The Passover dishes were left for me to share with family and generations to come.

Because it was Chanukah, we lit candles every night at the shivah, and to me it was as if the light from the Chanukah candles illuminated her path into the heavens.

Three weeks later, I was to make my first trip to Israel. This trip had been arranged months earlier, and I had waited more than 55 years to make the journey. I had mixed emotions about going.

However, family and friends reassured me that this was the right thing to do, so I made the trip.

I walked to the Wailing Wall on a Sabbath morning in the pouring rain. I left notes that I had prepared the day before. Overwhelmed with emotion, I leaned against the wall and wept and prayed, and wept and prayed, and wept and prayed. I left tears for Mummy and Daddy and other family members we had loved and lost. I left tears of sorrow, and I left tears of joy, and I thanked God for his blessings. I prayed to God to continue to bless us and keep us safe.

Thirty days after Mummy passed on, I made a trip to the ancient holy city of Safed. I entered one of the oldest synagogues in the city. I spoke with the rabbi who was sitting there. I told him the story of how Mummy had passed away. His eyes gleamed at me with awe. He asked me the name of my mother and father, and he made a special prayer, as I lit two candles and placed them with all the other candles, in memory of those who were now gone. I could feel my parents' spirits close to me.

This year, on Rosh Hashanah morning, I took the small silver siddur that Mummy had brought me from Israel the year I got married. I stood outside in the garden and I prayed for God's blessings. When I came in, I went into the kitchen to finish preparing the matzah ball soup that I was bringing to my children's house for dinner. Suddenly, without warning, the kitchen cupboard began to move away from the wall. The cupboard doors began to open, and the dishes started moving. The entire cupboard and all the dishes inside came tumbling down on top of me.

My mother's Passover dishes, which were stored at the top of the cupboard, and my father's wine cup smashed into thousands of pieces. The cupboard sideswiped me and hit the wall behind me, where a hamsa from Israel with a blessing for the house was hanging. My mother's sugar bowl which was still filled with sugar, sprinkled sugar all over me, the kitchen, and parts of the apartment. I suffered a concussion, as well as cuts and bruises and severe trauma.

There must have been angels in the kitchen that Rosh Hashanah day – angels who somehow managed to save me from disaster. It seems as if the dishes were sacrificed for my life.

I have placed all the broken pieces in a box. I cannot part with them, even though they are broken.

The gravy cup and four soup bowls remain intact. This Passover, there will be new dishes for the seder, but the gravy cup will sit on the table as a treasured memory, and the four remaining soup bowls will be filled with matzah ball soup.

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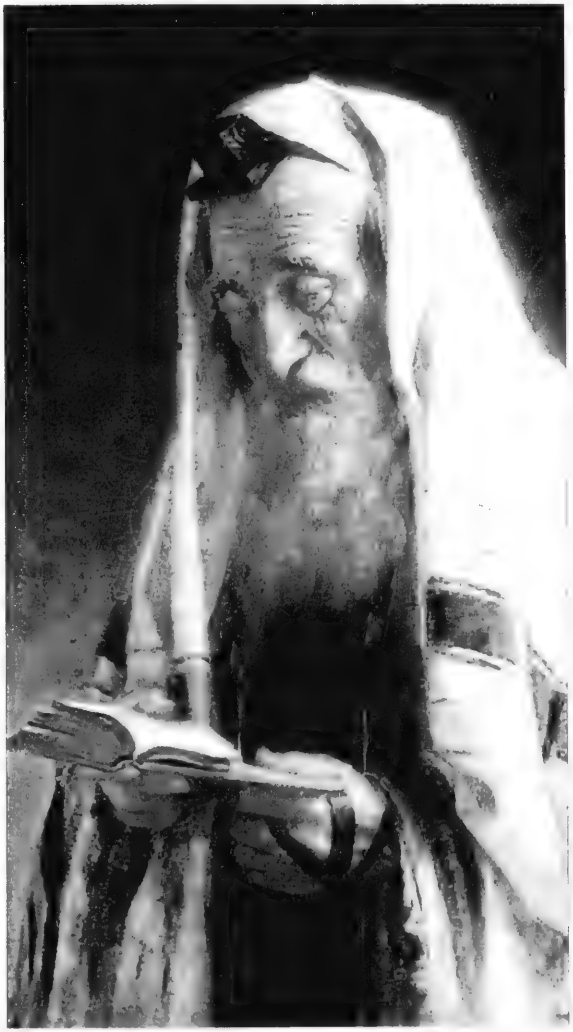
Kol Hakavod to the Older Men at Shul

By Andrew Fainer

Kol hakavod to the older men at shul.
They show honour to the Almighty and his creatures…
Well, I love their wisecracks as expressions of affection except when they are not,
that they learn with the Rabbi even when they pretend not to,
and that they talk privately to the Almighty in a silent prayer.
They mourn, provide comfort
and eat and drink with blessing, whether or not they pronounce one.
Otherwise to be always in His presence if you were always in His presence
you'd be like a fish out of water
which is why these honourable men swim in shuls.



Detail of *Morning Prayers*, oil on canvas by Isaac Snowman

Fire and Wine

By Israel Sarna

Two candles on fire
One design-carved cup overflowing wine
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Plucked from the antique Ashkenazi
And seraphic Sephardi repertoire
As braided challah loaves tangle together under cloth
Like conspicuous lovers under their wedding canopy

However strong it comes on
Havdalah always has the last say
A stretching braided candle whose twist is flamed
Its light reflecting in nail mirrors on fingertips
While its loyal red libation accomplice
drips from the same silver cup
kissed by Kiddush hours earlier

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To Golda: Lady of a Thousand Names

Golda Meir

By Donia B. Clenman

Golda Meyerson
of Pinsk
"a little too cold outside,
a little too empty inside,"
who ventured beyond the Pale
to Kiev
to keep two calendars
one for the coming of the Cossacks
the other for the Messiah

Golda Meyerson
of Milwaukee,
who at fifteen
quarrelled with the Lord,
and preached Zionism
in front of a weeping shul,
to the "shande" of her father's honour

Golda Meyerson,
"Goldale,"
who loved gentle Morris
and babes
and heartbroken,
never sought another love,
for Israel's children
were her own.

Golda Meyerson
of Tel Aviv,
who did not fear
Kruschev
Atlee
His Holiness,
always stating passionately:
"We are an ancient people."

Golda Meir
Jerusalem –
who loved orphans
justice
people
and wept
when 10,000 thronged in Bucharest
crying 'Goldale! Goldale!'
but shed no tear
when burying Jewish soldiers.

Golda Meir
– Ambassador –
who in sloppy dress
greeted the British and Russians
with dignity;
Fun Lady,
"Paramount Chief-Initiated,"
bright-eyed, bright-robed,
frolicking with Liberia's chieftains,
and singing on Lapland's frozen lakes.

Golda
of Pinsk
Milwaukee
Jerusalem
descendant of kings and prophets
lean are your sinews,
merciful your thunder,
your wrinkles as deep as history
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Detail of *The Curiel Family* at Passover, oil on canvas by Bernard Picart (1673-1733)

Rebecca's Soliloquy

By Rose Romberg

Rebecca's footsteps tread diamond
studded grass.

A rare warm April 1st, the
threshold of Passover.
Spring awakens maiden season.
Bluebells and trillium weave
earth's course canvas, spiced
with purple and crimson mushrooms.

Meandering along a gossamer
aura beckons her into the
mystical woods.
Roaming among ash-dry tree trunks,
their spindly arms hang bereft
from winter's cruel bite.
Her hands brush aside scratchy
web-like branches.
Bewitched at the haunted setting
staged by Nature's stroke.

Homeward bound along the winding
trail, Rebecca views an elderly man
and woman on a withered bench
under a looming willow.
Hands locked, they sit in silence.
A far-away look veils misty eyes.
Thoughts interlaced like the Sabbath challah.
Together, they have tasted the bitter
and the sweetness of life.

Rebecca arrives at her sun-bathed
flowering garden.
Peeking over the sculptured rocks,
delicate faces, violet, yellow-
eyed pansies, lavender and
white crocus, smile at her.

In a moment of fantasy,
Rebecca envisions a childhood scene.

Momma's Seder Table.
Young happy eyes watch
candlelight flicker and dart
over Elijah's Koyse brimming
ruby-red wine ripple.

Her spirit dances in anticipation
soon, to be at the festive Seder Table.

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Somewhere

By Pamela Scher

Somewhere in between
The Judean Desert of milk and honey hills,
The smooth stones of the Kinneret,
The melted sapphires of the red sea.

Somewhere in between
The pomegranate mountains of Jordan,
The sunset stains on the Mediterranean,
The laboured Earth, drenched with sweat.

Somewhere in between
The strength of the Golan,
The salty wall of wishes,
The Olive Mount.

Somewhere in between
The saffron of the Negev,
The proud palm trees,
The calm of a Jerusalem night;
I found what I was looking for.

As the wind rippled through the morning,
Standing on two thousand threads of time,
I felt it.
Eternity.

***Jerusalem*, oil on canvas by Friedrich Otto Georgi (1819-1874)**

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MARKHAM

How to make Bubbie Annie's chicken soup

By APRIL LAUFER

Not so very long ago, an announcement appeared in our community newspaper: "Whoever can make the best chicken soup in all the kingdom should come forward."

One by one, young and old, short and tall, thin and fat – I had no doubt that there would be many who would try. Not me.

The notice, titled "Better than Bubbie's Chicken Soup Contest," brought a smile to my face. I had been musing on how I would write the story of my failed efforts at trying to make Bubbie Annie's chicken soup. As far as her grandchildren were concerned, Bubbie Annie made the best chicken soup in the whole world!

"Better than Bubbie's," the contest had challenged. Wow. I had never even contemplated that such an option existed. Even if every chicken soup recipe in the whole land might be shared, would it be possible to find one that was better than Bubbie Annie's?

Before I went back to my writing, I felt a brief pang of conscience. Would I be committing some egregious sin if I wrote about Bubbie Annie's amazing chicken soup?

But then I came up with a solution. I would not reveal her secret ingredient. Of course, I had to discover what that was and I had to do so with great circumspection. After all, how could I tell Annie that though she had told me how to make chicken soup she had not told me how *she* made her chicken soup?

She might be insulted that I thought she was keeping secrets from me. Hadn't she said I was her favourite daughter-in-law next to her other daughter-in-law? Hadn't she always said not to worry, that she was more than happy preparing chicken soup for my family?

One Sunday morning I showed up at Annie's and told her about the Better than Bubbie's Chicken Soup Contest.

She just smiled her Mona Lisa smile.

"Would you like a tea?" she asked, going over to her kettle and filling it with water. I looked at the announcement that I was holding and then looked at Annie. How far would I be willing to go to find out the secret ingredient that made Bubbie Annie's chicken soup so special?

"Do you want to do this?" I asked waving the newspaper in my hand. She didn't turn around because she was plugging in the kettle. I was sure that she had heard me.

"I'll put out some biscuits to go with our tea," she said as she reached into the cupboard for her favourite wafers.

I walked over to Annie and stood next to her. I pretended to be studying the announcement that was still in my hand. Annie looked at me reading over the contest rules but said nothing.

"I guess you're not interested in the contest," I said, a bit disappointed.

"Why would I be?" Annie asked innocently.

"Well," I began, not wanting to pass up the opportunity, "you know how the kids always say that yours is the best chicken soup in the entire world? Wouldn't it be nice to share your recipe?"

She seemed not to hear me then. The kettle had started to steam and I decided I wouldn't pursue this line of reasoning.

"Tea's ready," she said happily. We sat down, and not another word was said about the contest.

When I got home, I told my husband that his mom wasn't interested in the contest. He looked puzzled.

"I was kind of hoping that she would do it and I would find out what ingredients I was missing, so I could make my chicken soup just as good as hers."

He weighed his words carefully before he spoke.

"Maybe you shouldn't worry about it," he said.

"I'm not worried," I retorted. "I just would like to be able to make chicken soup that tastes as good as Annie's."

"Well you know," he said sheepishly, "Ma did try to show you how to make her kreplach…"

He didn't have to finish the sentence. I never did make Annie's kreplach, even though she had spent a stress-filled two hours trying to show me what to do. I couldn't follow her recipe because she kept saying things like "a handful of flour," and I couldn't figure out what size hand was required. In the end, Annie had had to rummage through her cupboard to find a measuring cup and take her handful of flour and put it in the measuring cup so that I could see exactly how much she meant. I still don't get how a person can say a handful of flour when everyone's hand is a different size.

How could I find out the secret to Annie's amazing chicken soup? She probably didn't even realize that it was a secret, just as she had not realized that when she added a handful of flour to her dough, she just knew exactly how much was needed. If I was ever going to find out how to make Annie's chicken soup I would have to be a little more clever.

For the first several years of my marriage, I never actually bothered to make chicken soup. Every Friday afternoon, Bubbie Annie invited us to come over on the way home from work.

"I'm making you chicken soup," she'd say.

Continued on page B33

The Hon.
Joe
VOLPE
P.C., M.P.
Eglinton–Lawrence
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May your Pesach be filled with health, happiness and peace.

2006 Literary Supplement

Passover Greetings

'Bubbie Annie had a magic chicken soup pot'

Continued from page B32

Who could resist such an offer? Besides, Bubbie Annie's chicken soup came fully packaged with carrots, lokshen and an accompanying potato kugel.

After so many years of enjoying Bubbie Annie's amazing chicken soup, I had the idea that Bubbie Annie had a magic chicken soup pot. Like *The Magic Porridge Pot* story in the kids' *Fairy Tale Treasure* book, Bubbie Annie's pot never stopped bubbling and steaming with its wonderful aromatic chicken soup.

Here are the facts behind my enchanted chicken soup pot theory: first of all, Bubbie Annie had brought her chicken soup pot all the way from Czechoslovakia. Secondly, the pot was red on the outside, and everyone knows that red is a magical colour. And thirdly, if you peered into her chicken soup pot, which was quite deep, it had that lived-in look, it had experience. It was clear to me that this pot knew how to make chicken soup.

For the briefest moment, I thought of asking Bubbie Annie if I might borrow her pot

For the briefest moment, I thought of asking Bubbie Annie if I might borrow her pot.

"Well, if you take my pot, how will I make you chicken soup?"

I hadn't meant to say it out loud, but there I was, standing in Bubbie Annie's kitchen, and I had blurted out my request. I sheepishly laughed and then hugged Annie.

"Of course," I said. "I was being silly."

"Do you want me to buy you a stock pot?" she asked.

"No, no," I replied, "I have a pot."

Of course, it wasn't a stock pot but surely it was good enough.

This left me with no other recourse but to pay a visit to Annie and watch her put together all of the ingredients to make her wonderful chicken soup.

I never managed to arrive at the right time. If I promised to come at eight, she had been up earlier and decided to get started a bit earlier. I tried to pin her down to an exact time.

"What if I get there by 7:30?" I asked, calculating whether I could actually get all the kids up and ready for school before I left.

"7:30?" she asked. "You want to come at 7:30? Won't it be too early for you to get up? You'll be tired by the time you get to work."

"Well if I can get there by 7:30, will that be on time to see" I wanted to say to see the magic, but instead I said "how you put in the ingredients?"

Annie laughed.

"You want to see me put the ingredients into the pot?"

She seemed to be amused by my request.

Once again, Annie kindly listed the ingredients that went into making her soup: water, chicken, onion, carrots, parsnip, celery, parsley and dill. Though the list seemed complete I knew that making Bubbie's chicken soup required more than a list of ingredients. Maybe it had to do with the order of the ingredients, or where they were bought; maybe it was the length of time that they had to boil; maybe it was something she added that she didn't even think about because it was just so automatic. Then again, it was just possible that to make Bubbie's famous chicken soup you needed the right genes.

And what was that business about scraping the carrots. Scraping? I knew Bubbie Annie had a peeler; she gave it to Zayde Sam when they were making potato kugel, and he sat at the kitchen table with newspapers and peeled away. But for her chicken soup, Annie scraped the carrots.

After a very lacklustre effort, one Friday, I called Annie and complained that I was pretty sure that I had followed her recipe, but my chicken soup just didn't have the same rich taste as hers.

"It's okay," she said, "I'm happy to make it for you."

That should have been more than good enough, but I really thought I should try and take advantage of having the expert at hand.

On my way to work the following Friday, I stopped at Annie's to see if I could pick up any additional tips. It was 7:30 a.m. As usual, the door was wide open because of all the cooking that was taking place. I opened the screen door to find Annie standing in front of her magic chicken soup pot. She had little beads of perspiration on her forehead. She was dipping a ladle into the soup pot and taking a little sip. She seemed to be pondering what to do when I interrupted her.

"Oh," she turned as I announced my presence. "I didn't hear you come in."

The perspiration was now forming on her brow, which had creased into a frown. She recovered quickly and gave me a smile.

"I thought I might come by and get a few extra tips."

I stood next to her and peered into the pot. She put her ladle down on the counter, put her arm on my shoulder and steered me towards the kitchen table.

"Can I make you a coffee?" she asked.

With a bit of sulk, I replied, "No, that's okay. I guess I should get going."

"Okay," she said cheerfully as she walked me to the door. "The soup will be ready for you after work."

I thanked her and kissed her goodbye, and then she closed the door. As I walked down the stairs, it occurred to me that she never cooks with the door closed. I had the fleeting feeling that if only I could sneak back in at that very moment I would find the answer I was seeking. I looked at my watch. I had a couple of minutes to spare. Should I turn around and go back upstairs? I would have to see if the door was unlocked, and then what would I say? I have time for that coffee? And what would she do if I peered into her pot again? Not a good idea. I went to work.

I finally began to feel that my whole effort had been a mistake. Secret ingredients? Enchanted soup pot?

Young and old, short and tall, thin and fat, each may try, but for as long as Bubbie Annie makes her family chicken soup, we will happily proclaim, "Bubbie Annie, you make the best chicken soup in the whole, entire world."

And truthfully, isn't that exactly as it should be?

Deputy Mayor Michael & Sue Feldman
wishes all his constituents in Ward 10, York Centre and all residents in the City of Toronto a Very Happy Passover

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Passover Greetings

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FREEDOM AT LAST: A pencil watercolour drawing by Zinovii Tolkatchev of Auschwitz survivors being liberated. [Photo courtesy of Yad Vashem Photo Archives — RNS/Reuters]

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Best Wishes for a Healthy and Happy Passover

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Poland

By Stanley Weisberg

Weep no more
Your blooded tears
Your dead sons
Have no fears

Speak no more
Of Poland's foes
You have forgotten
But God still knows

Bleed no more for your
Hebrew cousins
Three million souls
Ripped from your bosom

Nine hundred years
For what it's worth
Jews lived and toiled
On Poland's earth

Nine hundred years
We were Polish sons
Yet, you let us die
By German guns

Once we were millions
On the Polish plain
Only five thousand
Now remain

Do not think
That time erases
Memories of those camps
Those killing places

Seven camps within
Europe's girth
And all seven placed
On Polish earth

The Holocaust Inferno

By Leon Krym

A rose garden I did not walk
Children's thrills I knew not.

A boyhood I lived but happiness I sought
Getting through the day was my only thought.

I walked a road burning beneath my feet.
Slumped in a pit Warsaw Ghetto retreat.

When the night came to a close
I dreaded the morning coming.

Trains rolling and puffing all day long
People like cattle to slaughter bound.

Treblinka Auschwitz, there stops the train
Lives extinguished no more pain.

Smoke and ashes blowing in the wind
Eclipse the sun stain the moon.

Silenced forever child's cry mother's plea
Echo in the valley resounding into eternity.

Nothing but a miracle can save my day
Postpone my demise come what may.

And amid the horrors of the Holocaust
As the world kept silent and hope was lost

On the Shores far away on the beaches of Normandy

The sun is breaking, broken hearts again smiling.

A new life emerging out of ruins and pain
Six Million perished just memories remain.

From the Nazi inferno to the Land of the free
I Salute Thee Canada my impossible dream.

Three March of the Living participants look at the remains of a Nazi death camp in Poland through barbed wire fences. [RNS photo]

Wishing you and your family a happy Passover.

From Josh Matlow, your TDSB school trustee for St. Paul's.

Josh Matlow
Toronto District School Board Trustee for St. Paul's
Phone: 416-397-3094 e-mail: josh.matlow@sympatico.ca
website: www.joshmatlow.ca

חג שמח

Warmest wishes from John Tory and the Ontario Progressive Conservative Caucus, for a happy and healthy Passover

JOHN TORY, MPP
Leader of the Official Opposition
and Ontario's PC Party

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Happy Passover!

The Mayor and Members of Vaughan City Council wish our Jewish Community a Happy and Kosher Passover.

Front (from L): Regional Councillor Joyce Frustaglio, Regional Councillor Mario F. Ferri, Mayor Michael Di Biase, and Regional Councillor Linda D. Jackson.
Back (from L): Ward 5 Councillor Alan Shefman, Ward 4 Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco, Ward 3 Councillor Bernie DiVona, Ward 2 Councillor Tony Carella, and Ward 1 Councillor Peter Meffe.

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Suicide bomber strikes in Tel Aviv

Jerusalem Post

TEL AVIV — The prevailing Pesach calm was destroyed shortly after 1:30 p.m. Monday afternoon when a suicide bombing rocked Tel Aviv's Neve Sha'anan neighbourhood.

At least nine people were reported killed, not including the suicide bomber, and at least 60 wounded, 15 seriously, as a result of the blast.

This was the second suicide attack to take place at the restaurant Falafel Rosh Ha'ir. Islamic Jihad and the Al-Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades claimed responsibility for the attack in a video released to Palestinian television.

An eyewitness said that he had seen a security guard stop and search a young man's bag at the entrance to the falafel stand just prior to the blast.

One of the restaurant's owners told Channel 2 that he had seen the bomber scuffle with a security guard, then detonate the explosive device just outside the restaurant.

Interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert responded to the first terror attack of his short tenure by saying: "We will know how to respond. We know what to do."

Continued on page 34

Harper condemns Iranian threats

OTTAWA — Prime Minister Stephen Harper has strongly condemned the latest threats to Israel made by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

At the opening of a three-day conference in Tehran in support of the Palestinians last Friday, Ahmadinejad called Israel a "permanent threat" to the Middle East that will soon be eradicated, and he questioned the validity of the Holocaust. "The Zionist regime is a rotten, dried tree that will be eliminated by one storm," Ahmadinejad said.

"Canada vigorously condemns the recent call by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for the annihilation of Israel, and his continued denial of the Holocaust," Harper said in a statement on Saturday. "The Canadian people reject the hatred that underlies such appalling and irresponsible statements.

"It is particularly disturbing that these remarks are being made at a time when Iran is in serious violation of its international obligations with respect to nuclear non-proliferation.

"Canada continues to believe that these outrageous comments by the president of Iran do not reflect the traditions and values of the Iranian people," Harper said.

Please see editorial on page 8 and related story on page 34.

Israel responds to rocket barrage from Gaza

Firing from within heavily populated civilian areas in Gaza, Palestinian terrorists have launched a campaign of Qassam rocket fire against Israel. Since April 1, more than 60 rockets have been fired into Israel. In response, the Israel Defence Forces has stepped up ground, naval and aerial assaults near populated areas from where, the army says, the Qassams are being fired. Twelve Palestinians have been killed or wounded in the IDF responses, and some Palestinians have urged the Palestinian Authority to stop the attacks on Israel. The head of the IDF planning directorate, Maj.-Gen. Yitzhak Harel, told the *Jerusalem Post* that Israel needs to continue escalating its response while severing all ties with the Hamas-run PA. "Eventually, there will be no Qassam fire," he said. *[Isranet photo]*

This Week

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Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
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Greater Toronto Area

Jewish Theological Seminary names new head — please see page 35

The News in Brief

CANADA

El Al Case Dismissed

TORONTO — The Ontario Court of Justice has dismissed a claim against El Al Israel Airlines by the former operator of a travel agency that specialized in travel to Israel. The judge said none of Shalom Even's rights were violated when El Al informed Even's employers they would cease to do business with them if they employed him. The court said El Al had legitimate concerns about dealing with a firm that hired Even, since his former company, Shalom K Tours, went bankrupt owing El Al $688,000, and Even breached an agreement to hold funds collected for tickets in trust.

Portus Heads Warned

TORONTO — The co-founders of hedge fund Portus Alternative Asset Management were warned by their own lawyers they might be violating Ontario Securities Commission rules up to a year before the firm failed, according to court documents filed last week by KPMG, Portus' receiver, Bloomberg News reported. As well, Boaz Manor and Michael Mendselson took in $500 million in assets even after their lawyer told them to stop because of concerns about fictitious trading records, money laundering and "further criminal problems," the *Globe and Mail* reported. Manor fled to Israel in March 2005 after the OSC forced Portus into receivership. He has yet to account for $800 million in Portus assets. He and Mendelson deny any wrongdoing

Passport Challenge

WINNIPEG — A Winnipeg court heard arguments last week in the case of a Toronto teen who is seeking to change Ottawa's policy of not allowing Israel to be noted on passports of citizens born in Jerusalem. Last year, Eliayahu Veffer, 18, launched a challenge to the policy, which doesn't allow Israel to be listed because, as federal lawyers said last week, Ottawa contends Jerusalem's status has been in dispute since 1948. But Veffer's lawyer, David Matas, said that with the exception of Jerusalem, when a city is in disputed territory, Canada lets passport applicants choose which country to list, CBC News reported.

WORLD

Hamas Visas Denied

PARIS — France has denied visas to two Hamas lawmakers. The Hamas members were invited to talks with the Council of Europe, a leading European human rights group. Last month, the group invited members of Israel's Knesset and the Palestinian Legislative Council, including the Hamas members, to its headquarters in Strasbourg for a meeting to promote dialogue. France is a member of the European Union, which has declared Hamas a terrorist organization.

Nazi Item Pulled

LOS ANGELES — A body marker from a Nazi concentration camp was removed from an auction in Los Angeles after complaints from a Jewish group. Los Angeles County removed the item from Dachau from a public-estate auction following complaints from the Simon Wiesenthal Center, which was alerted to the item by a woman who saw it listed on an auction website. The item reportedly was in a collection that included pre-World War II Prussian uniforms and Soviet-era statues of Lenin.

Interfaith Study

NEW YORK — Fewer than one-fifth of non-Jews who marry U.S Jews convert, a new study says. The American Jewish Committee report also found some 30 per cent of parents who convert reluctantly instil ambivalence toward Judaism in their kids, while 30 per cent of converts are active Jews. The study interviewed 94 mixed-marriage couples and nine Jewish professionals who work with interfaith families.

Doggone Seder

CHICAGO — A second annual Passover seder for dogs was held at Soggie Paws, an upscale pet store in Chicago. The dogs "sat content and still with tiny yarmulkes on their heads," the store said.

Google Buys Israeli's Search Technology

SAN FRANCISCO — Google has acquired an advanced text search algorithm developed by an Israeli man when he was a doctoral student in computer science at the University of New South Wales in Australia, *Ha'aretz* reported.

Ori Alon

Ori Alon developed the Internet search algorithm, called Orion, which answers a search by producing only the most relevant textual results. It also generates a list of topics directly related to the original search.

"For example, if you search for information on [Israel's] War of Independence, you'll receive a list of related worlds, like Etzel, Palmach, Ben-Gurion," he said last year.

Alon now works at Google's Mountain View, Calif., offices. The search engine company didn't divulge what it paid him for his search enhancement software.

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Vol. XXXVI, No 17 (1,744)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation 42,245 copies
Total paid circulation 41,398 copies

CCNA verified circulation
Feb 9, 2006

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada $35.95, 1 yr incl GST
$63.95, 2 yr incl GST
U.S.A. $100 U.S funds, 1 yr
All other countries $110 U.S funds, 1 yr

Postmaster Please return 29Bs and changes of address to Toronto office

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
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Board of rabbis withdraws from Yom Hashoah event

Protests refusal to allow girls to sing in the choir

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

The Toronto Board of Rabbis (TBR), comprising mainly Conservative and Reform clergy, said it won't take part in, or endorse, this year's community-wide Yom Hashoah commemoration after organizers decided the full Renanim Youth Choir can't sing at the event because the group has both boys and girls.

This year, for the first time, organizers decided to invite the Renanim choir to take part in the annual event, but only with its male singers. The decision was made out of deference to the Vaad Harabonim, the umbrella for some 70 Orthodox rabbis, in order to respect the traditional prohibition against men hearing women sing (*kol isha*).

The six-year-old choir is two-thirds female and its 25 members range in age from 10 to 18.

Although there are no formal, written guidelines for the event – to be held April 24 at Earl Bales Park – female clergy, female soloists and mixed choirs have not been on the program in past years.

Organizers want everyone in the community to feel comfortable, event co-chair Louis Greenbaum said.

Both rabbinic groups, along with about a dozen other organizations, have been longtime co-sponsors of the Holocaust Community Commemoration, which is facilitated by UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

The TBR, whose approximately 40 affiliated rabbis are mostly Reform and Conservative, voted unanimously this month to withdraw its support from this year's event, said Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich, who will succeed Rabbi Daniel Gottlieb as president June 1.

"I think the exclusion of children is particularly painful, because children's voices were silenced in the Holocaust," said Rabbi Gottlieb, who was on the event's steering committee. He said the program, as it stands, does not "reflect the community," and that although he has asked for the inclusivity issue to be looked at in the past, it has not happened.

He said families who observe Judaism in an egalitarian way "feel excluded by communal programs that don't reflect their values. These are the values of the overwhelming majority of the affiliated community."

Rabbi Reuven Tradburks, who represents the Vaad on the steering committee, said not having women sing has been "the understanding" in the past so that the Vaad can endorse the program and the "average pious Jew" can feel comfortable attending.

"We all have different beliefs. We try to make our shuls handicap-accessible. We try to be as inclusive as we can in a lot of different areas," Rabbi Tradburks said.

Likewise, he noted – as did Greenbaum and Morris Zbar, a senior vice-president of the federation – that organizers of the Yom Hashoah event have felt that it's important to make their commemoration inclusive.

The commemoration, which Greenbaum believes is the largest of its kind in the Diaspora, began about a decade ago after Jehudi Kinar, then Israel's consul general in Toronto, approached the federation about organizing a community-wide event. Last year, more than 2,200 people attended.

"The idea here is to create an event that everybody can go to," said Greenbaum, who represents the Canadian Society for Yad Vashem at the event. "It's not a religious event, but it's a solemn commemoration."

Kinar "felt it was important for the community to be united in memorializing the Holocaust," said Zbar, recalling the variety of commemorative events that existed at the time.

But, at least this year, the community is not united.

"There are things we [Orthodox] try to participate in on a community basis, but they're becoming fewer," said Rabbi Tradburks, who noted there are other federation-sponsored community events he won't attend because they have female singers.

Continued on page 6

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Art for Israel's sake

From the editor's desk

We should constantly remind ourselves how remarkable have been Israel's achievements and contributions for the betterment of mankind.

The constant emphasis in media and other circles of the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians necessarily casts our attention away from the Jewish state's many leading-edge discoveries and inventions in every scientific sphere.

Moreover, the ubiquitous, attendant false imagery of the Palestinian "David" struggling heroically against the Israeli "Goliath" further dims the meagre light that might otherwise shine a brighter spotlight on Israel's agricultural, biomedical, engineering, aeronautical and other advancements.

But among the long list of widely overlooked Israeli achievements, the most overlooked area is, perhaps, its uniquely inspiring fine art.

In his seminal work *One Hundred Years of Art in Israel* (Westview Press, 1998), Gideon Ofrat wrote: "The Israeli art world is amazingly rich and intense, regardless of its location far away from the attention of the western art centres; regardless of the absence of an avant-garde art market, regardless of the paucity of art journals and publications. It is a highly diverse art world, one with an excitable Mediterranean temperament."

In trying to paint with more precise strokes, he described Israeli fine art as "the art of a small place, one rich in landscapes and variegated in climate, torn between the mentality of a 'manhattanized' Tel Aviv and a 'sanctified' Jerusalem, a place located in the Middle East but with its heart set firmly in the West."

Ofrat noted, as has every historian of Israeli art, that "the art in modern Israel dates back to 1906 when the Bezalel School of Arts and Crafts was founded in Jerusalem," the dream child of painter and sculptor Boris Schatz.

Schatz and his colleagues tried to combine a pragmatic desire to help boost commerce related to arts and crafts for people who lived in Jerusalem. He was also motivated by the idealistic aspiration to help foster a local, indigenous art of the pioneering, Jewish soul that was newly forming with the lore, history and traditions of the Holy Land.

Israel has come a long and exciting way in all aspects of individual and societal development from the early pioneering days of the last century. And so, too, has the development of its art from those formative first struggles of Schatz and his colleagues at the Bezalel 100 years ago.

Lovers, acrylic on canvas by Adriana Naveh

In the coming weeks, readers will have the opportunity to view first-hand the extent to which a unique Israeli art has developed since Schatz opened the doors to his own pioneering school.

Israel ArtSource Fine Art, an umbrella organization of Israeli art galleries, most of which have some 30 years of commercial experience in art sales, will be bringing the works of some of Israel's most exciting artists, new and established, for special viewing in Toronto.

Established in 2005 with the support of the Ministry of Industry, Israel ArtSource's mission is to foster awareness in North America of Israeli fine art and fine artists. It features original paintings and sculptures of more than 70 artists including Israeli masters such as Judith Yellin, Menashe Kadishman, Moshe Castel and Nachum Gutman as well as relative newcomers such as Zina Roitman and Adriana Naveh.

The styles, subjects and themes of the works are as varied as are the creative, intense imaginations of the many exciting artists whose works the organization represents.

The CJN recently met with Ehud Dar, the manager of Israel ArtSource Fine Art, to discuss the upcoming Toronto exhibition. It is part of a three-city tour. Chicago and New York are the other two stops.

Dar pointed out that, indeed, the organization's primary motivation is commercial success. But it is far from the only motivation. Israel ArtSource, he emphasized, is intent on showcasing Israeli artists to the West. It strives "to give a boost to new artists." In particular, he mentioned the artists who have emigrated from the former Soviet Union and who continue to develop their art in the Israeli artistic environment.

Buying a work of art by an Israeli artist, Dar said to me, "is a way for your readers to bring a bit of Israel into their homes."

The Israel ArtSource exhibitions take place in Toronto May 2 and 3 at the Koffler Centre of the Arts, Bathurst Jewish Community Centre, 4588 Bathurst Street and from May 4 to 8 at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre, South Building, Room 802.

— *MBD*

SeeJN

CHAT WINS PHYSICS TOURNAMENT: Two teams from the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto competed in the recent Shalheveth Freier Physics Tournament at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel. The CHAT-Tanenbaum team, in the picture at the left, won first prize overall. CHAT-Tanenbaum team members are, from left, Jonathan Goldfarb, Chaz Firestone, Eric Kaplovitch, Lee Cohen and Joseph Weissgold. The CHAT-Richmond Hill team, in the picture at the right, placed within the top 13 out of 40 competing teams. CHAT-Richmond Hill team members are, from left, Yael Feinberg, Davin Young, Jason Binder, Rebecca Barmherzig and Aaron Pellow.

ART AND SOUL

Baycrest residents, some of whom have never done any type of artwork, are seen with the ceramic pieces they created in the centre's therapeutic recreation centre, under the guidance of Brenda Lass, a creative arts worker. Thirty-five of their pieces were sold at Baycrest's annual fundraiser, Art and Soul, last month. Others are donated to the Baycrest store, and the money received goes back into the program. "This puts the artists in the position of giving back to Baycrest," says Lass. Seen here, clockwise from top left are: Esther Kalifon, Max Cainer, Sarah Kagan and Morris Reiss.

[Carolyn Blackman photos]

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Cantors group to remain as sponsors

Continued from page 3

Despite the dispute, "we remain committed to the vision of a single community-wide commemoration, but it has to reflect the community. We hope the matter will be resolved," Rabbi Gottlieb said.

"If there is any possible way to arrive at a scenario where both [groups] feel comfortable, that's what we would do," Greenbaum said. "The event will go on. It's very meaningful, very important."

The Toronto Council of Hazzanim, which consists of 34 Conservative, Orthodox and Reform cantors – including women – considered following the TBR's lead, but remained as a sponsor and participating group after one executive member said it would not be right to pull out at such a late date, said Marshall Loomer, the group's president.

Greenbaum noted that, although females do not sing at the community event, there are females on the program. The keynote speaker this year is a woman, Sara Ginaite-Rubinson, a former partisan, he said. Also, females will read names of those who perished, and there will be female students in the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's presentation.

Ironically, the Renanim choir's "whole purpose" is to unite the community, said its director Susan Michaels. Her choir members – eight boys and 17 girls – range from observant to unaffiliated, she said. "And everybody gets along."

The choir will be taking part in another commemorative Yom Hashoah ceremony, the Megillah Hashoah reading at Adath Israel Congregation on Apr. 23.

But when Michaels received a call this past winter inviting the males to take part in the community commemoration, she said she had mixed feelings.

As a child of Holocaust survivors, she "profoundly wanted" to participate because she felt the music could provide catharsis and healing, but she didn't want to exclude some of her singers.

"We have eight boys. That would mean two thirds of my choir would not be singing. What is that saying to my girls?"

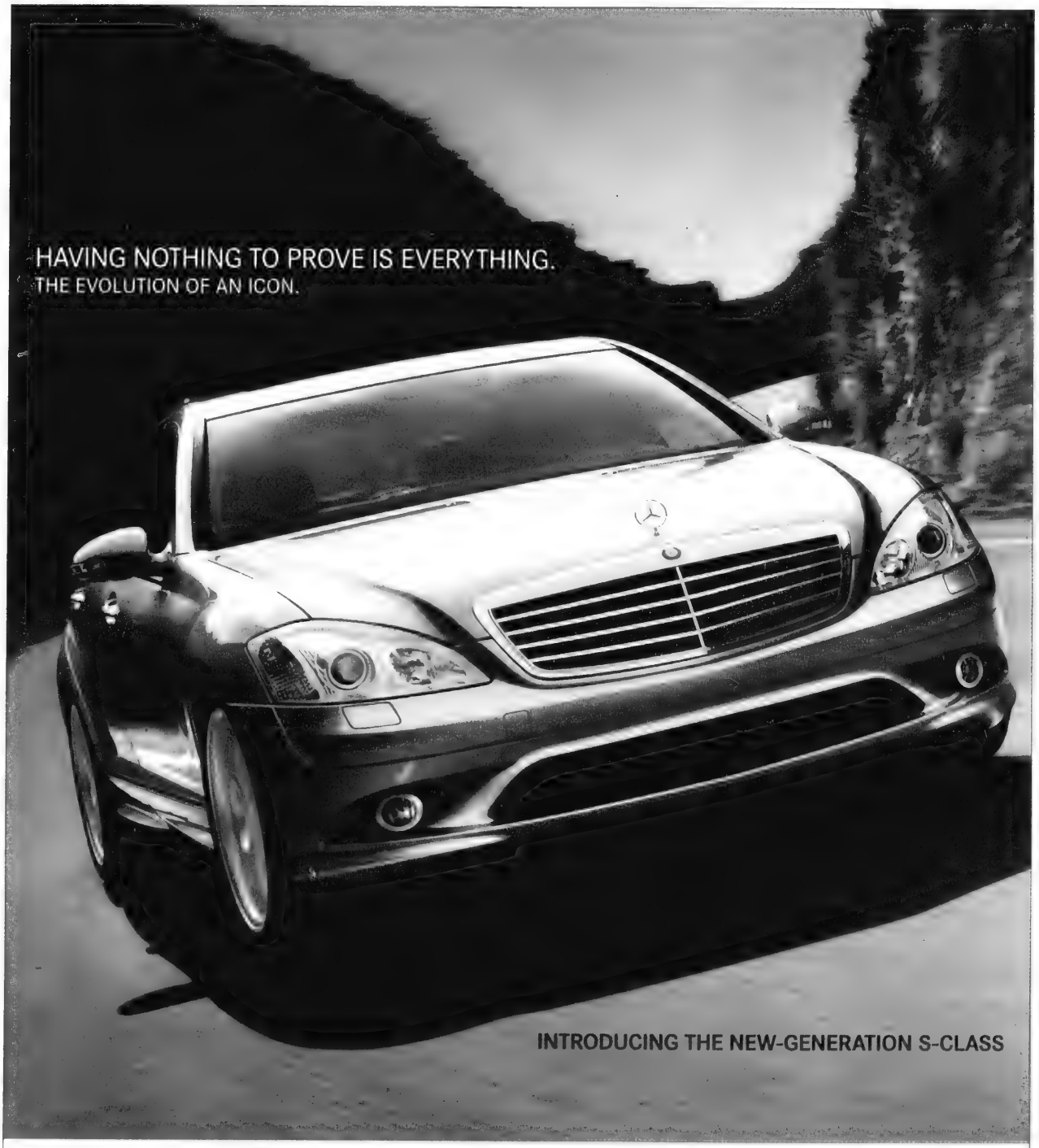
Michaels said she feels like she's in the eye of the storm.

But the rabbis involved spoke cordially of each other. "This is not 'bad blood,'" said Rabbi Flanzraich.

A statement released last week by federation spokesperson Howard English said his organization "will continue to pursue common ground between the two rabbinic bodies and then determine, in consultation with community leaders, the role of UJA Federation in facilitating future community-wide Yom Hashoah programs."

SOLEL'S INTERFAITH SEDER: An interactive seder was recently held at Congregation Solel in Mississauga.

AMNESTY!



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Iran's commitment to genocide

Last week was a busy one for Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. On Tuesday, he announced that Iran had, for the first time, successfully enriched uranium. It was coded language for all who understand his dangerous game, announcing that his government was well on its way to producing a nuclear weapon.

On Friday, he addressed the opening of a three-day conference in Tehran in support of the Palestinians' struggle against Israel. Many members of the new ruling Hamas elite of the Palestinian Authority participated. Ahmadinejad used the occasion to impart yet another of his menacing messages to the Jewish state and the West, belligerence against both of which appears to constantly obsess him and to steer his dysfunctional, amoral compass.

"The land of Palestine will be freed soon," Ahmadinejad told the attentive audience of some 900 adoring, hopeful listeners. "The existence of [the Israeli] regime is a permanent threat [to the Middle East]. Its existence has harmed the dignity of Islamic nations."

"Like it or not," the Iranian president ghoulishly added, "the Zionist regime is heading toward annihilation. The Zionist regime is a rotten, dried tree that will be eliminated by one storm."

One need hardly possess a high-octane imagination to decipher the malevolent meaning of Ahmadinejad's metaphor, "one storm." He is racing, with a marathoner's single-minded focus, to marry his hateful obsession with nuclear weapons capability.

According to a high-ranking officer from the Israel Defence Forces' military intelligence who spoke recently to the *Jerusalem Post*, Iran has developed a two-track nuclear program. Alongside and parallel to its publicly identified, purportedly civilian, nuclear track program, it is developing a separate track for nuclear arms.

"It is more probable that they have a second and secret plan [to develop nuclear arms] and they will copy the technology they are now developing in the open and use it in a secret location," the officer said.

If Ahmadinejad's earlier announcement regarding his scientists' successful enrichment of uranium is true, the urgency of intervening in his race to hell has heightened to a considerable degree.

Iran will not voluntarily abandon its development of weapons-grade nuclear material. It must be made to stop. Western nations must act now while, in theory at least, there are still non-military options available to try to get Ahmadinejad to quit his mad drive.

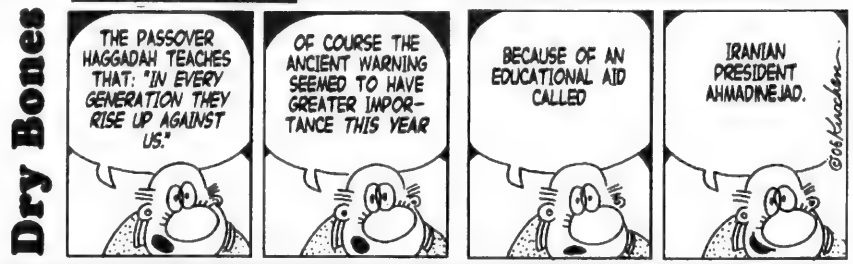
In complete violation of and utter contempt for the United Nations charter, one member state, Iran, repeatedly threatens the annihilation of a fellow member state, Israel. It is as eerie as it is bizarre. The UN Security Council must begin the process of imposing meaningful, effective, unbreakable sanctions on Iran. It must do so, not only to ensure the future of the United Nations, but of far greater importance – to save the world from a nuclear nightmare.

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• After the Parti Québécois won a second majority in the 1981 Quebec election, leaders of Canadian Jewish Congress and B'nai Brith said they were optimistic the good relations they had developed with the PQ government in its first term would continue.

• Morris Waxman, 102, led his family's seder for the 53rd straight year at his home in Hamilton. The semi-retired scrap metal dealer was born in Warsaw and came to Canada in 1912.

Editorials & Letters


Dry Bones
THE PASSOVER HAGGADAH TEACHES THAT: "IN EVERY GENERATION THEY RISE UP AGAINST US."
OF COURSE THE ANCIENT WARNING SEEMED TO HAVE GREATER IMPORTANCE THIS YEAR
BECAUSE OF AN EDUCATIONAL AID CALLED
IRANIAN PRESIDENT AHMADINEJAD.
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Editorial Advisory Board: **Isaac Apter, Michael Brown, Sandra Brown, Donald Carr, Daniel Held, Zac Kaye, Igor Korenzvit, Keith Landy, Andrea Most, Lon Ronson, Jacques Sayegh, Mike Shriqui, Pamela Medjuck Stein, Rabbi Michael Stroh, Rabbi Reuven Tradburks**

Reporting 'egging' to police

We live close to where the "egging" that was reported by *The CJN* occurred and have experienced two such incidents in the year we have been in the neighbourhood ("Toronto family's mezuzah egged by vandals," April 6). The second was likely on the same day as the one you mentioned in your article. The two involving our house appeared to probably have our door as a target (although one shot missed completely). We are not convinced that these incidents are anything other than the idiotic acts of the usual suspects. Our next-door neighbours who are not Jewish and do not have a mezuzah on their door were also hit and, as luck would have it, their shot was perhaps close to where a mezuzah might have been.

Clearly, many anti-Semitic incidents do occur in Toronto and it is sensible to be vigilant. However, some care should be taken before assuming that every act of vandalism qualifies. The multiple hits suffered by the Browns on their mezuzah may have been nothing more than fortuitous "good grouping" by the perpetrator. Nevertheless, it certainly does not hurt to report these incidents to police in the event a pattern emerges. As a result of your article, we will report our experience as an act of vandalism and let the police draw their own conclusions.

Bill and Donna Zener
Toronto

* * *

Hillel aims to engage the 'disengaged'

In response to the letter "Students 'disengaged' from communal life" (*CJN*, March 30), it's important to point out that the major reason why Hillel International conducted the millennial study was to find out what the disengaged population was saying. In Toronto, Hillel takes the responsibility of engaging students so seriously that we have replicated the American study. Our goal is to find out what Canadian Jewish students in general and Toronto students in particular have to say.

As did Hillel in the United States, we will follow up on the findings of this research by holding meetings with focus groups comprising the many different student viewpoints reflected in the study. We want to ensure that all legitimate voices are heard and that they can access the appropriate gateways to connect with Jewish life in this city.

Hillel of Greater Toronto regards, as its major mission, being attentive to the voices of all students and being inclusive and welcoming. Engaging the "disengaged" is a primary goal, one to which all levels of the organization are committed.

David Rosenbaum
President, Hillel of Greater Toronto

* * *

Israeli policy puts Jewish lives at risk

I don't know why Abe Zubatoff feels he has to misrepresent our sincere and reasoned objections to the government of Israel's policies toward the Palestinians, and claim they're based on some trivial desire to avoid the "embarrassment" of Diaspora Jews, even at the risk of endangering Israel's existence ("Embarrassing Diaspora Jews," letter, *CJN*, April 6).

If we thought that these policies were in any way necessary to preserve Israel's existence, we'd put up with a lot more than embarrassment.

But we believe deeply that the reverse is true, that the recklessness, lawlessness and cruelty of recent Israeli government policy puts Jewish lives and futures at risk all over the world, including in Israel, and also undermines the stature of Judaism and the ideals on which the State of Israel was founded.

Does he deny our stake in Israel and our responsibilities to it? Does he think we fulfil them by burying our heads in the sand? Is that his idea of a concerned Jew – Canadian or otherwise?

Michael Mandel
Alliance of Concerned Jewish Canadians
Toronto

* * *

Bought into Palestinian propaganda

The debate between the Alliance of Concerned Jewish Canadians and their critics seems to revolve mostly around whether or not they have the right to speak against Israeli government actions. While I don't dispute that right, I am seriously concerned about the reaction the alliance may provoke among Israel's enemies and critics. There are many individuals and organizations that will pounce upon their proclamation and trumpet the fact that if Jews, of all people, are disavowing the actions of the Israeli government, those actions must be truly terrible. Again, I don't dispute the alliance's right to criticize, but I do object to the fact that they are doing it so broadly and that their statements demonstrate no real knowledge of why the Israeli government acts the way it does. Instead of taking the time to truly understand the history, they've bought into Palestinian propaganda and now risk giving it even more weight in a world that is already hostile enough.

Stephen Tannenbaum
Thornhill, Ont.

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The 500th anniversary of the Lisbon Massacre

By RICHARD ZIMLER

Precisely 500 years ago, on April 19, 1506, the Lisbon Massacre began. At the time, the Portuguese capital was a dusty, disease-ridden city wasted by plague and drought. Just off the main square, in St. Dominic's Church, priests decided to restore the demoralized residents' faith in God's mercy. That morning, they apparently carved a niche at the back of a large crucifix. During mass, they put a candle inside so that the glow of the flame would show through, declaring the radiance a miracle.

Richard Zimler

As the story goes, among the worshippers was a man who called out that rain would be a far more useful miracle. This daring but foolhardy churchgoer happened to be a New Christian – a Jewish convert to Roman Catholicism. Thousands of New Christians lived in Lisbon at the time because King Manuel had ordered all Portuguese Jews to be forcibly converted to Christianity nine years earlier. Their only other choice had been death.

The worshipper who was foolish enough to criticize the priestly ruse in St. Dominic's Church that day was immediately seized, and outraged members of the congregation soon chopped off his head. Furious Dominican priests subsequently led a mob out to the streets, inciting them to riot, with calls for "Death to the Jews and heretics!"

Most of the former Jews had moved their faith into the shadows by then: in public, they professed to be good Catholics, but in their own homes – behind closed curtains and locked doors – they practised their traditional religion. On April 19, most of them would have been celebrating Passover.

As the crazed crowd rampaged through the traditional Jewish quarters of the city, they burst into New Christian homes and murdered anyone they could capture. Over the course of three days of rioting, they dragged the victims' bodies to the Rossio, the square that is still at the heart of the Portuguese capital, and burned them in two enormous pyres.

Contemporaneous accounts tell us that "Northern sailors" paid for the wood to burn the bodies. They do not mention the stench of charring human flesh, but I'd imagine that no one in Lisbon that day would ever forget it.

Some historians say the death toll was as high as 4,000, but most estimates centre around a figure of 2,000. In any case, given that the Jewish population of the city was probably not more than 10,000, virtually every Jewish family would have lost a loved one that day.

I first read about the Lisbon Massacre in 1989, by which time I'd been to Portugal several times to visit friends, and it shocked me that none of them knew anything about the pogrom. I soon discovered, too, that it wasn't mentioned in school textbooks. The massacre had been erased from collective memory. It was as if the Jews who had been murdered in April 1506 had never lived.

Feeling outraged, I decided to make the Lisbon Massacre the background for the novel I was then planning about a 16th-century Portuguese artist. This tragic event fit perfectly into my objectives as a writer, since one of my aims has always been to give a voice to people who have been systematically silenced. I take pride in crafting stories that force us to remember events that many people would prefer to forget.

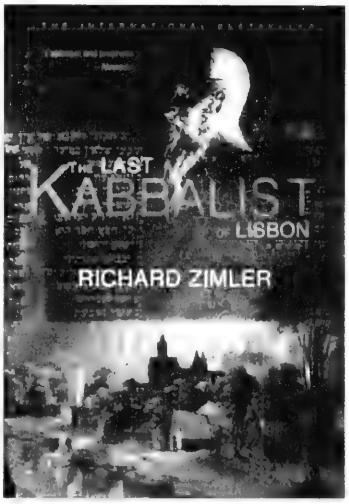
The novel I was then planning turned into *The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon*, which tells the story of Berekiah Zarco, a bright and studious young New Christian who lives through the Lisbon Massacre, only to discover that his beloved Uncle Abraham, his spiritual mentor, has been murdered in the family cellar. Berekiah must track down the killer. As a kabbalist interested in the symbolic meaning of events, he also tries to interpret what the pogrom means for him, his family, the Jewish people, all of humanity and even God's Upper Realms. Berekiah gives his interpretation on the last page of the novel, and it is a reading of events that gives the previous 300 pages of the book a poignant and chilling new meaning.

In my subsequent novels, *Hunting Midnight* and *Guardian of the Dawn*, I've written about other dramatic and little-known events in Sephardi Jewish history, including the imposition of the Inquisition in Goa, India. Indeed, my aim has been to create a Sephardi cycle, a series of independent novels – to be read in any order – about different branches and generations of Berekiah Zarco's family.

A few months ago, after I reminded one of Portugal's Jewish leaders about the upcoming 500th anniversary of the massacre, the Lisbon Jewish community decided to hold a commemoration ceremony on April 29. As that date approaches, I've been thinking about why we ought to remember the 2,000 Jews murdered five centuries ago.

For anyone who believes that we learn from history, the answer is obvious: we should commemorate the massacre in order to prevent such murderous outbreaks of religious and ethnic hatred from happening again. For practising Jews, another reason is provided by Judaism's extraordinary emphasis on remembrance. Every Passover, for instance, we re-enact the Hebrews' flight from Egypt to the Promised Land. We do this, I think, not just to feel ourselves linked to our forefathers and bound to God, but also to remind ourselves that we are exactly like the people who have come before us.

Although both of these reasons once seemed entirely valid to me, I now have my doubts. Having recently turned 50, and no longer as optimistic as I was as a young man, I've come to believe that only a few of us learn anything valuable from history. And I've lately begun to suspect, too, that in remembering our forefathers – in feeling ourselves part of a tightly knit Jewish community – we may tend to exclude people of other ethnicities and religions, even when it comes time to help them fight against violent oppression.



It's when I open my morning newspaper and read about yet one more bombing in Iraq and more attacks in Israel and Palestine-to-be – just to choose two obvious examples – that I become convinced that we are largely deaf to the voices of our ancestors. And even those people who do speak of having learned from the past often seem to have picked up the wrong lessons.

America's leaders are convinced, for instance, that the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks justify their country's using any means necessary to achieve current foreign policy goals. And many American pundits somehow learned from their nation's history of foreign warfare that U.S. troops would be met with open arms in Iraq.

All over the world – but especially in the Middle East – perpetrators of violence point to their people's past sufferings as justification for their committing moral outrages.

Yet even though I am riddled with doubts about our ability to make use of the past to create a better future, I still very much want to commemorate the death of 2,000 Jews in Lisbon. A few days ago, I had a seemingly silly daydream that gave me the reason why.

As I was sitting at my desk in my Porto home, I imagined a spaceship from a planet 100 light years away landing nearby, and when our extraterrestrial visitor came down his ramp, I decided to ask him about the history of his people and planet. But he knew almost nothing.

To me, that seemed a waste of a wonderful opportunity. To have journeyed for many decades, across an unimaginable expanse of space, and then have nothing to tell us about what his world has gone through – why come to Earth at all?

My brief daydream left me feeling that those of us without wide and varied historical knowledge have something essential missing from our lives. How is it possible to go on the wonderful journey we each make – from birth to death – without knowing the triumphs and miseries of centuries gone by, without knowing where we have been?

Our history is what any visitors to our planet would want to know first, and they'd be right! Because it helps to make us who we are. The more we know about where we've come from, the greater our insight will be into ourselves, our loved ones, our countries and our world.

I believe now that Jewish tradition, in re-enacting historical events, points us in the exactly the right direction. Past struggles and trials prove to us that we are all on the same journey, and if we are to have any hope at all of rectifying injustices in our world, I believe that we need to be reminded of that as often as possible.

But I'd also like to expand the scope of our Jewish celebrations. Though it might seem absurd to some, I think it's essential that we remember the tragedies and triumphs of other peoples – of Sudanese, Rwandans, Afghanis and everyone else. In part, that's because I believe that all human beings are God's Chosen People. In other words, an African slave shot down by an American plantation owner while fleeing captivity is as much my ancestor – and as worthy of my remembrance – as a Hebrew slave fleeing Egypt 2,500 years ago.

So I'll be in Lisbon on April 29, thinking not only about the Jews massacred in April 1506, but also about everyone still being crushed and murdered on behalf of fundamentalist gods, dictators and political ideals.

Richard Zimler is a novelist living in Porto, Portugal.

Opinions

Who should defend Zionism?

There are many ways to make the case for Israel. Recalling a personal experience or referring to shared values will often help to structure a convincing argument, while other times, references to historic, political or economic factors may be needed to more robustly anchor a particular position.

Lawrence Hart in Hamilton

But regardless of the forum, there is always the expectation that those who advocate on behalf of Israel have the ability to deal informatively and resolutely with whatever opposing views may come their way. Regrettably, this is not always so.

At colleges and universities, for example, we have all too frequently seen Jewish students outmanoeuvred, if not totally overwhelmed, by their Arab, and other, counterparts.

And while disharmony in our institutions of higher learning tends inevitably to attract media attention, debates on Israel and Jewish issues extend well beyond our campuses.

Outreach to Muslim groups, in particular, seems to be on the rise in various Jewish communities across Canada and the United States. This can be constructive, provided the discourse remains focused on matters of local interest. However, when agendas drift to include aspects of Israeli-Palestinian politics, as sometimes occurs, the "dialogue" may take on a somewhat different tone.

This might require our spokespeople to invoke key points of Jewish history or contextual details relating to the Mideast conflict that they may not be comfortable with. And should the Zionist narrative itself become a focal point, even more care is required to ensure that an informed and appropriate response is articulated.

According to columnist Cheryl Katz Elias, "teaching Zionism is never simple. It is a subject that entails a sometimes overwhelming repertoire of facts. Yet, at the same time, it is as much about instilling a feeling as it is about imparting knowledge"

Historian Gil Troy, in a piece titled "Israel in a Post-Mythological Age," calls for "a step-by-step Zionist resurgence." He suggests that "we can start by taking the term Zionism from its enemies and its more cynical friends and making it again a term of pride, openness, and one-on-one, culturally savvy creativity." He notes that "100 years ago, Zionism brought pride to the label Jew; modern Jews need to bring pride back to the label Zionist – not just for Israel, but for ourselves".

For any community activist, there is surely a relevant lesson in the remarks of Katz Elias and Troy. These are difficult times and the Israel agenda is complex. It's therefore important to identify those among us who have the skills, sensitivity, and, most of all, Zionist passion to effectively engage people who might seek to divide us or to discredit Israel – and let's leave it to them to represent our interests.

The times, they are a-changin'

I got a sense of where things were going when I asked three employees at the Hertz care rental agency who they were planning to vote for. Discussing politics with customers was not exactly part of their job description, and they eyed each other in uncomfortable silence. Finally, the young woman spoke up; "They're all disgusting, I'm not voting at all. None of my friends are either." The others chimed in their agreement.

Ross Culiner in Jerusalem

It wasn't surprising. Israeli politics, or rather politicians, have reached an all-time low in public esteem. Widespread corruption at the highest levels, reprehensible behaviour in the Knesset, the inferior quality of many of the individuals seeking office, and a pervasive sense of mismanagement and waste have alienated large numbers of potential voters, particularly among the young.

And so, as predicted, the day of reckoning was marked by a dismal turnout: in a country that once boasted 80 per cent participation levels in elections, 63 per cent this time around reflected the deep-seated, broad-based malaise.

On entering our designated polling station at 10 a.m. on election day, my wife and I were all alone. And yet, at the very same hour, the grassy expanse of Jerusalem's Sachar Park was rapidly filling up with picnickers staking out their territory for the day. Taking advantage of their unearned freedom (election day is a work holiday in Israel), Israelis flocked to beaches and green spaces for recreation and fun.

"Don't you understand the implications of your not voting?" I found myself repeating again and again. "A vote not cast, is, in real terms, a vote cast for another candidate or party whose platform you may very well detest!"

Such remonstrations were generally greeted with apathy, indifference and a lifting of eyebrows that signalled a sense of helplessness, like when one is already too far gone with a terminal illness. In this instance, it was slow death by democracy.

That's not to say there wasn't an upside to these sleepy elections. For one thing, with fewer banners, placards and leaflets, there was a lot less litter. And what a relief to be done, once and for all, with the rabidly ideological partisanship and blind tribalistic loyalties that have tainted Israeli public life since the very beginning. The Ashkenazi Labor stronghold selected a Moroccan as its leader, and the two big parties, try as they did to sound different, sounded more or less the same. Each attempted to carve out a place for itself in the big and fuzzy political middle, where most Israelis happen to be these days. All that highfalutin' Jewish destiny and historic homeland stuff was less a part of the discourse than were the programs for getting the country out of the terrible jam that "high-minded" talk and thinking had gotten us into. The successful Gaza withdrawal put dampers on much of the former bombast.

You would almost have thought we were in a normal country. Social and economic issues (imagine!) were making headlines. And those slanderous sorts of posters – like the ones that once portrayed Barak (who?) or Peres wearing Arab keffiyahs while bold red letters screamed "Traitor!" or "Will divide Jerusalem!" – were nowhere to be seen.

Of course they weren't. How could they be when Peres, Ramon and Itzik were bedding down with Olmert, Hanegbi and Mofaz in an amorphous concoction called Kadima. It was hard to decide whom exactly to loathe. And when, a mere three weeks ago, a roundtable discussion about the future of Jerusalem was held with representatives from the right and the left, not only did the idea of ultimately dividing – or rather surgically removing – certain Arab neighbourhoods from the "indivisible capital of the Jewish people" fail to arouse protests of outrage from anyone present, it was greeted with the equanimity of an inevitability.

Yes, we are weary. We need a rest from "Politics." Yes, the Palestinians have accomplished something tangible with their persistence, and there's no use denying it. And as a few 20- and 30-year-olds that I met told me, if they were going to vote at all, it was only for the Pensioners party. After all, a secure old age, they pointed out without the least bit of irony, is something you ought to prepare for well in advance.

Culiner@netvision.net.il

Israel's little big bang

The recent election in Israel – the sixth in less than 14 years – was not quite the cosmic event that had been advertised.

Kadima, the centrist party established by former prime minister Ariel Sharon shortly before he was incapacitated, emerged as expected as the largest party in the Knesset and will form the next government. This reflects the broad movement away from divisive ideologies and toward pragmatism, but it's happening more slowly than predicted. The big bang that was supposed to replace unstable coalitions and gridlock will have to wait.

Gerald Steinberg in Jerusalem

Without Sharon at the helm, many voters apparently decided that a vote for Kadima was a major risk. Acting Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is not a former general, has little experience in top government positions, and is an enigma to most Israelis. As well, his party lacks rank-and-file members or a platform that goes beyond the emphasis on pragmatism. The new MKs are also unknown, in many cases, even to each other, adding to the uncertainty.

As a result, the outcome of the vote reflects neither acceptance nor rejection of Olmert's central goal of setting Israel's borders by 2010, with or without negotiations with the Palestinians. This was the centrepiece of Kadima's platform, and represents the main extension of Sharon's legacy of unilateral disengagement. But with a relatively narrow foundation, Kadima will have trouble keeping a stable coalition together long enough to reach this stage.

Instead, the election results show that many Israelis prefer to move cautiously, particularly with the radical Hamas party in power on the Palestinian side.

After the catastrophic end of the Oslo peace process, Israelis have become more skeptical, and they have shifted focus to more immediate and manageable issues, such as the economy and education. The surprising support for the Pensioners party in the election was, in part, a protest against lacklustre candidates and widespread political corruption. And the Pensioners' success showed that Israelis expect their government to find a way to provide a decent standard of living for the elderly. Many Holocaust survivors and immigrants who fled Arab countries, as well as the former Soviet Union, are surviving on a small government social insurance payment.

The Labor party's new leader, Amir Peretz, did better than Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud, and it survived the ordeal. In the campaign, Peretz also stressed social issues, particularly after demonstrating a lack of depth on foreign affairs.

As a result, a coalition with Kadima and Labor at the core –and focused on economic equality, health care and education – could include the religious parties, who also maintained their traditional support. This might provide enough stability to get through four years without new elections, but differences over priorities, including disengagement, or a return to high inflation and unemployment, could also lead to crisis – and yet another round of early elections.

The strength of the coalition and the success of the centrist and pragmatic transition in Israeli politics will also depend on Olmert's performance. His missteps were, in part, blamed for Kadima's relatively poor showing compared to polls during the campaign. And as an untested leader, if he falters, particularly on security issues such as Palestinian terror or Iranian nuclear weapons, he may be challenged from within Kadima, as well as by opposition leaders.

In short, these elections did not produce the big bang that was expected to reshape Israeli politics. But even a somewhat weaker Kadima, anchored in the pragmatic centre, reflects an important movement that can continue to grow and establish deeper roots. Its success, and therefore its future, will be determined by how well Olmert and his colleagues manage the internal agenda, including health and welfare, as well as Israel's complex external relations. If they fail, the fragile foundation on which Kadima is built could collapse, leaving Israel gridlocked for another generation by a myriad of narrow parties, interests and ideologies.

But if they do reasonably well, Kadima will be able to emerge as the new governing party. In addition to guiding policy aimed at making Israel a better place to live, a strong pragmatic centre can also continue to advance the goal of reducing the level of violence and friction in relations with the Palestinians. For most Israelis, this is as optimistic as the current reality will allow.

The Kirshner File

Dominique Moisi: a specialist of generalities

No man or woman in France seriously interested in current events can avoid Dominique Moisi's weighty pronouncements.

One of France's most prominent commentators and intellectuals, Moisi is a founder of the French Institute of International Affairs, a major think-tank, and the chief editor of its quarterly publication, *Politique Etrangere* (*Foreign Policy*). He is a also a professor at the Institute of Political Studies in Paris and a roving academic who has taught at Harvard University.

Sheldon Kirshner in Paris

A columnist for mass-circulation European newspapers, notably the *Financial Times*, he is a contributor to two important American niche journals, *Foreign Affairs* and *Atlantic Quarterly*. In addition, Moisi is the author of *France in an Age of Globalization*, an adviser to the European Parliament and a regular guest on TV talk shows, both in France and the United States.

The son of a Holocaust survivor, Moisi, 59, describes himself as a generalist, or, as he put it in an interview at his home off the Place de la Concorde in Paris, "a specialist of generalties."

He is interested in three broad topics: Trans-Atlantic relations, a code phrase for Europe's sometimes contentious relationship with the world's only superpower, the United States; Europe and the Middle East, a subject to which he is particularly attuned; and European affairs, which comes naturally to him.

A diminutive, bespectacled man with a shock of graying black hair who favours formal wear, Moisi developed an interest in international affairs long ago, being drawn to the topic by Europe's endemic history of warfare and its treatment of Jews during World War II.

Moisi's father, Jules, an engineer who worked for his family's leather firm, was born in Paris, the scion of Russian immigrants who settled in France in the late 19th century. When Germany invaded France in 1940, he fought in the French army, earning a Military Cross for valour. After France's defeat and the formation of the Vichy government, he and his wife, Charlotte, moved to Nice, in the Free Zone controlled by the Vichy regime and Germany's ally, Italy.

Moisi's parents had no problems in Nice, at least until Germany invaded the Free Zone and began deporting Jews. Jules was sent to Drancy – a transit camp near Paris – in 1943, and from there to Auschwitz. On the day he was arrested, Charlotte went into hiding, finding refuge in a convent in southwest France thanks to the French resistance movement. Having been raised on these stories of their respective ordeals, Moisi formed a hatred of and fascination with war and violence.

At university, he fell under the influence of his teacher, Raymond Aron (1905-1983). A polymath who was a sociologist, historian and political pundit, Aron was a skeptic who was wary of ideological orthodoxy. "He was a towering figure. I made my PhD with Aron," said Moisi, who classifies himself as a moderate.

Having written his thesis on European defence, Moisi intended to join the French foreign service, but then had second thoughts. "I realized I was too independent to be a diplomat." Under Aron's tutelage, he founded what would be the French Institute of International Affairs.

A frequent visitor to Israel, Moisi was an instructor at the Hebrew University in 1972 and 1973. There he met and was enormously influenced by Yehoshafat Harkabi, a colleague who had been director of Israeli military intelligence. He convinced Moisi that the Arab-Israeli conflict could not be resolved without one condition: Palestinian statehood.

Moisi remains an advocate of a two-state solution, but is not sanguine about the prospects of resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute within the foreseeable future.

Arab attitudes toward Israel are a stumbling block: "It will be very difficult for the Arabs to accept Israel. They'll do so only if they have no choice." But Israel has not helped matters either by building settlements in the West Bank, he said.

Nonetheless, Moisi believes that Ariel Sharon, Israel's prime minister, would have been prepared to give up almost all of the West Bank in order to preserve Israel's Jewish and democratic character. (He made this comment before Sharon was incapacitated by a stroke).

Moisi never had much faith in Yasser Arafat, the former president of the Palestinian Authority. "He was more of a problem than a solution." And while Moisi regards his successor, Mahmoud Abbas, as an improvement, he believes that he is weak and wields little power.

To Moisi, anti-Zionism in France is an old story. Intellectuals from the far left, as well as French Muslims, have been delegitimizing Israel for at least 30 years. He regrets that some of the leading anti-Zionist figures in France are Jewish, but in his opinion, most French Jewish intellectuals are pro-Israel. Reflecting on Israel's image in France, Moisi said that prior to the 1967 Six Day War, Israel was "sanctified" by the memory of the Holocaust, but this is not the case today.

Dominique Moisi
[Sheldon Kirshner photo]

Although many of his friends and acquaintances were critical of the 2003 U.S. and allied invasion of Iraq, he supported the war on the grounds that it would spell finis to Saddam Hussein's regime. He was also convinced that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction.

Moisi, however, was always skeptical that the United States and its allies could win the peace. The postwar chaos in Iraq has vindicated his pessimism."The cost of the war, for the United States and the whole region, has been too high," he observed, referring to the current Sunni insurgency. Furthermore, he claimed, the turmoil in Iraq has strengthened Iran and emboldened Tehran to try to acquire a nuclear arsenal.

It was precisely these doubts that prompted Moisi to withdraw his endorsement of the invasion. Three years ago, in a remarkable volte face, he admitted his mistake in a column. But he opposes an immediate or unilateral U.S. pullout, fearing that it would fan lawlessness in Iraq and encourage the majority Shiites to establish an Islamic fundamentalist state.

Speaking about the wave of anti-Semitism that has cascaded across France since the outbreak of the second Palestinian uprising in September 2000, Moisi cautioned that it should not be confused with Vichy's brand of anti-Semitism. "This would be an insult to the memory of those who went through this period. Vichy was officially anti-Semitic. This is not true of the French state today."

In his view, contemporary anti-Semitism is fostered by the extreme right, the far left and radical Muslims. "It would be absurd to deny that reality." Moisi contends that Muslim anti-Semitism is basically rooted in a deep-seated jealousy of the success French Jews have enjoyed in all fields of endeavour.

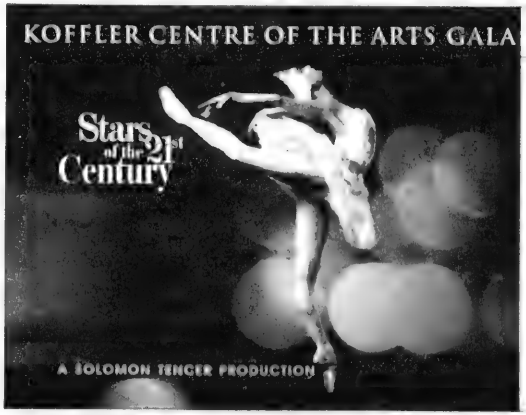
He does not believe that last year's civil disturbances in France which were perpetrated by disaffected Arab and African youths – were related to their affinity to Islamic radicalism, but by their rage over unresolved social and economic grievances.

He warned that terrorists affiliated with Al Qaeda pose the greatest threat to western civilization, but that they can be overcome.

Moisi caustically dismissed Jean-Marie Le Pen, the leader of the xenophobic National Front, as a "detail of history," saying that he has been eclipsed by the passage of time.

• • • •

Last in a series on France.



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Couple falls in love with more than Israel on birthright

Trip connects pair to Israel and each other

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

Fortunately for Toronto's Ayelet Eppel, she missed the boat - in this case, the plane - for a 2002 Canada Israel Experience (CIE) *birthright israel* trip.

It turns out the 27-year-old Torontonian registered too late for the trip, so she was forced to wait until the following year and neither she, nor her new fiancé, are complaining one bit.

It was thanks to that subsequent December 31, 2003 *birthright israel* sojourn that Ayelet – a madricha (leader) on the popular, structured Israel experience, at no cost to participants - first set eyes on her husband-to-be, Joel Borgida, during a *birthright israel* orientation session in November, at the Lipa Green Building for Jewish Community Services in Toronto.

They got engaged on April 1, this year and, despite the fact that Ayelet's mother, Patricia Tolken Eppel, feared it was an April Fool's hoax, they weren't kidding.

"I noticed Adam for the first time at that orientation session and then I saw him again a week later, on Christmas Eve at a Jewish single's party," says Ayelet, a research coordinator for the Ontario Pancreas Cancer Study at Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital. "I knew right away that there was something pretty special about this guy."

"There was definitely some chemistry when we saw each other," says Joel, "the best part of it though was how we met in that environment. It was great to see her so passionate about Israel."

Ayelet and Joel continued getting to know one another following the trip. "We really didn't spend time together in Israel because you're just so busy with so many activities. Besides, as a madricha, you're not supposed to get involved with participants," she says.

A strong proponent of *birthright israel*, Ayelet had been in Israel before. In fact, when she was one year old, her parents, contemplating making aliyah, moved there for a year. Then, at age 16, Ayelet took a six-week tour of Israel, before volunteering for Magen David Adom (Israel's equivalent of the Red Cross) for three months in the summer of 2000.

"To be part of *birthright israel* is like no other experience," she says. "It's especially important for people like Joel, who hadn't been to Israel before. I see so many of my peers transformed by *birthright*. Just being in this incredible place connects so many to their roots and to the land. I've also seen participants reconnect with long-lost family members who live in Israel. It's just an amazing thing to be part of."

Joel Borgida and Ayelet Eppel, who met on a 2003 birthright israel trip, are now engaged.

"I really never felt like I had a particular connection with Israel before, but I guess that's because I had never been there," explains Joel. "But once I got there, it was just such an overwhelming experience. Just hours after getting off the plane, we spent Shabbat at the Kotel (Western Wall). It was unbelievable. What really surprised me the most about Israel was the people. With the way Israel's portrayed in the media, I got there expecting to see a country walking on egg shells. That wasn't it at all. The people simply live their lives."

Internship program helps new olim crack the job market

Aliyah is a common dream for many young Jews living in the Diaspora. For a lot of them, however, a major barrier stands in their way - employment.

The Jewish Agency for Israel (JAFI) – UJA Federation's overseas partner - is attempting to smooth the way with an internship program aimed at young students from abroad.

The program gives prospective olim (immigrants), aged 19-35, work experience in their fields and access to the Israeli job market. Interns volunteer in their field for two to six months. While they are volunteering they become familiar with Israel and the Israeli way of life, and can meet young Israelis. The program enjoys extensive support within Israel, which has led to some great internship opportunities. "They get placements in the Knesset (Israeli Parliament) and in the Supreme Court, which Israelis cannot get," says Vered Layish, coordinator of the professional internship program. "People realize a lot of young people want to visit Israel, but not as tourists - as a person who works and gets to know the Israeli mentality, the Israeli community."

The professional internship program has been in existence for 20 years, but recently it has grown exponentially.

Last year, 450 interns from around the world participated in the program. Twenty percent of them made aliyah on their arrival in Israel, and many of them were offered jobs at companies such as Elite, Bank Leumi, and the Peres Conference for Peace.

"Everyone who is coming here and having a good time is a success story," says Layish. "But a lot of people are offered jobs, making aliyah and staying in Israel. Other people are finding love in Israel, marrying Israelis and staying here."

In addition to professional opportunities, the program is effective in strengthening Jewish identity. "I think it's important for any young Jew to come to Israel, to see what it's all about here," says Layish.

JAFI interns plant trees in Israel on Tu B'shvat.

Ontario Jewish Archives seeks synagogue artifacts

By CARLA LANCIT
UJA Federation

Do you have a piece of Toronto's Jewish history gathering dust in the attic? The UJA Federation Ontario Jewish Archives (OJA) is currently soliciting photos, documents, artifacts and memories from the Anshei Minsk and the Beaches Hebrew Institute for its virtual exhibit, "Toronto's First Synagogues."

The OJA is in the process of adding these two synagogues to the three already on exhibit: the First Narayever Congregation, Congregation Knesseth Israel, and the Kiever Synagogue.

The exhibit, which can be viewed on the OJA's web site (www.ontariojewishsharchives.org), documents the history of Toronto's early synagogues. Visitors get a taste of Jewish Toronto's past through texts, photographs, historical documents and audio/video clips.

"Toronto's First Synagogues", a collaborative initiative between the OJA and Robert Burley, a professor of photography at Ryerson, was funded through a grant from Canada's Digital Collections, Industry Canada.

"I'm excited that the OJA is able to expand our virtual exhibit to include these two early synagogues," says chair of the Ontario Jewish Archives, Brooky Robins. "The partnership with Ryerson University professor Bob Burley, along with the two synagogues involved and the community - in terms of personal donations and stories, should lead to a marvelous product, in keeping with the quality and standards set by the original site."

The ark at Toronto's First Narayever Synagogue

Among the items on display are the 1918 letters of incorporation for the First Narayever Congregation, a 1975 *Canadian Jewish News* ad for Congregation Knesseth Israel, a 1906 photo of Cantor Bernhard Wladowsky, and the original 1923 architectural drawings of the Kiever Synagogue.

Visitors can also watch a video of Sukkot services at the Kiever Synagogue in 1984, or listen to oral histories.

Accompanying text explains each synagogue's early history and architecture, as well as the role of religion and social life in the synagogue's past. The exhibit also documents the part that these synagogues play in Toronto's Jewish community today.

Individuals who have photos, documents, or artifacts from the Anshei Minsk or the Beaches Hebrew Institute, or who were active or members of the synagogues during the early years and would like to record an oral history, can contact the Ontario Jewish Archives at 416-635-2883 ext. 170 or oja1@ujafed.org

Any questions concerning information or photos that appear on these pages should be directed to jewishtorontonews@ujafed.org

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Hard times could not diminish love for Pesach

Sara Ginaite-Rubinson continues to hold Passover dear

By DANIEL HOROWITZ
UJA Federation

Passover has always been a special time for Sara Ginaite-Rubinson.

The Toronto native born in Kaunas, Lithuania's former capital, who, along with her entire family, was imprisoned in the Kaunas Ghetto during the war, went on to join the underground Anti-Fascist Fighting Organization resistance movement.

Her father later died in the Ghetto while her sister and mother were sent to Stuthoff concentration camp, where her mother perished.

"The most memorable holiday for me was Passover," Ginaite-Rubinson told *Jewish Toronto*. "I remember the beautifully set table graced by a plate of sweet fruits, honey, bitter herbs, and the somber symbolism of a bone, scraped clean."

Ginaite-Rubinson, the author of *Resistance and Survival*, is the keynote speaker at this year's Yom Hashoah Community Commemoration Service, on Monday, April 24 at 7:00 p.m. at Earl Bales Park (Bathurst, south of Sheppard).

Even while imprisoned in the Ghetto, Ginaite-Rubinson recalls how her mother would cook Pesach meals, including what she calls "empty fish."

"We tried to preserve the holiday even in the Ghetto. My mother would cook all the vegetables which we would normally put in the fish. We had no fish, of course, so we'd have to settle for a potato on top. It was empty fish."

Apart from the religious aspects of Passover, for Ginaite-Rubinson, the holiday is also a celebration of spring and the rebirth of nature.

"It was usually warm at that time of the year in Kaunas and during the holidays, when almost all of the Jewish-owned businesses were closed, the Jews of Kaunas dressed in their nice clothes and went for leisurely walks," she says. "The entire city seemed to be celebrating the liberation of the Jews from Egyptian slavery."

Ginaite-Rubinson has been cooking up a storm for Passover this year and the traditions of the holiday mean more to her now than ever.

"I am very happy to have lived to see the day when our entire family, small as it is, gathers every year at the home of my youngest daughter Anya Rubinsonaite-Sorkin, to celebrate the Passover Seder. My granddaughter, Riva, asks her father: 'What makes this night different from all other nights?' And he answers, 'We were slaves. Moses delivered us from Egypt and led us into G-d's Promised Land. Now we are free. Israel is an independent country and we can meet in Jerusalem whenever we choose.'"

Sara Ginaite-Rubinson, today and as she was in 1944 when she was part of the underground Anti-Fascist Fighting Organization resistance movement while imprisoned in the Kaunas Ghetto.

Debit card combines food packages with personal choice

JDC introduces electronic innovation to increase dignity for food recipients

With a cart full of Passover products, Irena (her last name is being left out to protect her anonymity) excitedly walks the aisles of the Kirovskiy supermarket in Yekaterinburg, capital of the Ural mountain region of Russia. "I am most excited for the applesauce and bananas," she says, pointing to the products in her basket.

This trip to the food store is an exciting one for Irena because it's the first time she's using her new SUPERmarket debit card, developed by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) – an overseas partner of UJA Federation – for recipients of food packages, who would otherwise be severely undernourished.

The SUPERmarket program in Yekaterinburg is modeled after the successful COTO card program in Argentina. After the collapse of Argentina's economy in 2001, JDC sprung into action by giving food packages to needy Jewish families. It quickly became evident that this form of aid was not well received by recipients. The food packages were replaced with monthly food vouchers and finally by debit cards accepted at COTO supermarkets.

Before the Yekaterinburg program began, Irena would receive a food package filled with items already selected by the local JDC Hesed centre. Today, food card program participants can shop with a sense of dignity and the freedom to choose their own food. To help with product selection, JDC worked with a local Jewish nutritionist to create a kosher-style food guide.

The goal of the program, which began in September last year, is 250 participants and every Kirovskiy store branch in Yekaterinburg.

JDC's Urals office worked with one of the biggest banks in Russia, Vneshtorbank to set up the electronic debit cards. To guard against misuse, the cards are programmed to be accepted only at the Kirovskiy market. They can not be used at cash machines or other stores.

Money is electronically transferred monthly onto the card, which can then be used between the 10th and 20th of the month. If the full amount is not used in any one month, the remainder rolls over to the following month.

Those enrolled in the program must also buy foods that adhere to the kosher-style guide and the food store reports back with lists of the products each individual purchased.

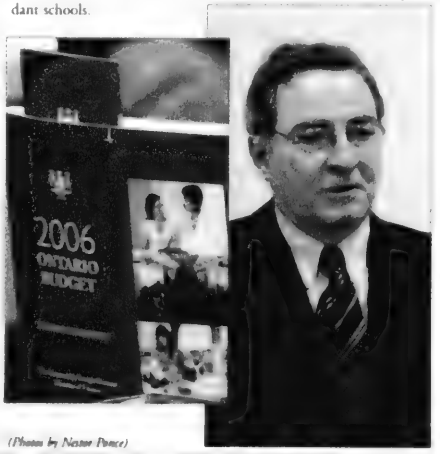
Gesturing to the long line behind her at the checkout, Irena proudly hands her orange credit card to the cashier, "I am grateful for this card," she says. "After all, it is not every Russian pensioner who can boast a personal credit card."

An orange debit card, developed by the JDC, allows participants to shop with a sense of dignity.

Community budget briefing

The provincial Liberal government is aiming for a balanced budget next year, according to David Zimmer, who represents the Willowdale riding in the provincial legislature and serves as parliamentary assistant to attorney general Michael Bryant.

Zimmer conducted a recent budget briefing for Jewish community members, sponsored by UJA Federation and Canadian Jewish Congress, Ontario Region. He stressed the importance of extra funding for public transit in the recent provincial budget, particularly a proposed subway extension to Vaughan, and he touched on the controversial questions of government financial assistance for independant schools.



(Photos by Nestor Ponce)

JEWISH TORONTO IS PUBLISHED AS A COMMUNITY SERVICE BY UJA FEDERATION OF GREATER TORONTO.

Family-in-Israel dinner to honour Elie Kalb

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Edie Kalb confessed that she was very surprised when Emunah Women of Toronto nominated her as the honoree for this year's Family-in-Israel Dinner, which will be held at Shaarei Shomayim Synagogue on May 9.

"I'm not the kind [to be a dinner honoree]," she said, visibly squirming, "but they talked me into it."

She recognizes the special honour it is that she was chosen solely for merit, "not for any other reason."

Kalb said that when her son, Brian, now 31, was having problems learning in a regular day school, she enrolled him in She'arim Hebrew Day School, a school for children with learning disabilities.

"He was one of the first six students at the school. We had no funding from anyplace. We didn't even really know what learning disabilities meant – and no one else really knew that much more anyway."

Kalb, with the urging of Elaine Rubinoff, then principal of the school, started a parents' association. "We used to have a goods and services auction, and then we had an art auction. One parent was an accountant, and had experience being an auctioneer. So she was the auctioneer, and also handled the money."

The first event raised $3,000, the next $6,000. At the art auction, they raised $20,000.

That, she said, was her first experience at leadership.

The Kalb family, inspired by the example of daughter Lisa, now living in Detroit with her three children, became more observant, and eventually became shomer Shabbat. Wanting some connection to the Orthodox world, she joined Emunah Women of Canada, a religious Zionist organization that raises money for children, day-care centres, residential facilities and other social programs in Israel.

It didn't take long for her to become active in Emunah. First, she worked and then chaired the annual bazaar. "I felt that Emunah hadn't moved forward to acknowledge the new way of doing things," Kalb said.

Besides working on the bazaar, she has served as editor of the organization's newsletter, public-relations chair, vice-president for two years, president for two years, and two more as co-president.

"In Israel, Emunah gets a lot of respect, because of our family and social services and schools – all with the love of Torah. But I felt that Toronto wasn't giving this information over as well as it could."

First, she said, she insisted that the bazaar be certified under COR, rather than the women cooking in their kitchens. To the members' surprise, Kalb said, "the food was all sold out. I had taken the organization to a more religious plane."

Kalb felt that people wanted to come for entertainment in a place with kosher auspices. She organized the first kosher murder mystery night, developed parties, and organized such gala events as En Hiver and En Printemps. "We have elegant affairs, in really nice places."

Attendance at Emunah events soared from an average of 80 people to an average of 300, while the Mother-in-Israel Dinner, which changed its name to Family-in-Israel Dinner so that husbands could come too, was attended by 450 people.

Kalb encouraged Emunah to participate in communal events, such as the Yom Ha'atzmaut celebrations.

Two scholarships to study in Israel are given each year by Emunah. Unlike many such projects, they do not necessarily go to girls with the highest marks or the greatest financial need.

"We try to find girls who are exemplary in academics and in serving the community," Kalb said. "We want to identify and encourage potential leaders," she said.

Kalb is extremely proud of the work Emunah does in Israel. "It sponsors women's shelters, and crisis centres, such as the one at Neve Michael in Pardes Chana, which is available to help [children in danger or at risk] 24/7, said Kalb.

Initially, Kalb's new approaches were not always appreciated by some of the members of Emunah. "After all, I was the new kid on the block, and here I was changing the way things had been done." However, her ideas have now been accepted, and she has mentored many young people joining the organization, as members and even as officers – including the current president, Joyce Rifkind.

She said her family, especially her husband, Jack, a renovation contractor, have been supportive and encouraging. Her children, grandchildren and other family members are planning to come to the dinner.

The Family-in-Israel Dinner is dedicated to the memory of Sharon Rosenblum Leff, a popular and committed longtime member of Emunah, who died this past year at the age of 61.

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Jewish Life

Obligation and freedom

By ELLIOTT MALAMET

JEWISH EDUCATION
The Next Generation

In the contemporary Jewish calendar, the classic seven-week journey from Pesach to Shavuot is punctuated by two significant days – Yom Hashoah and Yom Ha'atzmaut. The timing of all of this could not be less accidental in a philosophical sense, and casts light on what is ultimately a precarious strategy in current Jewish education.

Traditionally, the liberation entailed by the Exodus could only be fulfilled by the receiving of the Torah at Sinai. The great paradox of freedom fulfilled through acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of heaven was not lost on the Talmudic sages. Rava comments: "All people are vessels; happy is he who is a vessel for Torah." This simple message is volcanic in its effects.

Rava intimates that thrusting off the "burden" of religion with the seemingly autonomous perspective of secularism is an illusion. Given the enormously powerful forces of nature and environment, one is bound to "serve" some master work – money, status, attractiveness. The modern world is filled with such slaveries, so the obligation imposed by mitzvot is simply a desire to serve the highest.

Once upon a time, Jewish children were taught to see Shavuot, in a profound sense, as the end goal. "Getting out of Egypt" was only purposeful if there was a place to arrive, a goal for living called Torah. But today, the widespread alienation from observance has led to an enormous dual emphasis placed on remembering the Shoah and celebrating the State of Israel. These two impulses are best exemplified by the increasingly popular March of the Living, which combines both notions.

It is not that the march is a bad thing; quite the contrary, it can create a powerful stimulus to Jewish identity. But inevitably, stimulation without discipline is a ticket to frustration and even decadence. After Auschwitz and Israel, to what will these children come back? I have had hundreds of students go on the march, and their return almost always leaves them with predictable dilemmas.

To these students, the most pragmatic questions slowly replace the understandable high that suffuses their trip. How will the seductive energies of feeling proud to be a Jew translate back into the "mundanity" of your native environments? In what practical way will you incorporate Judaism into your lives? Will you increase your Torah study? Will you take on Jewish observance in a serious way? Where? With whom? Think Jewish, act Jewish, live Jewish? Or will the experience be oddly diminished in the long run, as the climb down from the peaks of the march into the valley of ordinary living, without a plan or a structure as to how to really go about the business of being a serious Jew, leads to drift?

And so Shavuot beckons beyond the "intermediate days" of Yom Hashoah and Yom Ha'Atzmaut. In his 2002 book *Lidrosh Elohim* (*To Seek Out God*), the Israeli psychologist Yair Caspi relates his profound transformation many years before as a result of attending a *chavurah* at the Jerusalem apartment of the famed professor Yeshahyau Leibowitz. In the opening page, Capsi recalls Leibowitz's thundering words: "One who seeks out freedom will not find freedom. [But] one who seeks out obligation will possibly find freedom." And from that day, relates Caspi, he became a different human being.

In memory of my rabbi and rebbitzen

Guest Voice

By JULIEN BAUER

A little bit more than 10 years ago, while spending a sabbatical year in Jerusalem, I was introduced to Rabbi Hayyim Yaacov Bulka, who invited me to his weekly Talmud *shiur* (lesson). I was immediately hooked, attending regularly for a year, then every summer, which I spend in Jerusalem, followed by weekly attendance during a second sabbatical.

Rabbi Bulka was the kind of rabbi Jews can be proud of. He was both learned – which is not unusual for a rabbi – and had an extensive knowledge of secular topics.

I knew he was a graduate of Hildensheimer Seminary in Germany, but I once asked him what university he had attended.

"I have no academic degree," he told me.

"But the way you teach us combines both the traditional yeshiva type of learning and the modern university style," I replied.

"I went to university as a free student, not to get a degree, but to open my mind. Please don't tell anyone!" he implored.

This was revealing. Today, we have a choice between rabbi-doctors, for whom a PhD is of the utmost importance, and rabbis who assiduously refuse to learn anything outside the yeshiva curriculum.

Rabbi Bulka was one of those too few who followed the philosophy of *Torah umada* (Torah and science).

His students were mostly retired Americans, some with very strong Jewish backgrounds, some with weaker ones. With his vast knowledge, he could easily have tried to impose his views. Rather, he preferred to offer arguments in an effort to persuade.

If one of us asked a question and Rabbi Bulka was not sure of the answer, he would study the sources for a whole week and give us an extensive explanation in the following *shiur*. Once, upon hearing sheer nonsense from one of his students, he very nicely and delicately guided the fellow away from his lack of knowledge and toward a measure of common sense. And in that particular case, believe me, it was not easy.

Rabbi Bulka could do that because he was genuinely interested in people, always ready to help, always smiling. Even when he suffered his own health problems, he always displayed a sense of humour that one does not usually associate with rabbis, especially in Israel.

Rabbi Bulka did not dress according to the custom of 150 years ago in Germany in order to show he was a rabbi, as many today are inclined to do. He dressed modestly, in classic modern garb. Nevertheless it was obvious to everyone that he was a rabbi.

I remember one morning, coming back from the *shiur*, a young girl telling her sister, "Let the rabbi pass."

I asked her, "Do you know him?"

"No," she replied.

"So how do you know he is a rabbi?"

She looked at me quizzically and answered: "How can this man not be a rabbi?"

A similar question and observation could have been made about Rebbitzen Yehudit Bulka. She was not one of the many American retirees living in the Wolfson Towers in Jerusalem. She was the Rebbitzen. At home, helping her husband, and outside, caring for people, she behaved the way I had always imagined in my heart that a rebbitzen should behave. Alas, she survived her husband by only one month.

She passed away before Pesach.

Whenever I was in Jerusalem, one of my preferred activities was to attend Rabbi Bulka's *shiur* and simply speak with him.

Now, there is a void.

This summer when I'm in Jerusalem, instead of learning with him, I will go to his graveside.

May the memory of Rabbi Hayyim Yaacov Bulka, my rabbi, and his wife Rebbitzen Yehudit Bulka, be a source of comfort to their children and of blessing for Klal Yisrael.

Julien Bauer teaches at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

Jewish Life

Making a difference

***To Heal a Fractured World: The Ethics of Responsibility* by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Random House.**

Books
Bernard Baskin

In this wise, inspiring and compassionate book, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of Great Britain and the Commonwealth since 1991, asks challenging and pertinent questions: What are our duties to others, to society, and to humanity? How do we live a meaningful life in an age of global uncertainty and instability? What are the answers of religion to the difficult questions of modern society?

The author seeks his answers in a forthright and searching discussion of the ethics of responsibility. In his quest, he turns first to the Hebrew Scriptures and Jewish theology, and then to the teachings of philosophers and ethicists from other cultures. "We are here to make a difference," he writes, "a day at a time, an act at a time, for as long as it takes to make the world a place of justice and compassion."

He points out that either God exists or he does not. If he does, we will be rewarded for the good that we do. If he does not, we will still be rewarded, for there is no greater reward then the knowledge that you have healed some of the pain of our deeply troubled world, mitigated some of its injustice and cured even a fraction of its ills.

For the author, Jewish ethics is refreshingly down to earth. If someone is in need, give. If someone is lonely, invite them home. If someone you know has recently been bereaved, visit them and give them comfort. If you know of someone who has lost a job, do all you can to help him or her find another. The sages called this "imitating God." They went further: giving hospitality to a stranger, they said, is "even greater than receiving the divine presence." That is religion at its most humanizing and humane.

In the book's final chapter, the author sums up what he has learned about ethics in a series of brief aphorisms. They include the following:

- Each of us is here for a purpose;
- Even the smallest good deed can change someone's life;
- It is not the honours we receive that matter, but the honour we give;
- What counts is not how much wealth we make but how much of what we have, we share;
- There is no greater gift we can give our children than to let them see us sacrifice something for the sake of an ideal;
- Religions reach their highest levels when they stop worrying about other people's souls and care, instead, for the needs of their bodies;
- No religion that persecutes others is worthy of respect, nor one that condemns others, entitled to admiration;
- Putting others down, we diminish ourselves; lifting others, we lift ourselves;
- Pain and loneliness are forms of energy that can be transformed if we turn them outward, using them to recognize and redeem someone else's pain or loneliness.

Rabbi Sacks concludes his volume with these uplifting words: "To heal where others harm, mend where other destroy, to redeem evil by turning its negative energies to good: these are the mark of the ethics of responsibility, born in the radical faith that God calls on us to exercise our freedom by becoming his partners in the work of creation. That seems to me a life-affirming vision... becoming co-authors with God of the world that ought to be."

Humour in the Holocaust

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

On the evening of Monday, April 24, the 27th of Nisan – candles will be lit around the world to honour the memory of the millions of Jews who perished during the Holocaust. On Yom Hashoah, we also remember the courage and defiance Jews showed during the war. That defiance could have taken the form of physical confrontation but often it was seen as psychological resistance such as the use of humour against their Nazi oppressors. Today, a look at humour during the Holocaust.

As part of her doctoral thesis, Chaya Ostrower interviewed more than 50 survivors of the Shoah to find out how and why they used humour during the war. They said it was an outlet for feelings of aggression, a defence mechanism, and a stress reducer. It did not reduce the horrors of atrocities they were witnessing, but it did help them cope. One survivor told Ostrower, "However little it was, however sporadic, however spontaneous, it was very important, very important. Humour and satire played a tremendous role, in my opinion. It was a cemetery all right and exactly for that reason, the mere fact that we wanted somehow to preserve our personality, they wanted to make robots out of us." **[http://tinyurl.com/jyefr]**

That sentiment was echoed by the late Emil Fackenheim, philosopher and survivor of Auschwitz: "We kept our morale through humour." Fackenheim is quoted in the essay Humour in the Holocaust: Its Critical, Cohesive and Coping Functions. In it, John Morreall writes that western culture has a "long tradition of prejudice against humour, especially in connection with anything as tragic as the Holocaust." But he suggests that the ancient Greeks and Shakespeare saw a different value for comedy. "Comedy is not 'time out' from the real world; rather it provides another perspective on that world," such as the solidarity of the oppressed during the war.

As Hitler's armies faced more and more setbacks, he asked his astrologer, "Am I going to lose the war?"

"Yes," the astrologer said.

"Then, am I going to die?" Hitler asked.

"Yes."

"When am I going to die?"

"On a Jewish holiday."

"But on what holiday?"

"Any day you die will be a Jewish holiday."

[http://tinyurl.com/lxjy3]

In their *Big Book of Jewish Humor*, William Novak and Moshe Waldoks devote a large section to anti-Semitism and wartime humour, including the following.

Sensing Hitler's imminent takeover of his country, an Austrian Jew goes to a travel agent to find a way to escape. He is shown a globe but then is told that nearly every country has made Jewish immigration impossible. In desperation he asks, "Haven't you got another globe?" **[http://tinyurl.com/r84cn]** (Note: to read these free excerpts, you will need to register at Amazon.com.)

While most of the Jewish humour during the Shoah was whispered in defiance, the situation was very different at the Westerbork Transit Camp. Writing in the Yad Vashem Online Magazine, Yehudit Shendar explains how camp Kommandant A.K. Gemmeker encouraged prisoner and theatre director Max Ehrlich to present entertainment including classical concerts, recitals and cabaret shows. The most notable, *Humour and Melody*, was a satirical presentation of daily life in the camp. "Jewish talent performed repeatedly for auditoriums packed with Jewish prisoners, while Nazi camp commanders filled the front rows." Unfortunately, the fate of most of these talented performers was only delayed by their participation in the shows. **[http://tinyurl.com/fcysc]**

Although humour was generally used as a psychological survival technique, the Hebrew-language site, Humour as a Defense Mechanism during the Shoah, tells the story of how it made the difference between life and death. A boy of 10 was standing in line at the Birkenau crematorium. While the rest of the children were crying and screaming, the boy began to laugh loudly. An SS officer asked him what he was laughing about. He said, "You're about to kill me and I have to stand in line for that?" According to the site, the SS officer freed him and he survived. **[http://tinyurl.com/pmmbk]**

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com.

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ICRF honours three Women of Action

By LEILA SPEISMAN
Staff Reporter

Some 500 people filled an Arcadian Court banquet hall earlier this month to honour the 2006 Israel Cancer Research Fund's Women of Action.

Gallery owner Sandra Ainsley, volunteer and philanthropist Lesley Binstock Offman, researcher Dr. Janet Rossant and the event's keynote speaker, *Globe and Mail* columnist Margaret Wente, were recognized for their achievements.

The Israel Cancer Research Fund (ICRF) has been supporting cancer research in Israel since 1975. In 2004, professors Avram Hershko and Aaron Ciechanover of the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology received the Nobel Prize in chemistry for research partly funded by ICRF.

Previous Women of Action honorees include realtor Elise Kalles, Nova Scotia Lieut.-Gov. Myra Freeman, cookbook author Rose Reisman, and Supreme Court Justice Rosalie Abella.

After losing her husband to leukemia in 1985, Ainsley was left as the sole supporter of her three sons. She was urged to give up the gallery she had just opened in Yorkville, but she chose to carry on with her dream. The gallery is now a 10,000-square-foot facility in the Distillery District, specializing in glass.

The measure of success, she told luncheon attendees, is not just financial. Rather, it comes from the energy and satisfaction that success brings you.

Offman, who lost her first husband to cancer in 1991, began her volunteering career as a child, "standing on a table and selling shmattes at the Hadassah Bazaar." Realizing that "many Jews and non-Jews were less fortunate than I was," she continued her philanthropic and communal work with hospitals, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, Baycrest, and Kolel, the Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning.

Organization has supported cancer research in Israel since 1975

Cancer, she said, is no longer a certain death sentence. Nevertheless, it still strikes far too often, she said, discussing her work with ICRF.

Rossant, a professor at the University of Toronto, is chief of research at the Hospital for Sick Children, the first Canadian woman, and one of the few women in North America, to hold such a position. She is particularly involved in stem cell research.

Science, she said, is an international language that gives her a common set of values with people she comes into contact with. She said she sees science as one of the primary routes to peace in the world.

In her address, Wente, an award-winning *Globe* columnist, said she is concerned about the increasing power of violence emanating from the Muslim community worldwide.

"Some teachers in France have stopped teaching about the Holocaust, because of fear of reprisals [from Muslim extremists]," Wente said.

She urged the audience to appreciate the greatness and goodness of Canadian society. "Don't be wishy-washy about Canadian values," she told them.

Fundraising at the event included a silent auction, an auction of a trip for two to Israel, scarves produced to raise money in memory of a young man who died of cancer, and the launch of *Cooking Kindness: Heroes in the Kitchen*, edited by Gloria Guttman. Proceeds from the sale of the cookbook will go to ICRF.

For more information about ICRF, call the Toronto office at 416-487-5246.

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Hamas tries hard to pretend it's something else

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

On April 8, the *National Post* carried a story by Tim Butcher of the *Daily Telegraph* under the optimistic headline, "Hamas may recognize Israel." The piece covered an interview that Palestinian Authority Foreign Minister Mahmoud Zahar gave to the *London Times*, in which he hinted that Hamas might consider a two-state solution, thus implying recognition of Israel. Many news outlets, including the Israeli media, ran similar accounts of the interview.

Butcher wrote: "A willingness to consider a two-state solution implies acceptance of Israel's right to exist alongside a Palestinian nation, something Hamas has never agreed to before… Should Hamas genuinely be considering modifying its stance and preparing to recognize Israel, the likely catalyst is [the April 6] decision by the European Union to freeze the next monthly payment of the $600 million (US) a year the EU and its member states give the cash-strapped Palestinian Authority."

The key question is whether Hamas, a radical Islamic fundamentalist movement sworn to Israel's destruction, is prepared to renounce this cornerstone principle in order to gain international acceptance and the financial aid that comes with it.

Some Hamas leaders, including PA Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh (sometimes described as a "relative moderate") have tried to avoid talking about the movement's more extreme aims in order to give the Hamas government a veneer of pragmatism.

Meanwhile, some Middle East analysts are eager to take any Hamas statement, no matter how ambiguous, as proof that, like the PLO before it, Hamas, too, is capable of moderating its views.

But, as a number of Israeli analysts have noted, one must distinguish between the secular nationalists of the PLO – many of whom have still not reconciled themselves to Israel's existence – and the Islamic fundamentalists of Hamas, all of whom remain true believers in the eventual triumph of Islam over Israel. These Israeli analysts argue that many westerners simply can't comprehend how ideologically committed Hamas is to Israel's disappearance from "Islamic land."

Hamas' Mahmoud Zahar is a known hardliner who recently told a Chinese news agency that "there is no room for Israel on this land."

In the *London Times* interview, Zahar was repeatedly asked if Hamas is prepared to accept the Quartet's demands in order to return to negotiations for a two-state solution: renunciation of violence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements between the PLO and Israel.

Is radical Islamic fundamentalist movement sworn to Israel's destruction, prepared to renounce this cornerstone principle?

Zahar was extremely evasive on the question of a two-state solution, saying, "What is the concept in the Quartet about the two-state solution and on what basis?" After remarking that this is something "to discuss with our president [PA President Mahmoud Abbas]," Zahar added. "We are not here speaking about [Israel in the] '48 or '67 [borders], we are speaking about what they [the Israelis] are going to offer."

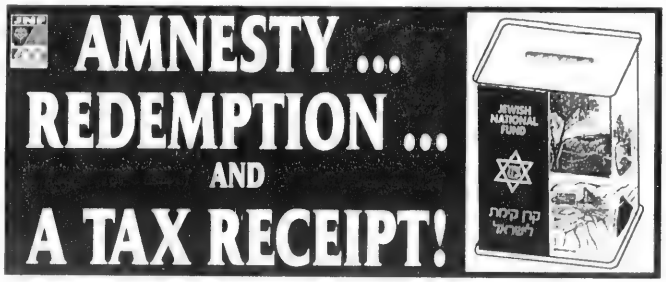
And at least on this point he was abundantly clear: the Palestinians – "more than five million" have the "right to come back to our land." This is code for the "right of return," which means the elimination of Israel as a Jewish state.

While many in the media were quick to interpret the mere appearance of some moderate-sounding words from a staunch rejectionist like Zahar as evidence that Hamas is softening its position, this more upbeat note was soon quashed by a Hamas "moderate."

In an April 9 *Ha'aretz* story "Haniyeh: PA won't bow to foreign pressure to recognize Israel," Shmuel Rosner reported on the reiteration of Hamas' strident anti-Israel position: "Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh said [on April 8 that] his government would not bow to foreign pressure to recognize Israel and disavow violence, despite funding cuts that are pushing the Palestinian Authority to financial collapse."

Hamas may speak of ceasefires and temporary truces if Israel accedes to (impossible) conditions. It may even go through all sorts of verbal gymnastics to try to convince naïve Western audiences that it's heading toward genuine moderation. But in the end, Hamas cannot renounce its core religious belief that a Jewish state has no right to exist in the Middle East – without, that is, ceasing to be Hamas.

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.



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Feature

Tasmania is home to Australia's oldest synagogue

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

HOBART, Tasmania — Despite its tiny population, the Jewish community of Hobart the capital of Australia's only island state offers a choice of Shabbat worship services. Every second Saturday there is a short "progressive" service; following it is the regular weekly Orthodox service.

Caroline Heard, president of the Hobart Hebrew Congregation until last month, deserves credit for the harmonious arrangement, according to Pnina Clark, who with her husband, David, serves as Hobart's de facto Chabad emissary.

Caroline Heard

Their synagogue is the oldest in Australia, with backless wooden benches – once reserved for convicts shipped from Britain in the 1800s – supplementing more comfortable high-backed wooden pews. In all, there are 150 seats downstairs, and 45 in the women's gallery.

A well-preserved structure fronted with tall trapezoid-shaped windows, the synagogue was built 160 years ago in neoclassical Egyptian style, even incorporating palm-tree- shaped columns.

"We've gone from candlepower to gas to electric," Heard told a small group of visitors on a mild Tasmanian spring day last November.

Pointing out the elaborate chandelier over the bimah, she told of the synagogue's July 4, 1845, consecration in Hobart Town, as the city was then known. "It was the middle of winter. It would have been cold and dark… I reckon they used a heck of a lot of candles that day."

Heard, a native of Plymouth, England, who moved to Australia in 1971, has spent the last dozen or so years in Hobart but is moving to Melbourne this month. The 160th anniversary concert she organized at the synagogue last November featured a rearrangement of the music composed by Catholic bandmaster Jacob Reichenberg for the building's opening.

Because the governor of Van Diemen's Land – the name by which Tasmania was originally known – would not grant land for a non-Christian institution, Judah Solomon, a local Jewish merchant and pardoned convict, donated his garden. His stately home, known as Temple House, still stands next to the synagogue and is owned by state police.

From the time the synagogue's foundation stone was laid in August 1843, it took two years – and help from Sir Moses Montefiore – to complete the building. The famed British Jewish philanthropist raised money for the congregation when locals ran low on funds.

Donors and the amounts they provided, in British pounds, are listed on the back wall in gold script. Prominently displayed on a side wall is the prayer for the Royal Family.

In recounting the synagogue's early history, Heard notes an unusual halachic issue whether or not convicts could be honoured with aliyot or included in a minyan, the traditional prayer quorum. After consultation with the chief rabbi of England, it was determined that they could be counted in the minyan but not called to the Torah, she said.

Hobart's current Jewish population comprises an eclectic group, many of whom are married to non-Jews. There is at least one Israeli, an Algerian couple, university students from elsewhere, and a woman who was a classmate of Anne Frank's as a child. Their class picture is on display at the synagogue, which has about 50 individual members.

A Chabad rabbi comes in for the High Holy Days, life-cycle events and the occasional service. Progressive rabbis also visit, on an irregular basis.

According to Australia's last census in 2001, Tasmania has about 165 Jews. There were more than 400 in Hobart alone in 1848, but most of the original Jewish families either left Judaism or left the city, said David Clark.

After World War II, he noted, the community was "repopulated" by European immigrants.

As Orthodox Jews, the Clarks are a minority within a minority on the scenic island whose license plates bear the slogan "Tasmania – Your Natural State." Launceston, about 200 kilometres to the north of Hobart, has a Chabad House.

The couple lives on a hilly street lined with prewar houses fronted by flowering gardens. They have hosted many Jewish backpackers looking for a kosher meal or a place to sleep. In fact, their home is listed in the phone book as the Jewish Centre. Pnina runs a small Hebrew school and began her first Jewish playgroup last fall.

It is only "by default," according to Pnina, that they are Chabad emissaries. Their presence in Hobart predates their affiliation with Chabad in the early 1980s.

David was born and raised in Hobart. Pnina emigrated from Hungary at age 8 with her family in the late 1950s. She is the daughter of the late Rabbi Jacob Joseph Schick, a former congregational rabbi in Melbourne.

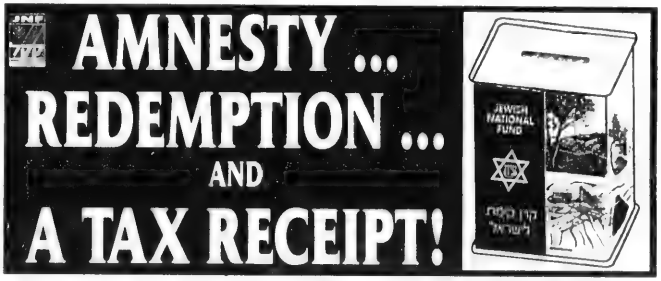
In Tasmania, it's harder being observant. Kosher food is scarce, and Jewish day schools don't exist. When their children reached high school age, the Clarks sent them to Melbourne, where they eventually settled, to continue their education.

"Anything kosher, we get from Melbourne," said Pnina. "I closed down my milchik sink until Shavuot."

Among the more memorable moments of Jewish life in Hobart, David recalls the time he was called on to help move about 50 bodies from the site of the colonial Jewish cemetery, which was sold decades ago, and reinter them in the Jewish section of Hobart's community cemetery.

"With six skeletons in the car, I was hoping I wouldn't get pulled [over] for any reason," he said.

Continued on page 25



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Australian ANZAC biscuits are easy to prepare

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Living in Toronto as part of a diverse, multicultural population, we have become familiar with many different types of cuisine.

That is why I was intrigued to be offered a dessert I'd never heard of at the Shabbat table of Australian friends in Melbourne last November.

ANZAC biscuits – the acronym stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps – may not be exotic, but they're easy to prepare, go well with a cup of tea, and have an interesting history that dates back to World War I.

Next week, on April 25, Australians and New Zealanders will mark ANZAC Day, a public holiday that is the anniversary of the date ANZAC troops landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula in 1915. That day, now commemorated with dawn and daytime ceremonies, marked the start of an eight-month campaign resulting in 25,000 Australian casualties, according to Australia's government website.

The pseudo-national biscuits – as aussieslang.com refers to them – were sent to the troops during both world wars by women on the "home front."

A few days after our dinner in Melbourne, I saw packaged ANZAC biscuits at a grocery store in Tasmania, Australia's island state.

When I returned to buy some as gifts, a fellow visitor to Hobart gave me an impromptu history lesson as we walked to the shop and discussed the biscuits and the ANZACs. Vera Goldberg, a former teacher who is involved with the Sydney Jewish Museum and its Holocaust education programs, also advised me that it would be easy to make the cookies myself.

Once we got to the store, she searched the aisles to find a bag of rolled oats with the ANZAC biscuit recipe on the packaging. She then read it to me while I wrote the instructions in my notebook – right there in the cereal aisle.

Vera Goldberg, who lives in Sydney, recommends the ANZAC biscuit recipe on the rolled-oats package she is holding. [Frances Kraft photo]

Although Vera suggested that I buy a jar of golden syrup to use in the recipe, I figured that readily available corn syrup would be an acceptable substitute if I wanted to make the cookies at home. But when I found golden syrup, by chance, in a Toronto store, I set out to recreate the authentic recipe.

Recently, I served it to an Australian guest at our Friday night table. Apparently, my cookies were smaller than the Australian version, but otherwise, it seems they passed muster.

ANZAC BISCUITS

Other variations are available online. Mim Gunn, whose son and daughter-in-law had us over for dinner in Melbourne, favours a recipe called South African Crunchies, which is simplified by using a square pan to make slices instead of individual cookies. She uses castor sugar instead of brown sugar, and the amounts of coconut and syrup are modified slightly. Baking time for the squares is 25 minutes.

The recipe that follows is from the rolled-oats package.

1 cup oats
1 cup flour
1 cup lightly packed brown sugar
3/4 cup desiccated coconut
4 oz. butter or margarine
2 tbsp. golden syrup
1 tsp. baking soda
3 tsp. boiling water

Blend oats, flour, sugar and coconut. Melt butter or margarine and syrup. Dissolve soda in water. Add to butter and syrup. Stir into oat mixture. Drop by tablespoon onto greased tray. (They spread.) Bake at 300, 15 to 17 min. (10 to 12 min. convection). Will harden. Cool 5 minutes.

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CHOCOLATE SEDER: Grade 6 students at the Paul Penna Downtown Jewish Day School celebrated with family members at their recent chocolate seder, part of the school's Passover family education program.

Enjoys lifestyle in Hobart

Continued from page 23

David and Pnina both perform chevra kadishah duties, preparing Jewish bodies for burial. "It's difficult here, because often you know them," Pnina said.

Pnina, who has a master's degree in psychology, also finds time to counsel pregnant women and women in crisis, working with a group of Christian women

"I believe it's important for us to do things for the general community," she said. "The Jewish community doesn't need me full time."

Although it would be nice to have more Jewish amenities, David said he likes the lifestyle in Hobart.

"In about 10 minutes, you can be in the bush, away from all the houses. You can't do that in many cities."

The Canadian Jewish news

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Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to...

Mazel tov to Joseph & Edie Cladman on their 60th wedding anniversary. Wishing you continued good health and happiness. Love Shelley, Wendy and Chana.

Mazel tov to Matthew David & Gyle Claener on your engagement from parents Janet & Raphael David, Alydia & Irwin Claener. An August wedding is planned in Nova Scotia.

Mazel tov to Reesa Goldenberg and Alex Volhansky who were married on Aug. 28, from the family.

Mazel Tov to Denise Stavsky on her 60th birthday. Much love from her family.

Welcome to Harrison Kaiser Rotman born on March 10.

Mazel tov to Dina Shyllit on her 80th birthday. Proud children Rochelle & Joel Kuchar, Joey & Esther Shyllit and grandchildren Jill, Brian, Sara and Robyn.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, April 24, is the deadline for the May 4 issue and Monday, May 1, is the deadline for the May 11 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Saturday, April 22

PARSHA DISCUSSION
Dr. Murray Urowitz will discuss *Shemini*. 9:30 a.m. at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433

HALTON-PEEL SERVICES
Join B'Nai Shalom Congregation of Halton-Peel for service followed kiddush. Info, bnaishalom2004@yahoo.ca or 905-469-4344.

Sunday April 23

WINGATE BRANCH MTG
The Royal Canadian Legion election meeting takes place 9:15 a.m.,788 Marlee Ave. 416-782-5024

THE LONG WAY HOME
To commemorate Yom Hashoah Beth Tikvah presents *The Long Way Home*. 2:30 p.m. No charge. 416-221-3434

SINGLES WALKING GROUP
Join Walk and Talk Etc. for singles 50+ for a visit to the Lower Forest Hill Village. Meet at Tweedsmuir Ave and Heath St. at 10 a.m. E-mail walkandtalketc@hotmail.com.

T2-TIKKUN TORONTO
"T2-Tikkun Toronto: Jewish Youth Repairing the World One Day at a Time," an afternoon of hands-on community service for teens sponsored by BBYO, Bnei Akiva, Tzofim, Habonim Dror, USY and Young Judaea and earn four community service hours. 12-5:30 p.m. 4700 Bathurst St. Register, www.bbyo.on.ca,416-398-2004, ext. 221.

END OF LIFE SYMPOSIUM
Beth Tzedec Congregation presents "End of Life Decision Symposium," a program directed to healthcare professionals with **Rabbis Dr. Reuven Bulka** and **David Feldman**, of the Jewish Institute of Bioethics, **Arthur Fish**, lawyer, **Dr. David Novak**, of the University of Toronto, **Laurie Zoloth**, of Northwestern University, discussing transplantation, halachic and secular implications of organ donation, the theological and legal implications of advanced directives, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and withdrawal of support in the comatose patient, and other halachic and secular issues, 12-6 p.m. Physicians $50, others $35. Medical accreditation pending. RSVP 416-781-3514, ext. 34 or e-mail: mlaba@bethtzedec.org.

SINGLES 35+ BRUNCH
Adath Israel Dynamic Singles 35+ presents "Canadian Jewry Standing Tall" with **Bernie Farber**. 11:30 a.m. $15 prepaid by April 20, $20 at the door. 416-635-5340

GHETTO MEMORIAL
The Workman's Circle and Jewish Labour Bund mark the 63rd anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising with ghetto songs and readings. 3 p.m. at 417 Lawrence Ave. W.

YOM HASHOAH MEMORIAL
Michael Way Skinne discusses his experience at the International School of Holocaust Studies of Yad Vashem, at the Beit Rayim Synagogue's Yom Hashoah memorial service. 7:30 p.m. 905-770-7639

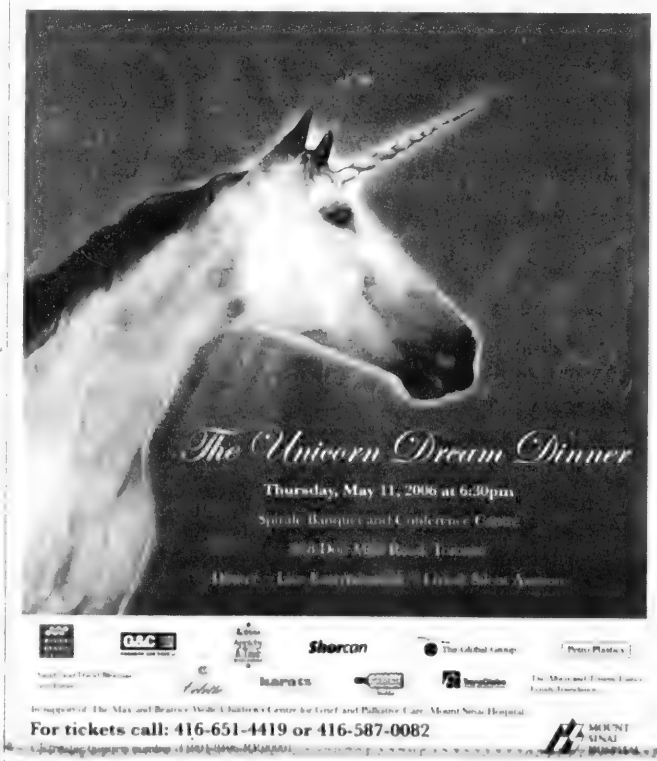
ROSH CHODESH GROUP
The Beach Synagogue Rosh Chodesh Group meets at 7 p.m. to discuss life from Jewish women's perspective. 109 Kenilworth Ave. 416-694-7942

DREAMS
Temple Kol Ami presents **Rabbi Jerry Steinberg** discussing the Jewish perspective on dreams, 7:30 p.m. at Indigo Books, Yonge St. and Highway 7.

Monday April 24

YOM HASHOAH V'HAGVURAH
Join the Community Holocaust Commemoration in Earl Bales Park 7 p.m. 416-785-1333

Continued on page 27



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This group will provide sustenance for those seeking spiritual and emotional healing in a respectful community. The sessions will include study of sacred texts, rabbinic commentary, prayer, music and meditation. The group will be led by
Rabbi Baruch Frydman-Kohl, Beth Tzedec Congregation
Judy Shier Weisberg, Educator and Holistic Practioner
Location: Beth Tzedec Congregation (Board Room on first floor) 1700 Bathurst Street (entrance on Avenal Drive) Parking Available. Wheelchair accessible.
Day: Thursdays
Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Dates: April 27th - June 1st, 2006 (inclusive)
Fee required: $50.
Assistance available on request
To Register please call:
Ms. Etta Ginsberg McEwan, Co-ordinator
at 416-944-3359
With the generous support of The Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto

What's New

Continued from page 26

VE'AHAVTA VAUGHAN

Make a difference in the lives of others. Ve'ahavta Vaughan's fundraising, social and community awareness group welcomes new members to their monthly meeting with guest speaker **Alex Cywink**, who will talk about "Life on the Streets". 7 p.m. For info call 416-964-7698 ext 19.

Tuesday April 25

YOM HASHOAH PROGRAM

Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto-Richmond Hill invites family and friends to attend a Yom Hashoah commemorative program, 8 p.m. at Sha'ar Shalom Synagogue, 2 Simonston Blvd. 905 787-8772

CHUG HATANACH

Irving Matlow will lead the study group in a discussion of *The Book of Proverbs*, chapter 11. Beth David Congregation at 8 p.m.

Wednesday, April 26

JEWISH JOKERS

Join Jewish Jokers and Humour Group meet at 7 p.m. Antibes Community Centre,140 Antibes Dr. 416-661-2541

THE ISLAMIC THREAT

Prof. Raphael Israeli, of Hebrew University, will speak on "The Islamic Threat to the Middle East and to the World," 7:30 p.m. at Beth Sholom Synagogue. 416-783-6103

MAKING A SPIRITUAL HOME

Join the Paul Penna Downtown School for **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** on "After the Ecstasy...the Diapers," 10 tips for turning your Jewish home into a spiritual home. 7:30-9 p.m. at the Miles Nadal JCC. 416-928-3537, ext.136 or jessica@djds.ca.

MESSIAHS AND CULTS

Rabbi Joel Wittstein will discuss "Messiahs and Cults in the Streams of Jewish History." 7:30 p.m. at Congregation Or Shalom, 534 Huron St. 519-858-4400

DISCUSSING CONVERSION

Kollel presents "Conversations about Conversion," with **Alena Strauss**, an interactive course covering issues of acceptance, ethnicity, family dynamics and community for those who have converted to Judaism or those considering conversion. April 26-May 31, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Register at 416-485-7007, ext. 0.

Other news

BEING A MORAL BUSYBODY

UJA Federation Women's Campaign and Advocacy presents "Being a Moral Busybody: How to Do the Right Thing," a discussion on children's safety and well-being moderated by **Ellie Tesher** with **Roz Prober, Constable Andrew Gibson, Dr. Bev Kupfert** and **Howard Hurwitz**. Thurs. Apr. 27, 7 p.m. at the Sala Caboto Banquet Hall, 42 Playfair Ave. $15, Reserve at 416-847-1007 or email lsuydam@ujafed.org.

DARFUR

Find out how you can help the people of Darfur at an evening of speakers who have visited the refugee camps, and witnessed the atrocities that threaten the lives of people in Sudan today. Thursday, April 27, 7:30 p.m. at Temple Emanu-El. 416-449-3880

UNDERSTANDING ISLAM

Join Kollel for "Understanding Islam for Jews," with **Prof. Isaac Hollander**, a course that investigates the relationship of Islam and the Qur'an to Jews today, April 27-June 8, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Register at 416-485-7007, ext. 0.

BOUTIQUE NIGHT

Temple Sinai Nursery School presents its Fourth Annual Boutique Night, to raise funds for the school. Products and services not available in stores. Thurs. Apr. 27, 6:30-10 p.m. Free. 416-487-3281.

BETH TIKVAH WEEKEND

Beth Tikvah Synagogue hosts **Dr. Ronald Zweig** on Saturday, April 29 during service speaking on "Knowing and Not Knowing: Choosing to Ignore Evil," at a luncheon, by reservation only, on "Righting Historical Wrongs," and on Sunday, April 30, at breakfast, by reservation only, following minyan 416-221-3433, ext. 316.

OSTEOPOROSIS PROGRAM

Baycrest offers "POWER: Promoting Osteoporosis Wellness Through Exercise and Resources," a 7-week program for seniors beginning May 1. $70. **Maureen Smith**, 416-785-2500, ext. 2588.

MOM AND TOT DROP-IN

Shaarei Shomayim Moms and Tots program, Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings, 9:30-11 a.m. for tots and their caregivers and includes free play, crafts, snack and circle time. $7 session. Call **Robin**, 416-789-3213, ext. 217.

EATING DISORDERS

Eating Disorders of York Region provides services, support groups for families and friends of individuals who are affected by eating disorders. Join them in Richmond Hill Thursday evenings, sufferers 6-7:30 p.m., parents, family and friends 7:30-9 p.m. Contact 905-886-6632 or www.edoyr.com.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration call **Shawna**, 416-638-7800, ext. 215 or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Adult Children Losing A Parent, a six-session group for those who have recently lost a parent. Begins Tuesday, April 25, 7:30-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Today's Woman, a 6-session group for women wanting to make a change in their lives. Begins Wed., Apr. 26, 7-9 p.m. 4600 Bathurst St.

Effective Parenting, a 4-session group on how to raise happy, motivated and well behaved children ages 3 to 11 years. Begins Wed. Apr. 26, 7-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St.

Happiest Baby On The Block, a workshop for parents of newborns and infants to calm your baby. Wed. Apr. 26, 7-9:30 p.m. at The Family Resource Centre at The Promenade.

Infant Massage, a 6-session group for parents, grandparents or caregivers and their babies. Begins Thurs. Apr. 27, 11 a.m.-12 p.m.,The Family Resource Centre.

Teens and Depression, a lecture by **Dr. Amy Cheung** on identifying teen depression. Thurs. May 4, 7-9 p.m., 4600 Bathurst St. Registration required.

Parenting Children with Challenging Behaviour, a six-week group. Wednesdays, May 3, 6:30-8:30, Lipa Green. Call **Diane** for info, ext. 246.

FOR SENIORS

Lunch and Learn in Retirement present "A Family Tale of Enterprise," with **Robert Bick**, of Bick's Pickles, Wed. Apr. 26, 1 p.m. Bring a dairy lunch, coffee, tea served. $1. 416-789-3291.

Beth Emeth Chai Shalom hosts a "Musical Interlude with The Jack Steinberg Trio," Thursday, April 27, 7:30 p.m. $5, non members $7. For information contact **Marlene White**, 416-450-7199. Tickets available at synagogue office.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Casino Niagara, Wednesday, May 24. Call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. Closed April 20, April 27 bingo. Call **Menachem** 905-731-7748.

BERNARD BETEL CENTRE

1003 Steeles Ave. W., 416-225-2112.

Yom Hashoah Memorial, Israeli Etrog Club, Tuesday, April 25, 6 p.m.

Spend Thursday, April 27 at Betel, "Stories From the Heart," 12-1 p.m. "Fun With Yiddish," 1-2 p.m. and "Nafty Naftolin's Komedy Kabaret," 2:30-3:30 p.m.

WAGMAN CENTRE

55 Ameer Ave. 416-785-2500.

Lunch and Learn, Tuesday, April 25 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. with **Cynthia Good** discussing "Writing Your Memoirs." $5, includes dairy lunch, guests $7. Reservations must be made in advance, call ext. 2267 or 2275.

MILES S. NADAL JCC

Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, 750 Spadina Ave., 416-924-6211 or wwwmilesnadaljcc.ca.

Intermediate Hebrew II, 6-week course, Tuesdays, April 25-May 30, 8-10 p.m. Members $154, non-members: $186, + $10 materials fee.

Hebrew Conversation 2, an 8-week course, Thursdays, April 27-June 1, 7-9 p.m. Members $154, non-members: $186, + $10 materials fee.

Klezmer Player's Workshop, a 10-week course for instrument players. Tuesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. beginning May 2.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Seniors event, "Buying a Computer How and What?" Friday, April 21, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Register at ext. 235.

Luncheon with entertainer **Rhonda Silver**, Tuesday May 9, tickets at the reception desk or call ext. 235.

"Boogie Babies and Jammin' Tots" Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. in the Jewish Discovery Museum. Drop in fee $10 for music class and free play.

Be a part of the Toronto Maccabi Team. Try-outs for boys basketball, baseball and swimming and girls soccer and swimming 13-16 years. Contact **Grant Smith**, ext. 257.

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 20

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OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

Steeles Memorial Chapel

Deutsch, Livia	April 6/06	Private
Weinberg, Sidney	April 7/06	3 Harlock Blvd
Kirzner, Jack Joseph	April 8/06	63 Westdale Dr
Honickman, Phyllis	April 8/06	Private
Brass, Murray	April 9/06	Private
Osterman, Benzion	April 9/06	Private
Wolfish, Bessie	April 9/06	6010 Bathurst St
Cohen, David	April 9/06	Private
Benson, Charles	April 10/06	Private
Rzepkowicz, Sura	April 10/06	92 Shelborne Ave

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
BESSIE KIRSH ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, April 23rd, 11:30 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Clanton Park Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
SHELDON FARBERMAN ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, April 23rd at 11:00 a.m.
Pardes Shalom Cemetery
Community DDDD Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling.

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Jewish candidate accused of 'conflict of interest' in UWO election

By KYLE GORDON
Special to The CJN

The University of Western Ontario's student council election was marred by controversy after an e-mail from a Palestinian group claimed a Jewish candidate had a conflict of interest.

Executive members of Western's Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights Club (SPHR) expressed concern that Noah Farber, a candidate for the 2006-07 position of vice-president of finance and clubs, has a history of working against Palestinian human rights.

The e-mail was sent to the University Student Council (USC) on March 17, the day before it voted for the position of vice-president of finance.

It stated: "Mr. Farber is the president of the Israel Action Committee (IAC) and has a blatant conflict of interest with the SPHR goals of basic human rights for Palestinians. It would be unfair and deleterious to SPHR to grant Mr. Farber access to SPHR financial records and planned activities."

Farber said the USC president informed him that Dario Kuzmanovic, president of the SPHR, had sent out the e-mail on behalf of the SPHR executive.

"The e-mail was essentially drawing a lot of conclusions, making a lot of statements that were factually untrue and essentially trying to coerce voters not to vote for me," Farber said.

Matt Fisher, the 2004-05 IAC president and a law student at UWO, said that rather than trying to build support, SPHR was simply taking someone's hard work and trying to damage it.

Fisher said Farber was targeted because he is the president of the IAC. "The SPHR couldn't stand to see a leader in the Jewish community become a leader in the student community.

"SPHR stands separately from all other campus groups in their unwillingness to participate in the larger student community and their dedication to simply attack others who don't fall in line with their views," Fisher said.

The March 18 election resulted in a tie between Farber and Alison Todd. According to the USC bylaws, a tie is decided by a coin toss. Todd won.

Immediately following the election, Farber filed an appeal. In it he stated that the e-mail sent by SPHR brought the election into disrepute. He argued that he was unable to run a fair campaign with the e-mail circulating.

His appeal was eventually accepted, and a new election date was scheduled for March 29.

A few days before the second election, members of the SPHR sent an e-mail to the incoming USC board members. It said: "Despite being asked to declare a conflict of interest in the hearing against SPHR, he [Farber] refused to do so."

At that point, Farber said he felt the need to address the issue.

In an e-mail, he stated that the conflict of interest SPHR was referring to was his membership on the Clubs Policy Committee, which filed a complaint when SPHR celebrated the United Nations International Day of Solidarity, on Nov. 29, 2004, by erecting a mock Apartheid Wall at Western.

"Apparently, my candidacy is not as a result of hard work and desire to serve the students of Western, but rather the result of a massive conspiracy," Farber wrote.

"My only saving grace is that they [SPHR complaints] are so bizarre, at least they make clear the scary extremes to which these people have decided to try to skew the elections."

No longer a member of students' council

Dave Forestell, the legal affairs officer on the USC and a voting member in the election, said "it is fair to say, having read the confidential minutes, that at no point was Noah asked to declare a conflict of interest... All members of the committee were told at the beginning of the meeting [hearing] that if they felt they were in a conflict, they should declare that conflict. However, at no point did anyone ask him to declare a conflict."

When the votes from the second election were tallied, Farber did not win and is therefore no longer a member of the USC.

"At the end of the day, I'm obviously disappointed. To have your candidacy undermined by a group who is so concerned with one element of my life is frustrating. There is no doubt that the purpose of the e-mail was to raise doubt about my candidacy by any means necessary. It was obviously successful," Farber said.

Kuzmanovic said he is pleased with the results. "We are obviously happy. It would be unfair for us to operate under bias. If Noah Farber was the vice-president of finance, he would have access to the planned activities, financial records and membership list of SPHR."

Now that the election is over, Farber wants to ensure that Jewish students on campus feel comfortable running for board of directors positions.

"As a Jewish leader on campus, I feel that it is my responsibility to help work for future generations of Jewish leaders," he said.

CJC objects to Bibles being distributed to students

By LAUREN KRAMER
Special to The CJN

VANCOUVER — Canadian Jewish Congress has added its voice to parents' objections that the Gideon Society's distribution of Christian Bibles to students in a Vancouver-area public school system is inappropriate.

The Gideon Society, a lay association of Christians, has offered free Bibles to Grade 5 students across Canada since the 1940s, and in the Richmond School District since at least the 1960s.

But last month, a handful of parents objected to Richmond's school trustees, saying the distribution of the Bibles is inappropriate in a school system populated by children of many religions and denominations.

Typically, 50 students in the district's 38 elementary schools request a Bible in any given year, while the rest pass on the offer, said Richmond School District superintendent Bruce Bearsto

In an interview with the *Richmond Review*, school board chair Linda McPhail said the Bibles are not handed out to students. Parents who want their children to receive one must fill out a form that the board includes in newsletters, and return it to their child's school

She added that most e-mails she's received on the issue support the practice

Nevertheless, CJC is against it

"We don't see that there's any benefit in not communicating a very firm boundary when it comes to the public school system and the ability of certain denominations to effectively proselytize," said Mark Weintraub, chair of Canadian Jewish Congress' Pacific region. "A position which is not firm will encourage the most aggressive religions to promote their particular sacred texts."

But Beairsto insisted that the Gideon Society's offer to distribute free Bibles is no big deal.

"I don't believe anyone here is passionately wedded to the idea of distributing Bibles through the school district, but we just didn't see any reason to oppose it," he said. "The practice is long-standing and has not previously been raised as contentious."

"We have no particular axe to grind or position to defend, but at this time, our best judgment about how to live our inclusive ideals suggests that past practice is acceptable and there's no compelling reason to change it," he added. "That is not to say that we will not do so in the future, but to be honest, there are far more urgent challenges vying for our attention."

Beairsto said that if other religions come forward and wish to offer students their respective holy books, he would welcome it.

One Muslim parent in Richmond, Abdullah Ali, is reportedly doing just that he is obtaining Qur'ans to distribute to students who request them

But Weintraub said that unless they're being used as part of the curriculum, religious texts only belong in a public school's library

"We're totally opposed to an ad hoc process of disseminating information of religious teachings other than in an academic framework," he says. "It must be part of an overall teaching curriculum, and must not be left to those groups – be they Buddhist, Zoroastrian or anything else – to create an advantage of one faith over another in the public school system."

"If the library of this school should house the world's collection of sacred texts, we'd be supportive of that, but it must be undertaken in a spirit of academic and objective pursuit of knowledge, and without any underlying proselytizing motivation."

Each year, the Gideons distribute more than 63 million Bibles to schools, hotels, hospitals and prisons worldwide, its website says.

Other Vancouver-area boards do not allow the Gideons to distribute Bibles to students.

Beairsto said the Richmond school board does not promote any particular faith.

"We try to be accepting of everyone. For example, we provide rooms for Muslim students to pray, we sing songs from all traditions in December, and so on," he said.

DANCE STUDENTS: Bat-mitzvah aged girls in Grade 6 at Netivot HaTorah Day School got a lesson in simchah dancing at their recent Mother/Daughter Simcha Dance-A-thon. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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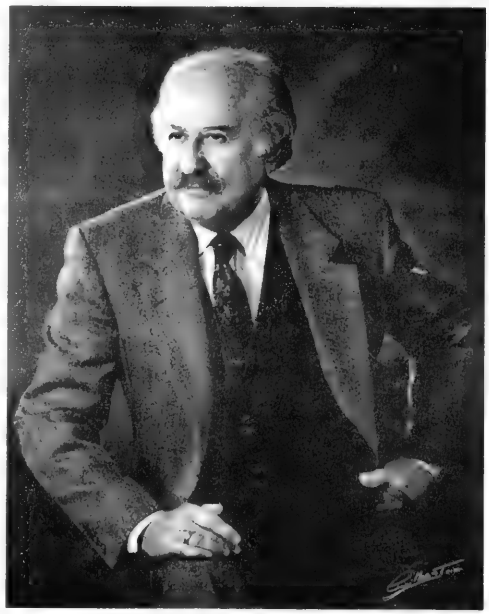

Harold Gorman, 1991 Negev Honouree, Jewish National Fund

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How your child can be successful in Grade One

Helpful hints for fostering an enthusiastic learner

TORONTO — Parents, educators and guidance counselors agree that the transition to grade one should be smooth and enjoyable. So, what can you do to prepare your child for Grade One?

Lisa Adler, grade one teacher at Bialik Hebrew Day School, says: "Don't worry about whether your child reads, rather focus on promoting independence. Don't do for your children what they can do for themselves."

Debra Danilewitz, Bialik's school counselor, agrees. Her advice? "Give your children the opportunity to be independent. If your children can't make their own beds, encourage them to at least put the pillow in the right spot. Buy shoes and coats children can do up alone."

As the parent of a grade one student, Nicole English was surprised at how quickly her son adapted. He brings home his homework folder each night — and it's organized with the "Stay at Home" work on the left side and "Bring Back" on the right side. Through this type of teaching, the children begin the lessons of organization and responsibility.

Another parent, Michelle Freedman, wondered how her child would be able to sit at a table all day. She quickly discovered that children at Bialik are exposed to a variety of ways of learning. While some work is done at their desks, either independently, or in small groups (where they make new friends), other learning is done through experiential tasks on the carpet, at "centres", or even in the playground.

Freedman says, "I was amazed at how the Hebrew instruction was done using gross motor skills – not just sitting at a desk!"

Of course, by this time of year, grade one students are reading and writing (in Hebrew and English) and developing math and science skills. They've developed friendships and have grown into independent people. *In the photo above, Bialik grade one students take part in the Celebration of Hebrew Letters.*

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Ce document est également disponible en français au Bureau du Greffier, à l'Hôtel de Ville de Vaughan au 905-832-8504

First Published: April 13, 2006

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City Clerk and Returning Officer, City of Vaughan

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Coast to Coast

Winnipeg's Asper Campus set to get a facelift

By MYRON LOVE
Prairies Correspondent

WINNIPEG — With most of the money from a $7.5-million fundraising campaign in hand, Winnipeg's Asper Jewish Community Campus is preparing for the next step: a redesign of the complex's interior.

In 2004, the Asper Campus launched a campaign to pay off its remaining debt, reconfigure its interior space and double the size of its endowment fund to help pay future maintenance costs.

The campaign has raised $7.1 million to date, and campaign co-chair Larry Hurtig said he's pleased that a significant number of donors are under age 50 and that many are community members who didn't contribute to the campaign to build the facility, which opened in 1997.

Among the major donors this time around are the federal and provincial governments – which have each contributed $750,000 – and the Asper family and Asper Foundation, who contributed $1 million.

The changes scheduled to take place include the downsizing of the Marion and Ed Vickar Jewish Museum of Western Canada, which is losing its exhibition space by the front entrance (future exhibitions will be displayed in cases along the campus' main concourse), as well as the relocation of the Kaufman/Silverberg Library from the basement of Gray Academy (Winnipeg's main community day school) to the former museum site.

Also planned is a move of the Aleph Bet Child Life Enrichment day care program to the former library space; the expansion of the Rose and Max Rady Jewish Community Centre's fitness area and locker room; and the creation of a more park-like entrance for the campus building itself.

Hurtig, the president of the Asper Campus board, compared the campus to a home that needs upgrading every few years. He also noted that membership in the campus' Rady JCC, at about 5,300, is beyond the centre's capacity and more than double the original estimates of its eventual size that were made when the campus opened in 1997.

The announced changes have caused some unhappiness, particularly among some supporters of the museum, whose allocation from the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg was significantly scaled back last year.

However, Barry Shenkarow, the Asper Campus president, noted that the boards of all the stakeholder organizations were involved in the decision-making process.

Shenkarow chaired a forum in late March for Asper Campus employees to explain the changes to them and answer their questions.

"There were a lot of questions," he said. "Some people wanted to know why we aren't just adding onto the building. That would have been too costly."

He said the first phase of renovations are slated to begin in June and will involve relocating the library, the museum and the day care.

"We hope that will be finished by September," he said. "We will work on the Rady Centre when the centre is having a slow period [after the summer], so as to not cause too much disruption."

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17th Knesset sworn in Monday

Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Following Monday's terror attack in Tel Aviv in which nine Israelis were killed and dozens more wounded, Israel's 17th Knesset began its swearing in ceremony.

Not all participants agreed, however, that Knesset members should be taking part in a celebration on such a day.

Shas chair Eli Yishai called on Knesset Speaker Reuven Rivlin to postpone the ceremony, saying, "This is not a day for celebrating. The Knesset must feel the fear that the people who are travelling throughout the country are feeling on chol hamoed."

Interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said, "We intended to open the first session of the Knesset and the faction in a better mood. It's a harsh attack. I wish a quick healing to the wounded and our condolences to the victims."

Former prime minister Ariel Sharon's chair in the Knesset plenum was to stand empty during Monday's swearing-in ceremony, as a reminder of the changing political tide marking the opening of the 17th Knesset.

Knesset spokespeople expressed uneasiness at the shift from a government led by a dominant party of 40 MKs with a larger-than-life leader to one headed by a newly created party of 29 MKs, Knesset.

"The truth is that the vacancy is so much bigger than that one chair. So many well-known, veteran MKs are not returning. There is a question of how the new class of MKs will be guided," one spokesperson said.

But veteran MKs told the *Jerusalem Post* they were happy to see the end of the 16th Knesset, which they characterized as a low point in the Parliament's history because of the number of corruption charges filed against MKs.

"The 16th Knesset was the worst term I remember since I came to the Knesset in 1984," said Ran Cohen of the Meretz party, who will take the oath of office on Monday for the seventh time. "I'd like to believe the 17th Knesset is going to be better."

With prayer and song, 120 MKs from 12 different parties were to be sworn in. There are 41 new faces and two recently created parties, Kadima and the Gil Pensioners party, both elected for the first time.

Some faction configurations have also shifted. Israel Beiteinu, which sat in a joint faction with the National Union in the 16th Knesset, now sits alone, with 11 members.

The National Religious Party, in contrast, will be joined with the National Union faction in the 17th Knesset, instead of acting on its own as it did in the 16th Knesset.

Absent from the Knesset is the secular Shinui party, which was the third-largest party in the 16th Knesset with 15 MKs. None of its members were re-elected.

Starting with the words, "I am honoured to open the first session of the 17th Knesset," President Moshe Katsav addressed the assembly.

Members also heard from acting Speaker Shimon Peres, who, as the oldest member, serves as the interim head of the Knesset until a permanent one is elected.

Knesset secretary Arye Hahn, who has been through this ceremony a number of times in the last decade, said he always finds it emotional. He spent the day going over all the preparations to ensure that the event would move like clockwork.

In spite of Olmert's prediction that he will construct a large coalition that will keep the government in place for four years, talk behind the scenes anticipates a considerably darker stage.

"There is a lot of joking around not to put away the election hats so fast. They may come in handy sooner than we think," said a Knesset spokesperson. "People are even saying that within a year we'll have elections again... It's all the small parties – they are nervous that things are going to fall apart with so many cooks in the kitchen."

One high-ranking Knesset spokesperson said all of the parties are feeling the lack of a "Knesset star" to turn to.

"Many of the new MKs are feeling like they are being asked to go from stagehand to centre stage," he said.

Top on the legislative agenda is passage of the 2006 budget, which must be approved within 45 days from the time Olmert is sworn in. Labor MK Isaac Herzog is already asking the plenum to debate a host of social legislation items, including improving housing rights for the disabled.

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IDF: Iran diplomacy now doubtful

By YAAKOV KATZ and HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — With projections that Iran could develop a nuclear bomb within 2½ years, Tehran's announcement last week that it has successfully enriched uranium proves diplomatic efforts to stop its race to the bomb have failed, says a high-ranking Israel Defence Forces (IDF) military intelligence officer.

"The way it looks now, it is doubtful that the United Nations and the international effort will succeed in stopping Iran," the officer told the *Jerusalem Post* over the weekend. "Iran spit in the world's face, but the world hasn't done anything."

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad

Last Friday, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad fired a series of verbal shots at Israel, saying the Jewish state is a "permanent threat" to the Middle East that will soon be eliminated, and questioning the validity of the Holocaust.

"Like it or not, the Zionist regime is heading toward annihilation," Ahmadinejad said at the opening of a three-day conference in Tehran in support of the Palestinians, attended by Hamas members, including party leader Khaled Mashaal. "The Zionist regime is a rotten, dried tree that will be eliminated by one storm," Ahmadinejad said.

Although Israel had no official response to Ahmadinejad, former Israeli prime minister Shimon Peres said the Iranian president's words were reminiscent of those of Saddam Hussein, and that his "end will be similar."

Peres issued a statement saying Ahmadinejad "represents Satan, and not God." History, he said, has denounced "madmen and those who wave the sword, and all those who acted this way ended their careers accordingly."

Peres added, however, that Israel needs to let the United States and the international community lead the campaign to protect the world from the Iranian leader.

"Iran is a United Nations member state threatening another UN member state, and the international organization will not let this go unheeded," Peres said in an Israel Radio interview Saturday.

"The Iranian president is uniting the entire world against him," he said. "Israel is following his statements and actions closely, but does not wish to respond to them."

Indeed, the Foreign Ministry had no response Saturday night to Ahmadinejad's comments.

On Tuesday last week, Ahmadinejad announced that Iran had passed one of the major hurdles in its race to obtain nuclear power and had, for the first time, successfully enriched uranium.

But while a battery of only 164 centrifuges was used to enrich the uranium to 3.5 per cent, the IDF officer said, it is only a matter of time before Iran has technology that will allow for the operation of thousands of centrifuges over a period of several months, which could produce highly enriched uranium at 90 per cent the amount needed for a nuclear bomb.

The officer said Iran is in the process of developing nuclear arms in a separate program, parallel to and alongside the Islamic republic's publicly known nuclear program, which Iran claims is for civilian, peaceful purposes.

"It is more probable that they have a second and secret plan [to develop nuclear arms] and they will copy the technology they are now developing in the open and use it in a secret location," the officer said.

Iran, the officer predicted, would obtain independent research and development capabilities – sometimes referred to as the "point of no return" – in a matter of months, technically allowing it to move forward with its nuclear program without external assistance.

"Once they succeed in enriching uranium at 3.5 per cent, there is nothing really technologically stopping them from enriching at 90 per cent," he said.

But after successfully enriching uranium, Iran's next test would be to operate thousands of centrifuges for more than just a few days. "The goal is to keep them going for several months without their breaking down or falling apart," he explained. "The fact that they know how to do it for several days is not enough."

While Israel needs to fear a nuclear attack by Iran, the threat is shared by the entire world and needs to be dealt with appropriately, the officer said. Tough and immediate sanctions could still potentially suspend Iran's nuclear program, he added.

"The diplomatic efforts made until now have been exhausted," he said, "and it is time for a diplomatic process with sharp teeth."

Ahmadinejad provoked a world outcry last October, when he said Israel should be "wiped off the map."

On Friday, he repeated his earlier statement about the Holocaust, saying: "If such a disaster is true, why should the people of this region pay the price? Why does the Palestinian nation have to be suppressed and have its land occupied?"

The land of Palestine, he said, "will be freed soon." He did not say how this would be achieved, but insisted to the audience of at least 900 people: "Believe that Palestine will be freed soon. The existence of this [Israeli] regime is a permanent threat [to the Middle East]. Its existence has harmed the dignity of Islamic nations."

Halimi kidnapping suspects surrender

PARIS — Two suspects surrendered last week in connection with the kidnapping and murder of a young French Jew.

A 19-year-old man, identified by the *Le Figaro* newspaper as Jean-Christophe S., has confessed to participating in the abduction of Ilan Halimi, 23, who died from torture inflicted on him by a gang of kidnappers.

The leader of the "Gang of Barbarians" who carried out the crime, Yossouf Fofana, who is in the custody of Paris police, says Jean-Christophe was not merely an accomplice but a partner in the crime.

A young man in his 20s, identified as Yassin N., also turned himself in April 10. He is suspected of having dealings with Jean-Christophe, but denies involvement in the kidnapping.

There currently are 22 suspects under investigation in the case, 18 of them in police custody.

Nine killed in suicide bombing

Continued from page 1

Olmert said that Israel was investigating what exactly had occurred and who was responsible, and also wished a speedy recovery to the wounded and condolences to the families of victims.

The new Hamas-led Palestinian Authority government called the suicide bombing a legitimate response to Israeli "aggression."

"We think that this operation… is a direct result of the policy of the occupation and the brutal aggression and siege committed against our people," said Khaled Abu Helal, spokesperson for the PA Interior Ministry.

Earlier, Moussa abu Marzouk, a Hamas leader abroad, told Al-Jazeera television that "the Israeli side must feel what the Palestinian feels, and the Palestinian defends himself as much as he can."

PA President Mahmoud Abbas denounced the attack, saying it harmed Palestinian interests, while Palestinian sources have reported that a large Israel Defence Forces contingent has entered the West Bank city of Nablus in response to the terror attack.

"President Mahmoud Abbas condemned the terrorist attack in the bus station in Tel Aviv that led to the killing and injury of many," his office said in a statement released by the official Palestinian news agency, Wafa.

Israel Briefs

Pope backs Israel, PA

Pope Benedict endorsed Israel's right to exist as well as Palestinian statehood hopes. "May the international community, which reaffirms Israel's just right to exist in peace, assist the Palestinian people to overcome the precarious conditions in which they live and build their future, moving toward the constitution of a state that is truly their own," the Pope said in an Easter Sunday speech at the Vatican. His remarks on Israel were seen as an indirect rebuff to calls by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad for the Jewish state to be eliminated. Benedict also urged an "honest," negotiated solution to the international crisis caused by Iran's nuclear program.

Diplomats visit Indonesia

Two senior Israeli diplomats visited Indonesia. Israel's Foreign Ministry disclosed that the deputy head of its Asia desk, Amos Nadai, and Israel's ambassador to Thailand, Yael Rubinstein, made an official visit to Indonesia this month despite the absence of formal ties between the Jewish state and the world's most populous Muslim nation. The trip was made within the framework of a UN-administered trade conference in Jakarta. Nadai told Israel Army Radio that while he doesn't expect full ties with Indonesia to be established before there is an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal, Jakarta is interested in lower-level relations. Israel broke the ice with Indonesia by sending an aid airlift following the December 2004 tsunami.

Iran pledges aid to PA

Iran has announced it will donate $50 million (US) to the Palestinians, Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said in a televised speech to a conference on the Palestinian issue in Tehran. The conference was attended by leaders of several radical Palestinian groups, including Hamas and Islamic Jihad. At the conference, Hamas leader Khaled Mashaal said "the Palestinians will never recognize Israel," adding that there is no point in initiating talks with Israelis.

JTA and Jerusalem Post

Sharon's career over

Israel formally brought the comatose Ariel Sharon's political career to a close. Top government ministers convened last week to implement a constitutional law by which Sharon, who suffered a crippling stroke last January and is not expected to recover, would be designated "permanently incapacitated." Sharon, 78, is in intensive care at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem, but doctors may eventually move him to a long-term care centre.

Pollard swap in works?

U.S. and Israeli officials denied reports Israel plans to offer to free a jailed Palestinian militiaman if the United States grants clemency to Jonathan Pollard. Army Radio reported Sunday that Israel would make the proposal to swap Pollard for Marwan Barghouti, who is serving five life sentences for orchestrating Palestinian terror attacks, after interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert forms a government. According to the report, Israel believes the United States could be interested in seeing Barghouti go free in order to bolster his Fatah party against the Palestinian Authority government under rival Hamas. U.S. and Israeli officials denied the report. Barghouti's lawyer welcomed the idea.

Arab killed for sale to Jews

Palestinian vigilantes killed a Jerusalem Arab they suspected of selling his home to Jews. Fatah gunmen claimed responsibility for shooting the 48-year-old father of seven, whose body was discovered in the West Bank last week. He was accused of being a traitor for selling his home in eastern Jerusalem's A-Tur neighbourhood to Jews. Residents reportedly refused the dead man's family permission to bury him in A-Tur.

Israeli Arab eyes Jerusalem

An Israeli Arab leader said Jerusalem will become an international Islamist capital. "Jerusalem will soon be the capital of a Muslim Arab caliphate, and all efforts by the Israeli establishment to Judaize the city will amount to nothing," Sheik Raed Salah, head of the Islamic Movement in Israel, told a weekend rally in Kfar Kassem.

New JTS chancellor weighs in on gay issue

By CHANAN TIGAY
JTA

NEW YORK — In his first interview with the Jewish media after being named the next chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), Arnold Eisen told JTA he favours allowing gays and lesbians to become Conservative rabbis.

"My personal opinion is that I would like to see these processes end up with the ordination of gays and lesbians," he said. "But I might be outvoted."

The Conservative movement in recent years has been roiled by this hot-button issue. Its central halachic authority, the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards, has debated the issue at length and has scheduled a vote for December.

Still, Eisen said, despite pressures to resolve the issue, a change can't simply be imposed from above.

"There's got to be halachic process," he said. "You have to preserve the integrity, the authenticity of halachah."

He added: "The halachic process is non-negotiable."

Arnold Eisen

Eisen, 54, advocated a robust discussion among seminary faculty on homosexuality's place in the Conservative movement. He pointed out that such a discussion preceded the seminary's decision to ordain women in 1983.

"The faculty is going to have to decide how it wants to think about this issue," he said. "I just want to have a discussion. I just want to know how my colleagues feel about this."

A sociologist who has focused largely on American Jewry, Eisen was named chancellor last week after a lengthy search. He will succeed Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, who will step down in June after two decades in the position.

Eisen, a Jewish studies professor and chairman of Stanford University's religious studies department, is not a rabbi and will be just the second seminary head (there have been seven) without rabbinical ordination in JTS' 120-year history. The first, Cyrus Adler, led the school from 1915 to 1940.

A career academic, Eisen has a PhD from Hebrew University and also attended Oxford University. He is the author of, among other books, *The Chosen People in America: A Study in Jewish Religious Ideology*; and *Rethinking Modern Judaism: Ritual, Commandment, Community*.

He will serve a year as chancellor-designate before taking the reins full time in July 2007.

He comes to JTS at a time of some uncertainty for the movement.

Once the dominant religious stream on the U.S. Jewish scene, Conservative Judaism has been losing ground to the Reform movement and has sometimes seemed feckless in the face of an energized Orthodoxy.

The movement also faces dwindling numbers, a debate on the homosexuality issue and an identity crisis as it struggles to articulate a unified vision.

The search for chancellor reflected a larger struggle that has dogged the movement since its inception: between those who would adhere more strictly to halachah and those who are more willing to change tenets of religious observance to fit modern living. The choice of chancellor was seen as a barometer of which approach the movement would take in the years ahead.

Eisen is well-acquainted with the U.S. Jewish community, but some Conservative rabbis have expressed concern that a position sometimes likened to the movement's de facto chief rabbi will be filled by a non-rabbi. Eisen said he understands the concerns.

Some in the movement have suggested the chancellor's role as a halachic voice could be transferred elsewhere: perhaps to the head of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the movement's synagogue arm; the head of the Rabbinical Assembly, the rabbinical arm; or a newly created position like a *mara d'atra*, a local halachic authority.

Eisen declined to speculate on whom this position might fall to. But he stressed that movement rabbis will find him to be a strong ally.

"I'm not one of these scholars who doesn't care about the rabbinate," he said. "You're going to find me a supersupportive chancellor for rabbinical students."

He added: "I think this is going to be good for the rabbis."

Eisen said he imagines a rabbinical school graduation ceremony in which he will ordain the movement's newest spiritual leaders "as a representative of the Jewish people and the Conservative movement in America," rather than as a rabbi ordaining another rabbi.

"I am a member of the communities they're going to be serving," he said. "And I like the symbolism of me representing these communities in ordaining these rabbis."

Eisen said the major challenge facing the movement is getting unconnected Conservative Jews more involved.

"How do you get them to be part of Jewish communities? How do you connect them?" he asked, noting that there's "a membership crisis" in the Conservative movement, which in recent years has been overtaken numerically by the Reform movement.

"But to me, with Jews in general, everybody worries about the declining numbers – but half the Jews we have are not connected."

"With camps, with schools, with synagogues, the challenge is to make the meaning so real, so palpable, that people want to come back for more."

Historically, Conservative Judaism arose as a middle-ground between traditional Orthodox Judaism and American modernity – a function that is no longer needed.

Becomes only second non-rabbi to head main Conservative seminary

"No Jews anymore have trouble being fully a part of American life, and many Jews don't know about tradition," he said. "So you have to attract them from square one. You have to persuade them that this way of being is a good, substantial way of leading a Jewish life."

Eisen said his first responsibility as chancellor will be to the seminary rather than the movement as a whole. There will be a focus on scholarship, on applying that scholarship to Jewish life, on training students in each of JTS' schools and in raising funds necessary to accomplish these goals, he said.

Still, he said, he hopes to play a role in the Conservative movement at large.

"One of my goals for the Conservative movement is that I want there to be a stronger leadership," he said, adding that leaders of movement branches need better resources. "I'm hoping to get many of my colleagues more involved in the Conservative movement than they have been."

He also said the movement's rank-and-file could play a broader role.

"We have people who are leaders in every area of life sitting in our congregations," he said. "They could make a contribution to the movement by bringing their expertises into dialogue with Judaism."

Eisen also lamented what he said was a growing chasm between U.S. and Israeli Jewry, and said that as one of the leading American Jewish institutions, the seminary could play an important role in bridging the gap.

Movement insiders also have complained that Conservative Jewry has not articulated a coherent message to take into the world. Eisen agreed that this has been a concern, and suggested that the movement ought to articulate "a message of substance and ethics and Torah."

He said that many Jews believe that by observing mitzvot, or Jewish laws, they give up their autonomy.

"This is, frankly, nonsense," he said. "The message that mitzvah is far more wonderful than that, this message has not reached most Conservative Jews, unfortunately."

That's because many of them lack the background to understand this, he said. As such, education will play an important role in rectifying this misconception — and not just traditional education, but experience.

"You have to give them positive experiences time after time," he said.

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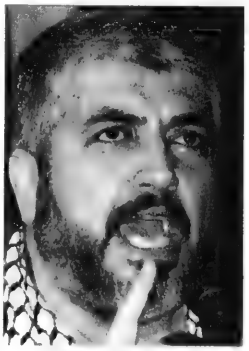
Hamas head Mashaal meets with Al Qaeda leader

By YAAKOV KATZ
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — In another sign of the Palestinian leadership's growing alliance with Al Qaeda, Damascus-based Hamas head Khaled Mashaal recently met in Yemen with a representative of the organization led by Osama bin Laden, the *Jerusalem Post* has learned.

During a visit to Yemen two weeks ago, the local Hamas branch organized a fundraising event to recruit financial aid for the new Hamas-led Palestinian Authority government. During the event, Mashaal met with Sheikh Abd al-Majid al-Zindani, who is suspected by the United States of being a loyalist to Osama bin Laden and a supporter of Al Qaeda. Zindani donated 200,000 Yemenite rials to Hamas, the equivalent of a little over $1,000 (US).



Khaled Mashaal

"This meeting reinforces the fact that Hamas and Al Qaeda come out of the same ideological wellspring of global jihad and the Muslim Brotherhood," said former Israeli ambassador to the United Nations Dore Gold, whose Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs carefully followed the meeting and recently published a paper on the Hamas-Al Qaeda alliance. "They still share the same financial infrastructure to this day," he said.

At the fundraising event, Zindani praised Hamas suicide bombers and called on his followers to donate money to assist the Palestinian people. "The Hamas government is the Palestinian people's government today," he told a crowd of several thousand. "It is the jihad-fighting, steadfast, resolute government of Palestine."

In 2004, U.S. authorities designated Zindani as a terror supporter and a spiritual figure for bin Laden. Zindani, the authorities claimed, played a key role in the 2004 purchasing of weapons on behalf of Al Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

"The U.S. has credible evidence that Zindani, a Yemeni national, supports designated terrorists and terrorist organizations," a statement released by the U.S. Treasury Department said. "Zindani has a long history of working with bin Laden, notably serving as one of his spiritual leaders. In this leadership capacity, he has been able to influence and support many terrorist causes, including actively recruiting for Al Qaeda training camps."

Senior Israel Defence Forces officers have confirmed that Al Qaeda has already established terror cells in the Gaza Strip and has begun working on creating a similar infrastructure in the West Bank. Maj.-Gen. Yitzhak Harel, head of the IDF's planning directorate, told the *Post* recently that Al Qaeda was operating within the PA territories.

"Al Qaeda is about money," he said. "There is always a flow of funds to terrorism in the territories and it is difficult to get our hands on the money."

Last week, the London-based *Al Hayat* newspaper reported that 10 Al Qaeda activists who had recently entered the Gaza Strip from Egypt had been captured by PA security forces. Citing Jordanian security sources, the paper said that the cells were in the midst of planning "large-scale" terror attacks on sensitive and strategic targets – possibly the crossings from Gaza into Israel.

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Going to shul may help you live longer

By GEORGE CONGER
Jerusalem Post

Weekly attendance at religious services can add up to three years to your life, a new U.S. medical study has found.

Dr. Daniel Hall of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, the author of the study published in the March/April issue of the *Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine*, compared the impact of regular exercise, statin (anti-cholesterol drug) therapy and religious attendance on life expectancy, and he found that each accounted for an additional two to five years of life.

Hall found that subjects who engaged in regular physical exercise tended to live 3 to 5.1 years longer. Those using statin medications lived 2.1 to 3.7 additional years, while those who regularly attended religious services lived 1.8 to 3.1 years longer.

"This is not to say that religious attendance should replace primary prevention, such as exercise or a proven drug therapy," Hall said. "But it does suggest that regular religious attendance is associated with a substantially longer life expectancy."

While Christians comprised the overwhelming majority of those examined in the U.S.-based study, observant Hindus, Muslims and Jews were also among the subject populations.

Hall told the *Jerusalem Post* that religious attendance "cannot be manipulated in the same way you can manipulate other things in health care," and he cautioned against making a facile conclusion about the health benefits of simply attending services.

"If you put your eggs in the basket of 'Get religion because it works,' you will end up with an empty basket," he said, arguing that religious belief should be viewed as a "demographic" factor, akin to race and ethnicity in looking at the health of an individual.

"Unlike other health behaviours, such as exercise, there are practical and ethical problems with recommending 'therapeutic' changes in religious behaviour, and there is no evidence that changing religious attendance causes a change in health outcomes," Hall said.

However, "something is going on here that deserves further consideration and further study," he said.

A graduate of Yale University's divinity school and its school of medicine, Hall noted that "medicine is not a pure science, it is a moral tradition. It is about discerning what would be good for a patient and then using available technology to achieve that good."

He added: "Science can never tell us what will be good. It has to be something that comes from our moral tradition and our moral discourse."

By SHELLEY MILLMAN HERMAN

We need to reach higher

As baalei tshuvah, my husband and I have spent the past 15 years learning about our beautiful religion, stepping out into the unfamiliar territory of religious observance and striving to evolve, both spiritually and in terms of our personal character.

An essential component of Torah observance entails active involvement in elevating one's character. This takes commitment, dedication and a consistent effort. I remember the early growing pains of feeling like an uneducated novice with respect to our religion, and how awkward this felt, given that we were educated adults with expertise in our respective careers.

But we stuck with it, even though we were outside of our comfort zones, because we knew that we wanted to strive to reach higher. A good Jewish life has no room for complacency.

To be whole beings, we have to carry into all areas of our lives the training towards personal excellence that is infused into a Torah way of life. We have to reach outside of our comfort zones in our careers, our exercise regimes, our hobbies and our relationships with both loved ones and all others with whom we interact.

In our careers, we should endeavour to take on new challenges that defy acceptance of the status quo. This does not necessarily mean leaving our jobs. Within the framework of our current positions, we could offer to be involved in a special project, or ask for a change to a different department, make a lateral move or get involved with mentoring new hires.

Our growth should be a proactive endeavour that impacts all areas of our lives. Our relationships with our loved ones deserve constant attention and effort, but this effort should be extended towards all others, including our colleagues, friends, neighbours and teachers.

We should strive for progressive excellence and achievement in our exercise regime and in our hobbies, keeping in mind that as we grow older, we need to keep our bodies and our minds fine-tuned and well-oiled. Optimum health provides us with the energy and vigour we need to pursue personal greatness, and as we all know, striving to be our "ideal selves" is an ongoing journey that requires persistent activity and commitment, and therefore lots of energy.

As I write this – a week before Pesach – I know that last week, my focus was on career achievement, and I pushed myself beyond my comfort zone to reach greater mastery in something that I don't normally get the opportunity to address. The results don't matter that much, as long as I know that I did my best, given all of the variables and circumstances, and that I pushed ourselves just beyond where we left off last time.

This week, my focus will be on excelling at cleaning my house for Pesach, and then cooking all those special foods that the family looks forward to at this time of year! As we put our hearts and minds into preparing for this special Jewish holiday, the enjoyment of the actual holiday will be that much greater.

Next week, I will concentrate on gaining a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Pesach holiday and what our ancestors experienced, while trying to maximize my enjoyment of my family and loved ones who come to share this wonderful time of year with us.

After that? I am not sure yet, but I know I will do my best to strive just a bit higher in something. Do I have my "down days" like everyone else? Most definitely. But the key is to get over it, pick ourselves up and reach higher!

Shelley Millman Herman is a life coach. She can be reached at shelley@globalrecruit.com.

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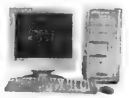

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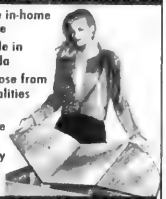

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Arts & Travel

Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

KOSHER COOKBOOK SELLING LIKE HOTCAKES

A cookbook launched by a Thornhill Jewish day school has become an international bestseller, raising more than $130,000 in profits so far for the school.

A new printing of *Gatherings: Creative Kosher Cooking from Our Families to Yours* has just come off the presses of New York-based Feldheim Publishers for distribution in the United States, England, Israel, South Africa, Australia and other foreign markets.

The book was created by a volunteer committee at NeTivot Hatorah Day School in late 2003. The project was the brainchild of **Shawna Magence** and **Carol Lesser**, two school mothers who aspired to create a first-class, professional cookbook that would raise funds for the school.

Sponsored by major food companies, volunteers amassed 900 favourite recipes submitted by families of the school, and tripled-tested each recipe. The 300 top choices include Sushi Pizza, Thai Mango Salad, Terra Chip Chicken, Nutty Bok Choy Salad and Peanut Butter Mousse Cake.

Jack Samuel and his wife, **Marla Samuel**, both real estate agents who have sent three children to the school, spearheaded marketing efforts last year after the book became a Canadian bestseller. With some applied Internet research and many direct sales calls, they expanded sales in Canada and shipped *Gatherings* to more than 80 book and Judaica stores in key markets in the United States. Sales doubled to more than 10,000 copies.

Last month, Feldheim produced another 5,000 copies of *Gatherings* for international distribution. The print run was conducted in Israel for cost efficiencies. "That's sort of a nice bonus for a Zionist day school, to be able to send business to Israel," Samuel said.

All funds from the sale of the cookbook go toward Netivot's operating expenses and help support its costly enrichment and remedial special educational programs. "It's very rewarding to see this book take off in foreign markets and knowing that other Jewish families are sitting down to meals that originated at NeTivot Hatorah in Thornhill," Samuel said.

The book is available locally for $39.99.

* * *

More Book News: In 1859, London critic **David Masson** noted ruefully that the pace of publishing had accelerated to the point where two new novels were being produced in London each week, making it impossible for a careful reader to keep up. Nearly a century and a half later, English literature is expanding at a frenetic pace, with newly published books being added to library shelves at a pace equivalent, so I've heard, to a car travelling along a highway at 100 kilometres an hour.

Thematically, Jewish literary publishing is also booming, as the row of recently received books on the shelf above my desk attests. Titles include:

• *The City Man* (Coach House Books), a novel by Toronto writer **Howard Akler**. Set largely in Toronto's Kensington Market during the Depression year of 1934, the story is a "darkly funny romance" between a (non-Jewish) *Toronto Daily Star* reporter and a (Jewish) female pickpocket who warily reveals some of the tricks of her trade to him.

• *Drunk From the Bitter Truth:* the poems of **Anna Margolin**, translated, edited and introduced by **Shirley Kumove** of Toronto. This State University of New York Press collection offers both Yiddish and English versions of Margolin's forgotten poetry, which deals with themes of anxiety, loneliness, sexual tensions and the search for identity.

• *The Joys of Much Too Much*, by **Bonnie Fuller**, formerly of Toronto. Lightly biographical, this over-the-top self-help bible from the queen of America's women's and gossip mags is meant as an inspirational book of encouragement and instruction for the Girl Who Wants It All. Its subtitle is, "Go for the big life – the great career, the perfect guy, and everything else you've ever wanted (even if you're afraid you don't have what it takes)."

• *Lines of Truth and Conversation* (Porcupine's Quill), a book of stories by **Joan Alexander** of Toronto's Eglinton-Bathurst neighbourhood. The tales reflect her "intelligent and sure-footed investigations of the darker side of urban life."

• *The Violin Lover* (Goose Lane Editions), by **Susan Glickman**. The author, formerly of Montreal and presently of Toronto, is a poet making her novelistic debut courtesy of this small Fredericton, N.B., publishing house. The story focuses on a secret love affair against the backdrop of the London Jewish community between the wars.

• *What Time and Sadness Spared: Mother and Son Confront the Holocaust*, by **Roma Nutkiewicz Ben-Atar** with **Doron S. Ben-Atar**. This Holocaust memoir, from the University of Virginia Press, moves from upper-middle-class Warsaw in the '30s to the death factories of Madjanek and Auschwitz, and thence to Israel

• *The World to Come* (Norton), by **Dara Horn**. A million-dollar painting by **Marc Chagall** is stolen during a singles' gathering and the unlikely thief is **Benjamin Ziskind**, who believes the painting formerly hung in his parents' living room. An intertwined plot, 80 years earlier, involves Chagall and the Yiddish novelist Der Nister. Not yet 30, the New Jersey-born Horn is on the cutting edge of modern Jewish fiction; her in-laws, the Schulmans, live in Winnipeg.

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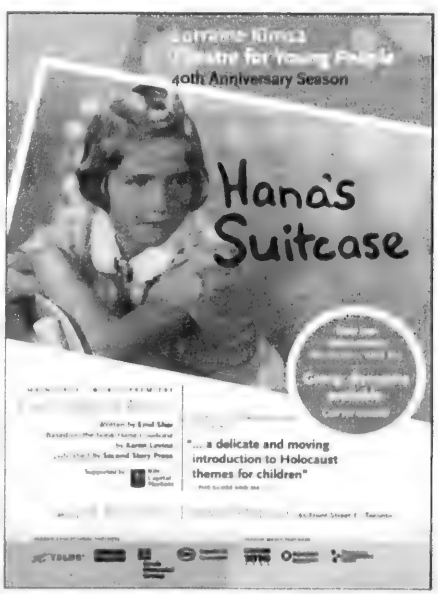

Arts & Travel

Youths learn to love Shakespeare in workshops

By ADAM MICHAEL SEGAL
Special to The CJN

William Shakespeare is surely the most enduring English playwright of all time, but when contemporary youths read his four-centuries-old plays, they often struggle to understand the words or relate to the messages.

"Eighty per cent of students' hands fly up when I ask who hates Shakespeare," says Marvin Karon, a teacher and professional actor in Toronto.

"So the first thing I tell them is don't worry about the language in Shakespeare you can't understand. He wasn't writing for the audiences of 2006 – he was writing for his day and age.

"And the second thing I do is tell them… a quote from T.S. Elliot, which is that a poem's meaning can be communicated before it is even understood and so can Shakespeare. So you don't need to understand every single word."

Karon puts this philosophy into practice through an initiative called Shakespearience, in which Shakespeare workshops led by experienced actors are held at schools.

Starting in 1998 as a 20-school pilot project, the program has blossomed into a 100-plus school endeavour involving more than 200 actors. It also now boasts summer camps and after-hours programs for underprivileged and at-risk kids.

On April 23, a special presentation showcasing Shakespearience will be presented to audiences at the Young Centre for The Performing Arts in Toronto's Distillery District.

Such celebrities as *Lord of the Rings* stars Brent Carver and Carly Street will be featured at the event.

"This gala is designed to be a coming out after eight years," says Karon.

"Actors will be performing brief scenes, kids from the workshops will also be doing scenes and it's 90 minutes of entertainment… that lets people see the impact we're having on kids' lives."

Ron Lea, who's been acting for more than 25 years, has done Shakespearience workshops several times and marvels at the influence it has on participants.

"Every time I go to a workshop, I just watch the eyes in the audience and I see a light go on for all of the kids," he relates.

"What's so beautiful about it is that it's interactive. The kids get up, Marvin gets them to ask questions and he instills confidence in the students."

During the workshops, the students and actors will typically read scenes from a play and then discuss them, in many cases likening themes to modern-day social phenomena. The workshops also focus on the particular language Shakespeare used.

"We'll use certain songs from today, such as those by… 50 Cent, and talk about how Shakespeare was trying to do the same kinds of stuff that goes on with rap."

Initially, the workshops were geared exclusively to high school students, but they now cater to students from grades 3 to 12.

To satisfy the growing demand, Karon's roster of actors is constantly expanding and he doesn't generally need to twist arms to enlist supporters.

"Actors want to be on stage so they can tell interesting stories to audiences," Karon says.

"These actors understand that if they can get kids plugged into Shakespeare, they'll develop audiences to perform to."

For tickets to the upcoming event, call 416-593-0094, ext. 400. More information about Shakespearience can be found at www.shakespearience.ca.

JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM CONCERT: The recent Journey to Jerusalem concert at Beth Tikvah Synagogue was a memorable evening of exceptional music and performances. In the picture at the left are, from left, soloists Cantor Tibor Kovari, Jason Allen and Michele Tredger. At right, are, from left, Kovari and soloist Yehezkel Lipinski, who is 12 years old. Allen and narrator Marsha Lederman were backed by the 55-voice Beth Tikvah Choral Society and the 25-piece Beth Tikvah Gala Orchestra, conducted by Eyal Bitton, the composer of *Journey to Jerusalem* and Beth Tikvah's choir director (seen in inset).

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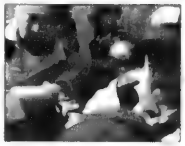
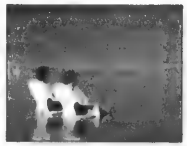


5 DAYS
D: YOAV SHAMIR
94 MIN, ISRAEL
CANADIAN PREMIERE
On August 15th, 2005, the Israeli government ordered the removal of Jewish settlers from the Gaza Strip. Years of confrontation with Palestinians have earned the Israeli army a reputation for firmness, but for the first time its iron fist is turned on fellow Jews.
BLOOR CINEMA, APRIL 30 6:30 PM
ROM THEATRE, MAY 4, 3:45 PM

THE BEACH BOYS
D: HONI HAMEAGEL
82 MIN, ISRAEL
WORLD PREMIERE
For the past thirty years, avant garde artist Honi Hameagel has filmed his friends hanging out and cruising for women on a beach in Tel Aviv. An engaging and unconventional portrait of masculinity, ethnicity and a life lived within the complex Israeli reality emerges.
ROM THEATRE, MAY 1, 7:00 PM
ISABEL BADER THEATRE, MAY 3 4:15 PM



THE CEMETERY CLUB
D: TALI SHEMESH
90 MIN, ISRAEL
INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE
Every Saturday at 11 am, a group of elderly citizens meet on Mt Herzl, Israel's national cemetery, where they conduct a weekly 'parliament'. Near the graves of Israel's founding fathers, in the shade of a tall pine tree, they discuss their nation's fate.
BLOOR CINEMA, APRIL 30, 1:00 PM
ROM THEATRE, MAY 1, 4:30 PM

ENCOUNTER POINT
D: RONIT AVNI, JULIA BACHA,
92 MIN, ISRAEL, OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES, USA
CANADIAN PREMIERE
An Israeli settler, a convicted Palestinian fighter, a bereaved Israeli mother and a wounded Palestinian ex-prisoner risk their lives to promote a nonviolent end to the conflict. A film about the everyday leaders within our midst.
AL GREEN THEATRE, MAY 4, 7:00 PM
ISABEL BADER THEATRE, MAY 7 4:30 PM

MARTYR STREET
D: SHELLEY SAYWELL
90 MIN, CANADA
WORLD PREMIERE
Martyr Street in Hebron, once a bustling market - and one of the most dangerous streets in the world - is now desolate. Award-winning director Saywell talks with Palestinians and Israeli settlers, invoking the time of Abraham to situate today's conflict.
ROM THEATRE, APRIL 30, 9:15 PM
ROM THEATRE, MAY 7, 12:00 PM

RAISED TO BE HEROES
D: JACK SILBERMAN
53 MIN, CANADA
WORLD PREMIERE
A look into the lives of a group of Israelis, from 18-year-old high school students to long-term officers, who refuse to serve in the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Presented with THEY CHOSE CHINA.
AL GREEN THEATRE, APRIL 30, 6:15 PM
ROM THEATRE, MAY 3, 1:15 PM

SISAI
D: DAVID GAVRO
56 MIN, ISRAEL
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE
In this intensely emotional cinematic journey, a 20-year-old Ethiopian immigrant, having lived with adoptive parents in Israel, returns to his homeland to meet his biological father. Presented with LA TRAVERSÉE (Spotlight on France)
INNIS TOWN HALL, MAY 3, 6:45 PM
INNIS TOWN HALL, MAY 6, 1:30 PM

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Chassidic Australian Jews fuse Judaism with electronica

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Four chassidic Jews in Melbourne, Australia, are proving that it is possible to be a dedicated student of Kabbalah and still create cutting edge electronic music.

The Underground Kabbalah Project, a band that records on the Australian-based Cookitup Records label, is made up of four "core" members – Noiyam Ha Shirmasher, DJ Tzsooris, MC Meshuganah, and MC Maccabi – all of whom are in their 20s and use an alias to hide their identities from the rest of the chassidic community who they fear would disapprove of the music they create.

Shirmasher, who spent six months in Canada in 2004 studying at different yeshivot in Montreal and Toronto, produces and writes the music, but he has great difficulty describing it.

"It's kind of electro-pop with big splashes of breaks, hip-hop, drum n' bass, mixed with psycho horn playing and chassidic melodies," he said.

"Sometimes though, I'll get some horn players or different cantors to do stuff."

Shirmasher said the reason he and his bandmates began to incorporate Jewish themes into this kind of music was that they felt suffocated by the community's many boundaries.

"Being frustrated with the closed-off nature of my community, combined with the need to experience some of the great things out there in the wide world" is what drew him and DJ Tzsooris to skip class and sneak off to record stores eight years ago, when they were 16.

Shirmasher said that once he became exposed to a whole new world of music, he saved some money and purchased a drum machine that he would practise on, hidden in his closet.

DJ Tzsooris did the same. With some of his bar mitzvah money, he bought himself turntables and a mixer.

But it wasn't until 2005 that they met the other two members of the group, MC Meshuganah and MC Maccabi, who offer "serious rhymes and word play," and signed with Cookitup Records.

The Underground Kabbalah Project put out its first single, *Push It Forward*, last September and Shirmasher said he is overwhelmed by the positive response.

"The first single, *Push It Forward*, has been played on more than 35 radio stations around Australia. It sold 300 copies through the group's website in about 12 weeks, and it's being released again on a compilation CD called *Circuit Breaker* in Australia, which will be out May 1," he said.

The group's second single, *New Music Warriors*, features [a sample from] the late Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, the Lubavitcher Rebbe for 44 years, and will be out soon, he added.

"This group and writing this music is also an incredible release, or even escape, for me," Shirmasher said.

"By fusing Jewish elements into accessible music, I suppose it kind of echoes an internal attempt to reconcile these two worlds."

He said members of the chassidic community in the Balaclava and Ripponlea areas of Melbourne, what he calls the "bagel belt," forced them into anonymity because he is certain they would not approve of their artistic expression.

"Specifically, they have a problem with our style of music. Many get offended by it. You know, we use drum machines, turntables, synthesizers. We bust rhymes. It's just not understood by the community as being a legitimate pursuit."

He said his parents have no idea that he is part of this group, and he plans to keep it this way.

"None of us are particularly keen on being disowned by our families. For them, having a son that plays this kind of music would be extremely shameful."

Although Shirmasher and DJ Tzsooris have been honing their craft for the past eight years, the group has yet to perform a live show. If they did, they would wear masks in order to conceal their identities, he said.

He added that if Canadians are interested in testing out their sound, they can visit www.cookituprecords.com to download the single for free.

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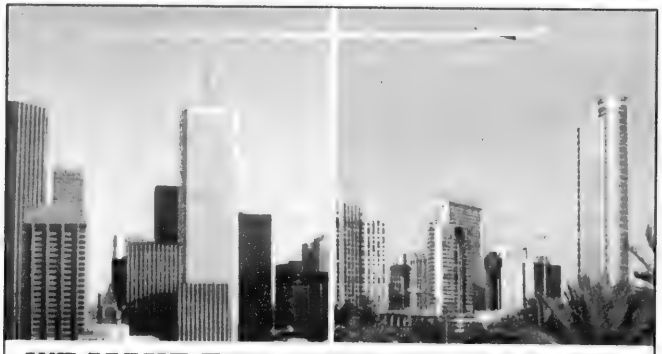

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Arts & Travel

Israeli films featured at Hot Docs

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Gen. Dan Harel comforts a sobbing Gaza settler in *5 Days*.

Israeli settlers in the Gaza Strip meet their match in a tough but sensitive major general. Israelis and Palestinians search for non-violent methods to resolve their conflict. A karate champion from an Israeli Arab village balances ambition with family obligations. Israeli senior citizens debate current events and philosophy. Israeli Lotharios cruise a Tel Aviv beach for women.

These are the themes of five Israeli movies scheduled to be screened at Hot Docs, the annual documentary film festival that runs from April 28 to May 7.

Yoav Shamir's *5 Days* (April 30, 6:30 p.m. at the Bloor Cinema and May 4, 3:45 p.m. at the Royal Ontario Museum) humanizes the events surrounding the removal of Jewish settlers from Gaza last August.

The 94-minute film unfolds through the eyes of Dan Harel, the general in charge of the operation, and the settlers who resisted the Israeli government's order to leave peacefully.

Forty thousand soldiers and police were on hand to carry out the evacuation, the central drama in Israel's policy of unilateral disengagement from Gaza. Once the settlers were expelled, their homes were levelled by excavators.

The sight of these attractive Mediterranean-style cottages lying in utter ruins, as if in a war zone, cannot leave a viewer unmoved.

Both sides bring passion to their beliefs.

"There are no winners in this battle," Harel observes sadly at the outset. But Harel is hardly a cream puff. As tensions heighten, he instructs one of his commanders not to let himself become "a pawn" in the settlers' "ethos of resistance."

In a gut-wrenching scene, a bearded settler sobs, "This is the Land of Israel." As he collapses into Harel's arms, Harel gently pats his shoulder.

For those who did not witness last summer's events in Gaza, *5 Days* is the next best thing.

Encounter Point (May 4, 7 p.m. at the Al Green Theatre and May 7, 4:30 p.m. at the Isabel Bader Theatre) aims a strong beam of light in a murky tunnel.

The film, by Ronit Avni and Julia Bacha, profiles Israelis and Palestinians who have been personally affected by the violence of the second intifadah and have somehow risen above it.

Encounter Point is about a group of families who recognize and share each other's pain and meet in a dialogue forum. At a time when despair and vengeance stalk the land, they strive to build bridges of understanding between the warring communities.

Inspiring at times, *Encounter Point* is proof positive that bitterness can be channelled into a force for good.

Roy Westler's *Shadya* (April 30, 4:15 p.m. at Innis Town Hall and May 7, 1:30 p.m. at the NFB Cinema) revolves around a high-spirited 18-year-old Israeli Arab Muslim woman named Shadya Zoabi.

Shadya, from the town of Tamra, is a talented athlete, a karate champion. Her father has been a source of encouragement, as has her apparently liberal fiancé, but her conservative older brother opposes her activities.

The film shows Shadya relaxing with her family at home, training with her Jewish teammates, competing at a championship in Durban, South Africa, and, in an impulsive prank left open to interpretation, wrapping herself in a Palestinian flag.

Once Shadya has been married, her husband reveals his true colours and discourages her from participating in further competitions. The baton passes to her younger sister, Waed, and Shadya becomes pregnant, her dreams of honing her athletic talents evaporating.

Westler's fine film is an engaging portrait of an unusual Muslim woman.

Tali Shemesh's *The Cemetery Club* (April 30, 1 p.m. at the Bloor Cinema and May 1, 4:30 p.m. at the Royal Ontario Museum) posits the assumption that old people can be vital and vibrant in their so-called golden years.

Every Saturday in summer on Mount Herzl, Israel's national cemetery in Jerusalem, a group of senior citizens sit on lawn chairs under the shade of a big pine tree to alleviate their loneliness and sharpen their minds in freewheeling discussions about current events, literature, poetry, philosophy and the like. When lunch is ready, a lady blows a whistle and a picnic begins.

Revolving around Lena, a perfectly coiffed and groomed Polish woman who still mourns her late husband, the love of her life, the movie is a tribute to the geriatric set.

Honi Hameagle's *The Beach Boys* (May 1, 7 p.m. at the Royal Ontario Museum and May 3, 4:15 p.m. at the Isabel Bader Theatre) introduces us to the crème de la crème of Tel Aviv beach society, the very masculine characters who relentlessly cruise for women.

In this sexually charged, amusing film, shot over a period of 30 years from 1975, these testosterone-powered men who remain juveniles at heart demonstrate their pickup techniques, make spectacles of themselves and offer crude observations about ethnicity, Arabs and manhood.

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Books & Authors

Simcha Simchovitch at 85

By BILL GLADSTONE
Special to The CJN

Readers of the *Yiddish Forward* may have noticed several published notices in the New York-based newspaper a while ago congratulating Toronto poet and writer Simcha (Sam) Simchovitch for passing the milestone of his 85th birthday.

Simchovitch is known as one of Canada's senior Yiddish writers, yet he's also achieved recognition for his literary contributions in English and Hebrew. As of last year, he's also begun appearing in other languages. His autobiographical novel, *Stepchild On The Vistula*, was originally published in Yiddish in 1990 and translated into English in 1994; last year a Warsaw publishing house produced a Polish-language edition, complete with a laudatory introduction by Elie Wiesel.

A regrettable occupational hazard of every Yiddish writer is the inevitably small and declining readership attendant upon a dying language. Consequently, Simchovitch has published several collections of poems in his own capable English translation. He's also written some poems in English, prompting a *Globe and Mail* critic to commend him for doing "what very few poets have ever done - completed the transition from a native language to a new vernacular."

Simcha Simchovitch

> And like a child that weaves on his tiny feet
> and walks, and falls, and tries again,
> I try anew my pen
> in English

The winner of various literary prizes including two Canadian Jewish Book Awards and two I.J. Segal awards for Yiddish literature, he is apparently not one to rest on his laurels. Mosaic Press recently published his translation of *At the Mercy of Strangers: Survival in Nazi Occupied Poland*, a Holocaust memoir that his aunt, Gitel Hopfeld, penned originally in Polish. His current projects include *The Fiery Mountain*, a proposed three-part collection of Yiddish and English poems about the shtetl of his youth, the Holocaust and Israel.

Despite philosopher Theodor Adorno's well-known proclamation that there can be no poetry after Auschwitz, Simchovitch has devoted a large segment of his literary output to the devastation of the Shoah, including such poems as *Auschwitz Elegy*, *September 7, 1939*, and *Memorial Book*.

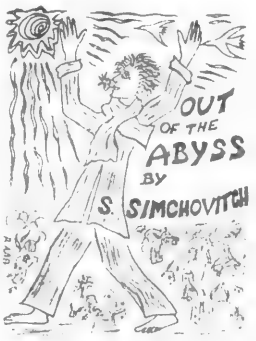
He was born near Otwock, Poland, in 1921, grew up in Otwock and, as he describes in *September 7, 1939*, left his parents' home as German planes threatened death and ruin.

> I tie my bundle – two shirts,
> a worn out coat for winter,
> few photographs, crumpled sheets
> filled with Yiddish writing.
>
> Outside the house – my sobbing mom,
> father, brother, sisters:
> we embrace, few words said,
> neighbours all around us.

The Nazis murdered most of the remaining Jews of Otwock in 1942: Simchovitch professes a sacred duty to bear witness and to remember. "My main goal in writing is to commemorate my parents who were killed in the Shoah – my little brother, my three sisters, my friends in the youth organization. I'm glad I was able to write about them in poetry, to immortalize them."

His self-proclaimed mission also includes writing about the vibrant Jewish life that existed in Poland in the interwar years (1918 to 1939), a period whose culture and history he claims has been overlooked. Shtetl literature by the likes of Sholem Aleichem elegantly captures an early time, but far fewer words have been written about Polish-Jewish life in the 20th century, he asserts.

"There were 3½ million Jews in Poland then. There was an intensive Jewish life, religious and secular. There was a youth organization, political organizations, sports clubs – there was so much. All of this dispersed, all of this was wiped out, and there was no time for the writers of the new generation to appear and to tell their stories. So this I felt was my main task – to recreate this life."



Having escaped the war in Siberia, he returned briefly to Poland after the war and saw first-hand the cruel devastation of his beloved hometown. He wrote his first poem in 1946 and his first collection, *Thus a Youth Perished*, appeared in 1950 after he and his wife had landed in Montreal. He worked in a leather factory for two years, took some courses at the Montreal Jewish Teachers Seminary, and taught cheder in Ottawa for six years. In the mid-'60s he and his family moved to Toronto, where he became curator of the Judaica Museum of the Beth Tzedec Congregation.

At the culmination of his studies, for which he earned a master's degree in Hebrew literature from the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, he wrote a Hebrew thesis on the 18th-century Jewish philosopher Solomon Maimon; it appeared in 1972. His other book-length work is *Stepchild on the Vistula*, an autobiographical novel of Polish-Jewish life, told in the third-person narrative voice of a fictional character.

"This I wrote in one summer, in about 10 weeks in Ottawa during a summer vacation. I went every day to the school and the school was closed, and I wrote every day. It [a draft manuscript] had been lying around for many years because I was studying. After my studies I dug it out and edited it."

Stepchild on the Vistula is based on a much earlier work that has apparently been lost. In the late '30s, Simchovitch responded to a campaign from the YIVO Institute, seeking autobiographical essays from young people. "I wrote down my story and sent it to them, then war broke out. Afterwards I tried to trace it at YIVO in New York. They have a list of submissions and my name is there, but my original is missing."

His poetry collections include *Selected Poems* (1990), *A Song Will Remain* (1994), *The Remnant* (1999) and *Out of the Abyss* (2003). He's also published *The Song That Never Died*, a collection of translated songs by Mordechai Gebirtig (2001); and *After the Blood Inundation*, a collection of Yiddish essays (2004).

Despite the images in many of these titles, he also writes on less solemn matters: the pleasures of life in Canada, for instance, even some lyrical poems about old age. Perhaps it is this lyricism and what critic Moishe Wolf has called "the special Jewish feeling of mercy" that most elevates his work. For all their dolorous subject matter, his poems also celebrate life.

> *The cup nearly empty,*
> *I thirst for more,*
> *and count the bounty*
> *hour by hour.*
>
> *Like a scribe who pens*
> *a holy scroll,*
> *I sanctify the road*
> *and pay the toll.*
>
> *Because after all*
> *I say: "It was good!"*
> *My testimony*
> *to life a salute.*

We hope that Simcha Simchovitch is permitted to record his joyous song for many more years to come.

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• • •

FOREST HILL - $1,679,000.
Fabulous renovated family home. Lots of charm & character. 5 bedrooms. Master ensuite. Main floor family room. 2nd floor library. Close to Village shops & restaurants. ***Edith Weiss/*Judy Nathan**
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• • •

BLOOR / AVENUE RD. - $1,150,000.
Elegant, tastefully reno'd & restored Heritage Home circa 1884. Spacious light filled principal rms. Many architectural details. From the main fl. family rm. & kitchen walk-out to beautiful garden. 2 car parking. Short walk to Yorkville/Hazelton/Bloor shops. ***Carol Cotton**
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• • •

BATHURST / LAWRENCE - $1,250,000.
A special home. 5 + bdrms. 6 baths. 3 open fireplaces, 2 skylights. Main fl. family rm. + study. Finished lower level. Close to 2 parkettes, shopping, TTC, synagogues & schools. ***Marlene Federman**
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• • •

AVENUE RD/ LAWRENCE - $968,000.
Situated in a desirable neighbourhood, this home has lots of traditional charm. Main floor open concept family rm. Eat-in kitchen. Private drive. 190 ft. deep lot. ***Donna Taylor**
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• • •

ALLENBY SCHOOL AREA - $729,000.
Lovely 4 bdrm. home. Spacious principal rms w/beautiful wainscottiing. Kitchen w/breakfast area opens to sunrm. Stone fireplace. Lots of leaded glass. Private drive. Walk to great shopping on Eglinton. ***Carol Cotton**

• • •

MT. PLEASANT / EGLINTON - $699,900.
Updated family home in prime neighbourhood. 3-4 bdrms. Master ensuite bath. Main fl. family rm. addition. Finished lower level. Picturesque, deep garden. Parking. ***Richard Sherman/*Erica Binder**
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ST. CLAIR / BATHURST - $529,000.
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YONGE / SHEPPARD - $409,000.
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Israel & the Jewish World

BAKING IT THEMSELVES: In preparation for Pesach, some families in Jerusalem got together to make their own traditionally round shmurah matzah. [Israel photo]

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Sports & Leisure

Israeli senior team faces hockey Mount Everest

By PAUL LUNGEN
Staff Reporter

Jean Perron has seen a lot of hockey in his day, and there's no way his innate optimism is going to trump his good judgement and sense of realism.

So you know he's serious when he jokes, "There's no doubt we won't move up this year."

Moving up in the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) rankings is the ultimate goal for Perron and the Israeli hockey teams he coaches, and moving up is what the senior team did this year, advancing to IIHF Division I from II. They did so with an unexpected gold medal last year, defeating third-tier hockey countries like North Korea and Serbia and Montenegro.

As a result of last year's success, starting on April 24 in Amiens, France, the Israeli national senior team will face off against the world's second tier of hockey powers, including Great Britain, France, Germany, Hungary and Japan.

In their first game against Germany, they will likely face Washington Capitals goaltender Olaf Kolzig (.896 save percentage), Boston Bruin forward Marco Sturm (27 goals and 27 assists) and, if the San Jose Sharks miss the playoffs, Marcel Goc (seven goals, 12 assists).

"It's going to be a challenge just to win a hockey game and stay in Division I," Perron, the former Montreal Canadiens' bench boss, said on the telephone from Montreal. "We're only amateurs and they are all professionals. It's like climbing Mount Everest."

Perron, who worked some coaching magic to get the Israelis to Division I in the first place, believes the only chance the boys in blue have is to "play like a team and not dipsy-doodle so much."

Last year he had the team play a hybrid trap – a defence-first approach to the game – and he expects his players will again accept their assignments and put team play first.

Looking at his roster, Perron said only the Eizenman brothers – Alon, who played professional hockey in France last year, and Oren, who plays in the NCAA – have the talent to match up against the competition.

"We know our limitations," he said. "It won't be tough to get the players to agree to" the system.

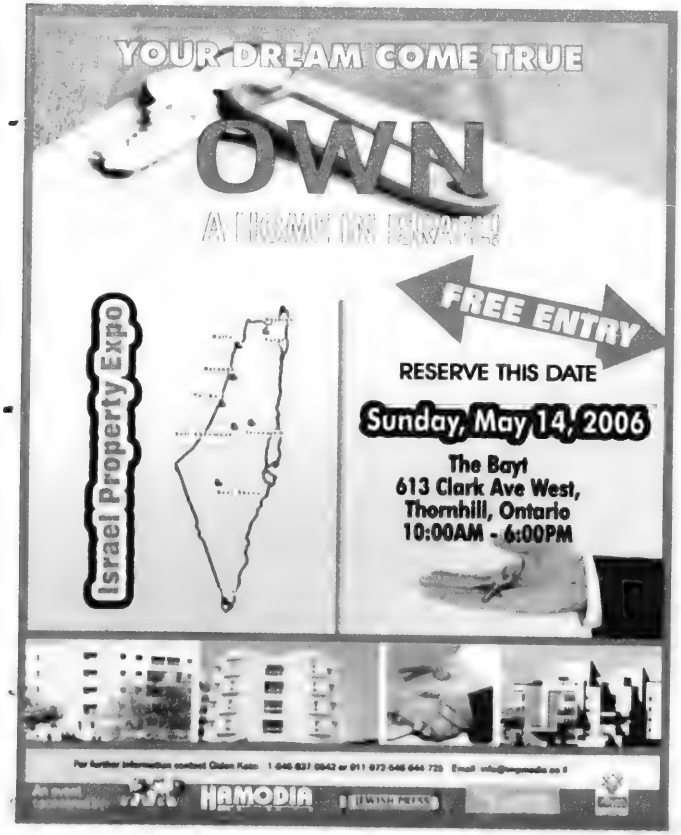
Alan Maislin, chair of the Ice Hockey Federation of Israel, said that in addition to the two Eizenman brothers, the team will rely on Max Birbraer, a 2000 third-round draft choice (67th overall) of the New Jersey Devils who plays for the Long Beach Ice Dogs of the East Coast Hockey League; the third Eizenman brother, Erez; and two other Canadian-based players, Daniel Spivak from Toronto and Montrealer Dimitri Levin. Levin is a defenceman with Val-d'Or in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. Spivak is a defenceman with the Stouffville Spirit of the junior A Ontario Hockey Association.

"Maybe we can sneak in a couple of wins," Maislin said. "We'll be young and strong going forward. Spivak and Levin could have played for the junior team."

The Israeli under-18 squad he was referring to recently captured a silver medal at a tournament in Romania and moved from Division III to Division II.

Since Perron took over as coach of the Israeli hockey teams, he's won three medals – a bronze and a silver at the junior level and a gold last year with the senior team – Maislin noted.

No doubt his skill as a coach will be sorely tested in Amiens.



Golf 2006, is this your year?

By DAVID GOODMAN
Special to The CJN

Oh yeah baby, this is the year! My wife just bought me that hot new Perfect Putter – only $350 – and a $600 Taylor Made Titanium 5000 super long driver. The tour guys are averaging 375 yards with it! I'm gonna murder it!

OK, so which of us ever stops hoping with this game? It's a new golf season, the grass is turning green and the grass is always greener… at least in our minds… until about the first round. I don't wish to put a dent in your dreams, but check the statistics. Even today, with all the great technology, balls that supposedly go as far as China and golf lessons that are video analyzed, 90 per cent of golfers still don't break 100.

The thing that bugs me is this: a decent, good-looking golf swing that produces a ball flight that soars high and straight is really easy to attain. Yes, I said easy. Seriously! I can get most beginners to hit the ball decently with their eyes closed. The secret? Getting out of your own way. The golf swing is as natural as throwing a ball.

Now, I'm not saying it's easy to shoot low scores. That takes commitment to practising your short game and developing the proper mental attitude. But if you can make your 2006 goal to do the things that enable you to make those nice high soaring shots, you'll get so excited you actually may start working on your short game.

If I took every four-year-old child in the world and tried to teach them how to throw a ball, a lesson would sound something like this: "Okay kids, extend your arm perpendicular to the horizon, fold your elbow 90 degrees downward, place 67 per cent of your weight on your right foot as you pronate your forearm, make a lateral hip move." Then I'd be saying: "God, can't you kids throw a ball?"

You get the point. Children learn to throw naturally because it's a natural motion. So is the golf swing. But we do need to learn the proper fundamentals such as posture and grip before we swing. A couple of lessons will put you in the proper positions to facilitate that easy swing, and also help correct all the nasty habits you may have picked up over the years.

So let's start our 2006 golfing season with some clear goals. Rather than spend hundreds of dollars on expensive drivers and golf balls may I suggest the following plan of attack:

- Buy new grips for your clubs.
- Take two or three lessons.
- Make practice fun.

Many of you are using grips from the '80s that are so shiny you can comb your hair looking in them. And that means they're slippery. You need grips that you can hold on to very lightly but won't slip out of your hand. Most golf stores will re-grip your entire set for $75 or less.

Golf lessons are not therapy, so don't feel ashamed to take a couple. Almost every golfer you see on TV takes lessons. Remind someone that Mother's Day and Father's Day are coming, and a golf lesson would be a nice present.

What do I look for in a good golf teacher? Someone I can relate to as a person. Someone who communicates ideas mostly with easy to understand images and pictures, rather than using technical mumbo jumbo such as swing plane. I'm not a big fan of video swing analysis, unless you're a single-digit handicap. I'd prefer a teacher who spends his time physically holding your head, your ankles or your hands. Golf has to be learned from feeling and doing, not by watching a complex geometry lesson on a laptop.

Finally, a word about practice. Make it fun. Practise pitching balls into a basket from a few yards away. Using 10 balls, give yourself five points for getting the ball in the basket, three for hitting the rim and one for just hitting it. Keep trying to beat your score. And you can do this in your backyard. You'll be amazed how great you'll be with your touch around the greens in no time.

Swing your club a few minutes each day at home with one hand so it almost swings by itself, and note how you can feel the club head. Now swing with both hands until it feels as light as it did with one hand. Hit balls at the range with this feeling in mind. You should notice a much better result. When you go to the range, always try to hit a target, whether you're using a driver or a pitching wedge. You'll be amazed how much the brain will get the ball to the target even when your technique isn't so hot. I know that if you follow these suggestions, 2006 will be your best year yet. Fore!

David Goodman lives in North York and teaches privately, gives clinics and is director of a junior summer golf camp.

Femininity demands attention

About two weeks ago I wasn't feeling so hot and so I did what I usually do and headed for the local salon.

My hairdresser knows this routine of mine; after all, I'm not one of those spontaneous types. She knows better than anyone that change is simply not in my vocabulary.

Or so I thought.

After two years of having the exact same colour, cut and style, she gently asked me if I'd consider doing something "slightly" different.

"I trust you," I said, although a wave of nausea suddenly passed through me. So she'll cut two inches instead one. It will grow back, I thought to myself, trying to make myself relax.

A girl should always trust her instincts.

When I opened my eyes three hours later, my long caramel-coloured locks had turned into a shortened black mop. Instead of my golden-blond highlights, I had what looked like streaks of grey. I was a 20-something Cruella de Vil.

Now I'm not the kind of girl who has to have her nails done every week and I'm not the type of woman who won't step out of the house until she's dressed to the nines. But even girls like me have superficial standards.

Looking good and put together is such an essential part of being a woman. No matter how smart you are, or how well your career is going, a girl never feels quite complete until she looks just as polished on the outside.

I've often been accused of setting the woman's movement back 50 years with my views, but I know I'm right about this. Look at feminism pioneer Nellie McClung for heaven's sake. Even she wore pretty hats and blouses.

There's an unspeakable power that comes with looking feminine. Femininity demands attention, just as masculinity does. But it seems as if women have been made to feel embarrassed or shallow for taking so much pride in their looks.

When my friend Ana started working, she made a conscious effort never to look too pretty. Her fantastic clothes were replaced with conservative wear from Banana Republic. Her polished makeup was replaced with a neutral-coloured lipstick.

"Are you kidding? I can't stand out, I need to blend in," she told me when I asked her what the deal was.

When we first entered the workforce and tried to be taken seriously, the last thing we wanted was to be recognized by our youthful looks.

That doesn't mean we should be embarrassed by them.

It's been a couple of years now since I've graduated and started working full time and by now I'm confident enough in myself to bring out the woman in me.

In many ways, I wish I took more interest in the superficial stuff. I wish I cared for chipped nails more. I wish I'd wear something different than just clear mascara and clear lipgloss because maybe then my hairdresser would have taken me a bit more seriously too.

It wasn't the horrible hairstyle that made me bawl my eyes out the night I came home from the salon. It was what my hairdresser said. When I insisted she fix her "slight" mistake the next day, she told me I would have to wait a week.

"What's the big deal? You came to me with six months of roots showing so it's not like you really care," she said. "What's one more week going to do?"

I cried because she was right and it made me feel sick inside. At that point, not only did she ruin my hair, she insulted my womanhood, and that is something no girl should ever let go of.

Tomato Edamame Salad

1/2 lb. green beans, cut into thirds and ends trimmed off
2 c edamame (soy beans) shelled
(find these in the frozen vegetable section)
3 green onions, thinly sliced
1 pint cherry tomatoes, cut into halves
1 handful fresh basil, chopped
1 tblsp. rice vinegar
1 tblsp. fresh lime juice
1 tsp. honey
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
2 tsps. olive oil
dash of salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Cook the green beans and edamame in boiling water until tender but crisp, approximately 5 min. Drain and set aside to cool

Combine green onions, tomatoes, basil, and cooked edamame and beans, tossing to mix

In a small bowl, prepare dressing. Combine vinegar, lime juice, honey, and mustard, whisking in the olive oil. Pour dressing over vegetables and toss to coat. This unusual combination of beans may be served chilled or at room temperature.

Serves 6.

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About Life

Dear Ella,

After a few years of dating since my divorce, I met Sonia, whose company I really enjoy.

We have been seeing each other for a few weeks and have found that we share the same family values, are very involved in our children's lives and enjoy having fun, both alone and with our kids.

But I'm not jumping into this relationship with both feet, because I'm afraid of the financial commitment that may be expected of me down the road. I work very hard and am still raising my own family. I now have extra financial obligations due to the divorce and the thought of having to support children who are not my own is far from appealing to me.

I don't know if it's appropriate to raise the subject now and get it out of the way, or not. Sonia hasn't made any financial demands on me so far, but I know it's just around the corner.

What's Mine is Mine

Dear What's Mine is Mine

It's nice that you have finally made a connection with someone who makes you happy, but I'm not clear on why you feel the financial burden of Sonia's children will fall on your shoulders. Sonia has managed to raise her children without your help until now. I'm sure she has some kind of income, and chances are she also receives child support from her ex-husband.

Right now you are simply in the "getting to know you" phase of your relationship. Putting up road blocks is not a great way to start. First, you need to see if there is anything for you to build on.

Since you are both parents, you must be able to respect each other's choices when it comes to your children. First and foremost, you'll both do what's best for for the kids.

At this stage in your life, the chances of finding a soulmate with no history is slim. You have to grow and learn about each other together and decide what you can and can't accept from each other.

Don't put the cart in front of the horse. Relax and enjoy each other's company for now. If you are meant to be together, you will work the details out in time.

Readers may submit their questions to Ella at The CJN, email: ebias@cjnews.com. But Ella is not a professional counsellor. She brings to the questions posed by readers her unique brand of earthy wisdom. Her advice is not a replacement for medical, legal or any other advice. For serious problems, consult a professional.

The Zareinu Moveathon

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

URBAN WRITER

The Zareinu Educational Centre is a gem in the treasure chest we call Toronto Jewish education. Its motto is, appropriately: Making Miracles Happen.

Recently, I had a shmooze with Eve Gestetner, the director of special events who is responsible for overseeing the organization's annual major fundraiser – the Moveathon, which raises close to $1 million for the school's programs.

Eve, who is clearly passionate about her role at Zareinu, told me it is a Jewish school for children with physical and developmental disabilities or behavioural problems. The school is located in the Sephardic Kehilla Centre and has 73 in-house students, provides specialized input to other schools and has a teacher ration of 2:1.

Zareinu is an outstanding school for students six months to 21 years old, utilizing innovative programs such as one to help children with autism, based on a U.S. model. The school also provides speech, occupational and music therapy, an exceptional walking program called MEDEK and hydrotherapy (swim).

The beauty of Zareinu is that it frequently accepts and works with children who have not been helped by other institutions. Children receive special education in Hebrew and English.

Eve told me that Zareinu reaches out to other schools and stressed the importance of accepting all children, as well as consulting with parents on how best to address their children's needs.

Zareinu's Moveathon is in its ninth year and takes place on June 18, Father's Day, starting at Earl Bales Park at 9 a.m. Registration began in early April. Last year, 6,000 people participated in various events in the park including a 100-, 50- and 20-kilometre ride; a 10-kilometre run and a two-kilometre walk. Sponsors include Yogen Früz, Steelman, The Shoe Company, RH Capital Partners, Barrday, and Macfarlane Nameplate & Anodizing Inc.

The Moveathon's success is evident as other private schools have become involved. Students at Leo Baeck, a fundraising leader, have raised more than $4,000 that will be used to buy educational equipment.

Rabbis from many shuls attend informational meetings to learn about the school and the Moveathon. Some of the participating synagogues include the Beth Avraham Yoseph of Toronto, Holy Blossom Temple, Beit Haminyan, The Lodzer Shul, Adath Israel Congregation, Beth David, Darchei Noam, Temple Kol Ami, Petach Tikva and Shaarei Shomayim.

The Moveathon gets a great deal of attention from the small fundraising staff, which also works hard on the school's golf tournament, a bowling evening, an evening of fashion and song, and the Zareinu Dollars programs.

Eve is overwhelmed by the goodness of the individuals who have committed their professional and volunteer time to the Moveathon. "It is so heartwarming to me to see how thousands of people give of themselves in order to make the world a better place," she said.

Zareinu had humble beginnings. The school was founded by three men motivated entirely by goodness, who saw the glaring need for a school like Zareinu.

The school's success stories include one child who was diagnosed with complex neurological disorders and therefore perceived to have a limited capacity to succeed. The parents were advised to institutionalize their little one. Today, the child speaks, is lovable and interacts well with others.

Another child, who was unresponsive in most ways, loved the sound of the guitar. Zareinu staff saw this as an open door to therapy and incorporated guitar notes and chords into a computer program, which increased the child's communication dramatically.

It costs nearly $40,000 a year for a child to attend Zareinu full time. However, Zareinu's annual Moveathon gives more families the opportunity to take advantage of the school's resources. Clearly, this community-wide accessibility is only possible because of the Moveathon, a most impressive event and undertaking.

To sponsor a participant or join in the fun, see www.moveathon.com.

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This Week

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Photo exhibit tries to give terror victims a human face. *Page 7*

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York Hillel spars with student federation. *Page 26*

Arts & Travel

TJFF explores black-Jewish musical connection. *Page 39*

Books & Authors

Safran Foer's newest book tackles Sept. 11. *Page 40*

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www.cjnews.com
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40036684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

Olmert lays political groundwork for his final borders plan

By HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Interim Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert indicated clearly in Sunday's cabinet meeting that he will be quick to draw Israel's border in the West Bank and that he was serious when he said he would not wait forever for the Palestinians.

Olmert said before the election that his "convergence plan" – to withdraw from most of the West Bank and establish permanent borders – would be implemented if, after a "reasonable period of time" it became clear that there is no partner on the Palestinian side. On Sunday, he said it was already clear that there is no Palestinian partner.

After Hamas justified last week's suicide attack in Tel Aviv, Olmert said, it's important "that the diplomatic community, foreign ministries and government ministries around the world absorb the fact that there is no partner here with whom it is possible to talk."

Ehud Olmert
[Israel Sun photo]

There were strong condemnations of Hamas' reactions to the attack from around the world, he said, both from governments and in the international media. He pointed to editorials in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and Britain's *Guardian* (which he called "as left as can be") "praising the Israeli position and essentially [saying] it has been proven that Israel does not have a partner and that this will necessarily lead to unilateral Israeli steps."

In an interview with the *Jerusalem Post* before the election, Olmert, in explaining his plan to withdraw from most of the West Bank while keeping a few settlement blocs, said Israel would wait to see if a Hamas-led Palestinian Authority (PA) government would accept the international community's three conditions for recognition of its legitimacy: recognizing Israel, renouncing terror and accepting previous agreements.

"We will wait, but I don't intend to wait forever," he said at the time.

"If, after a reasonable time passes, it becomes clear that the PA is not willing to accept these principles, we will need to begin to act."

His words in Sunday's cabinet meeting, as well as the messages he has given potential coalition partners over the last few weeks, indicate that in his mind, a reasonable time has already passed.

Senior diplomatic officials said Olmert's telescoping the time frame for his plan is connected with the U.S. election timetable and a desire to get his withdrawal plan off the ground while U.S. President George W. Bush, whose term expires in January 2009, is still in office.

One official said Olmert is in a hurry to go to Washington and get Bush to repeat the same commitments supporting Israel's plans that

Continued on page 33

A Mimouna end to Pesach

While most Ashkenazi families were happy to put away their Pesach dishes, Sephardi families from Morocco were happier still, enjoying traditional Morrocan sweets last week at the Mimouna festivities in Davidov Park in Jaffa at the end of Pesach. *[Israel Sun photos]*

Shabbat Rosh Chodesh:
Tazria/Metzora
Candlelighting: 7:59
Havdallah: 9:04

Greater Toronto Area

Poland seeks to change name of Auschwitz death camp — see page 34

The News in Brief

Canada

Shul Launches Website

PETERBOROUGH, Ont. — Beth Israel Synagogue, the only shul in Peterborough, Ont., launched a website this month. The site, www. bethisraelsynagogue.ca, serves the shul's 35 families and the small city's 300 Jews. It includes a history of the local Jewish community, a list of events, and community news. The website "will allow synagogue members to keep up on community events and activities, and will provide a welcome, easily accessible portal… for unaffiliated Jews in the area, and to those considering moving to the area," said shul president Larry Gillman.

PM Backs Museum

WINNIPEG — Prime Minister Stephen Harper will honour a $100-million pledge made by the previous Liberal government to a planned human rights museum in Winnipeg, the project's supporters say. Gail Asper, daughter of the project's founder, media mogul Israel Asper, said she and her brother David met recently in Ottawa with Harper, who said he would honour the pledge and would help find ways to fund the museum's $20 million in operating costs, Canadian Press reported. The $270-million museum is slated to open in 2010. The Asper Foundation has pledged up to $50 million to it, while the province and city have agreed to contribute $20 million apiece.

Lawyers Mark Shoah

TORONTO — The Law Society of Upper Canada is holding its second annual Holocaust Memorial Day program this week. In addition to an evening reception on April 26 featuring Ruth Fazal, composer of *Oratorio Terezin*, the Law Society was to host a panel about hate on the Internet and freedom of expression.

New Muslim Paper

TORONTO — The Calgary-based Islamic Supreme Council of Canada (ISCC) launched the *Muslim Free Press* in Toronto last week. The newspaper, to be distributed every other week in Toronto, Montreal, Calgary and Vancouver, was launched in the wake of the uproar over Danish cartoons of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, which were reprinted in the *Western Standard* and *Jewish Free Press* in Calgary. The paper has news and opinion in English and French, the ISCC said.

World

Prominent Rabbi Dies

ENGLEWOOD, N.J. — Rabbi Arthur Hertzberg, a leading and provocative liberal U.S. rabbi, died April 17 at 84 in Englewood, N.J. An outspoken writer and speaker, Rabbi Hertzberg was a staunch supporter of the civil rights movement. He called for the creation of a Palestinian state after the 1967 Six Day War and once called the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington the "national cathedral of American Jewry's Jewishness," the *New York Times* reported. A longtime Conservative pulpit rabbi, he was also president of the American Jewish Congress from 1972 to 1978 and the editor of *The Zionist Idea*, a primer on Zionism. Born in Poland, he came to the United States with his family at age five.

Shul Hit on Pesach

KIEV — Several windows were shattered in a Ukrainian synagogue in what is believed to be an anti-Semitic attack. Vandals threw stones early on April 17 at the Choral Synagogue in downtown Kirovograd. No one was hurt. Police are investigating, but no arrests have been reported. According to local Jewish leaders, the incident was only the most recent act of vandalism against Jewish institutions in the central Ukrainian city during the past few years. Local Jews believe the attack was an anti-Semitic act, as it happened on Passover.

Israeli Invention Quiets Canadian Fans

MONTREAL — A Drummondville, Que., manufacturer and an Israeli high-tech firm have signed a deal to develop less noisy ventilation systems.

Venmar Ventilation Inc., which has been making products for North American homes for more than 25 years, hopes to integrate the new noise-control technology invented by Rehovot-based Silentium into all its products, ranging from stove hoods to attic heat-exchangers. More than one million homes have at least one Venmar product, the company says.

Silentium's "S-chip" analyzes noises and sends out wavelengths of the opposite phase to them, thereby dampening the sound. Silentium recently also reached a deal with General Motors for the right to install the S-chip in its cars.

The S-chip does not eliminate all sound, but reduces the more annoying noises, its creators say. Ventilation systems have been especially challenging because both the mechanical parts of the fan and the air running through ducts make noise, and unlike other machinery, they can't be insulated.

The partnership was made possible by the Canada-Israel Industrial Research and Development Foundation. Established in 1994 and funded by Canada and Israel, it brings together firms seeking partners for research and development.

School Founder Dies

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Maurice "Chico" Sabbah, founder of America's only non-Orthodox Jewish boarding school, died April 17 at 77. A wealthy businessman, Sabbah gave more than $100 million (US) to American Hebrew Academy's (AHA) 100-acre campus in Greensboro, N.C. It opened in 2001. Sabbah's gift, which paid full tuition for the school's first 77 students, is believed to be the single largest donation by any person to Jewish education in the United States. Born in Brooklyn and raised in Great Neck, N.Y., Sabbah made aliyah and served in the Israeli army after college. After returning to the United States, he served in the U.S. Army in Korea before entering the reinsurance business.

Germany OKs Access

WASHINGTON — Germany has agreed to drop its resistance to opening one of the world's largest Shoah archives, Brigitte Zypries, the German justice minister, said last week at Washington's U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, which led calls to open up to 50 million documents at Bad Arolsen, Germany. Of 11 nations on a commission controlling the archives, only Germany and Italy had resisted access, citing privacy concerns for innocents who might be mentioned in the documents. Germany will back access when the commission meets next month.

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The Canadian Jewish news

Vol. XXXVI, No. 18 (1,745)*

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CIRCULATION
Total circulation: 42,245 copies
Total paid circulation: 41,398 copies

CCNA verified circulation
Feb. 9, 2006

SUBSCRIPTIONS
Canada: $35.95, 1 yr. Incl. GST
$63.95, 2 yr. Incl. GST.
U.S.A.: $100 U.S. funds, 1 yr.
All other countries: $110 U.S. funds, 1 yr.

Postmaster: Please return 2985 and changes of address to Toronto office.

Postage Paid at Toronto
Canada Post Publication Agreement #40010684
Publication Mail Registration #09894

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program, towards our mailing costs.

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Reading of Megillat Hashoah draws hundreds

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Liturgical text read by more than 100 Jewish communities around the world

In what is becoming an annual tradition, hundreds of people gathered to read Megillat Hashoah at Adath Israel Congregation Sunday to honour the Jewish victims of the Holocaust.

The service began with an introduction from Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Rabbi Philip Scheim, who with the help of Alex Eisen, inspired the liturgical text that is now read by more than 100 Jewish communities around the world, Rabbi Scheim said.

Last year, the service was held at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Congregation to commemorate the 60th anniversary of liberation.

The reading of each of the six chapters of the megillah was followed by a candlelighting ceremony during which a candle was lit to honour both the victims and the heroes of the Holocaust.

Seven candles were lit by members of the Jewish community in honour of the six million Jewish victims, the destroyed communities, the 1.5 million Jewish children, the ghetto fighters, the righteous of the nations, the partisans and the fallen soldiers and victims of terror in the State of Israel.

Throughout the evening, the Renanim Vocal Youth Ensemble, performed under the direction of Susan Michaels, accompanied by Konrad Harley.

The first chapter of the Megillat Hashoah, written by a Holocaust victim, portrayed the strength of the Jewish people in overcoming each adversity that threatened the very existence of Jews. The reading was followed by Cantor Tibor Kovari singing *Ani Ma'amin*.

The second chapter, read by Sheryl Saperia, told a story of a young journalist who saw first-hand the horrors of life in a Jewish ghetto.

"Wherever you looked, terrifying sights – a dead body, its face covered by a newspaper, and a man hastily removing its overcoat while digging in its pockets with anticipation; a young girl, holding tightly her infant sister who was weeping out of hunger listlessly… a boy who had tried to smuggle potato skins into the ghetto surrounded by a group of guards revelling with coarse laughter as they stripped him before he was beaten to death."

Cantor Moshe Ginz sang *Es Brent* before Rabbi Erwin Schild took the stage to read the third chapter of the megillah in Hebrew. It was a passage that was found wedged between two wooden beds, written on a scrap of paper by a woman named Gertrude.

She cursed herself and all the other Jews in her town who were blind to their fate and didn't escape to the far east before being sent to death camps.

"O, how foolish and blind we were! We rejected the advice to abandon the homeland; to emigrate to the distant east and we hid ourselves from the signs, 'No Jews Allowed.' Our ears were sealed from hearing the hateful speeches, for they were just words…"

Michael Furman read the fourth chapter about a prisoner who claimed to have been reborn four times and died once, having narrowly averted death on four separate occasions and experienced a death after being forced to extract the gold teeth from the mouth of his brother who was gassed to death.

Cantor Marshall Loomer chanted the fifth chapter titled, "A heavenly voice, hovering, cries out," while the congregation responding with the phrase, "For those, I do weep," after each passage.

"Let there be light again," the final chapter, read by Ellie Weisdorf, chronicled the difficulty survivors had when it came time to return to their homes and the lives they knew before the war.

"The unfortunate who tried to return to their homes found in them hostile neighbours from time to time…"

But while the writer warned that survivors and their families should never forget the horror they experienced, survivors should also not forget to live their lives.

"Do not mourn too much, but do not sink into the forgetfulness of apathy. Do not allow days of darkness to return; weep, but wipe the tears away."

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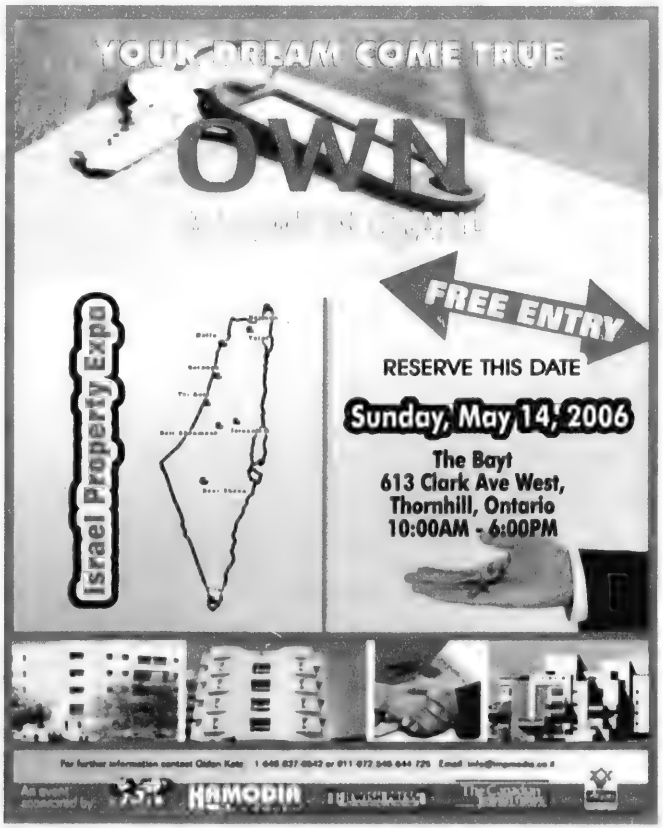

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What it means for us all

From the editor's desk

We had no right to expect that Canadian soldiers would be unharmed in Afghanistan. But it was our hope, if not our folly.

Cpl. Matthew Dinning of Petawawa, Ont., Bombardier Myles Mansell of Victoria, Cpl. Randy Payne of Wainwright, Alta., and Lieut. William Turner of Edmonton were killed on the weekend in a roadside blast that ripped through the jeep in which they were travelling.

Of course, more than their lives ended in the explosion. So, too, did the wholeness of their respective families, complete, intimate circles of human connection, love and belonging never more.

In all, 15 Canadian soldiers and one diplomat have been killed in Aghanistan on the mission that our government and many other governments of the free world have deemed to be of paramount importance: helping to implant and secure the rooting of freedom in the mostly dry, dusty soil of Afghanistan.

Freedom in Afghanistan, it is hoped, will be part of a solidly entrenched bulwark of democracy ultimately connecting all parts of the world like a shield of hard-as-rock, shining pearls.

In his message of condolence to the families and friends of the fallen soldiers, Prime Minister Stephen Harper encapsulated the essence of Canada's role in Afghanistan. "These men were working to bring security, democracy, self-sufficiency and prosperity to the Afghan people and to protect Canadians' national and collective security."

The prime minister's words were not mere platitudes. They are a reflection of a very large, though at times, disquieting truth.

Afghanis have asked Canada and many other countries for help in reclaiming their country from the intolerant, fanatic Taliban and in restoring a brown "barren" landscape into one that might sustain a green and golden life free from oppression.

The deaths of the Canadians will undoubtedly renew the call in some quarters to bring our troops home. But that call must be resisted despite the irremediably sorrowful loss of life.

Harper was absolutely correct in pointing out the linkage in the two prongs of the Canadian mission in Afghanistan: assisting the Afghanis is in the best interests of Canadians. Enhancing the structure of democracy in Afghanistan, even a modest one, enhances security in Canada and the West. This is not, it must be emphasized, an American need. Rather, it is an imperative of the West.

We were reminded of the inescapability and the importance of the linkage on the weekend by none other than Osama bin Laden. He apparently crawled out of his hiding place long enough to record a new audiotape that was dutifully broadcast Sunday by Al Jazeera. The last time he "spoke" to the world was some three months ago.

As in the past, he declared that the West was at war with Islam. Of course his accusations bear no resemblance to the truth but are, in fact, a projection of his own malevolently religious worldview of events.

To prove the truth of his declaration, he brought two proofs: the decision by some western nations to deny funding to the Hamas-run Palestinian Authority, and the call at the United Nations to send soldiers to Darfur to end the genocide there.

"The blockade which the West is imposing on the government of Hamas proves that there is a Zionist crusader war on Islam," bin Laden – assuming it was him – said on the tape.

Bin Laden, we know, hates Israel for two reasons. It is Jewish and sovereign in a part of the world he considers the exclusive domain of his kind of Muslims. And it is the vanguard of the West with all the attendant values of the western way of life, namely democracy and freedom of choice.

He is attempting to penetrate the West Bank and Gaza. Intelligence officials have long ago noted his efforts. The recent withholding of funds to the PA is simply another of his many mendacious pretexts.

The high-tech, cave-dwelling bin Laden also urged his followers to pour into Sudan to fight the UN peacekeepers who are scheduled to take over peacekeeping duties from the feeble African Union forces at the end of September.

"I call on mujahedeen and their supporters, especially in Sudan and the Arab peninsula, to prepare for long war again the crusader plunderers in western Sudan. Our goal is… to defend Islam, its land and its people," bin Laden said.

Thus, we send our deepest, most heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of Dinning, Mansell, Payne and Turner. Our words can never abate the sense of loss they feel. But it is important that they know these brave soldiers losing their lives in Afghanistan is the irreducible essence of what we are as a people and what we cherish so dearly for our children: the belief that every human being is precious and entitled to live his or her life with the freedom to make the belief real.

MBD

See JN

A PRAYER FOR CANADA: At a pre-Pesach meeting in his Ottawa office with the executive committee of the Canadian Federation of Chabad Lubavitch, Prime Minister Stephen Harper received a leather-bound prayer book from his guests. With Harper are, from left, rabbis Yitzchak Wineberg, Zalman Grossbaum and Berel Mockin. (Chabad Lubavitch photo)

Darfur rally planned

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Project Equity, a grassroots organization run by three high school students and one university student, is organizing a "Scream for Darfur" rally this Sunday, April 30, at 1 p.m., at Queen's Park.

Speakers will include MP David Kilgour, Darfur activists Normal Epstein and Acol Dor of Canadians Against Slavery and Torture in Sudan (CASTS), and MP Olivia Chow.

It is especially important for Jews to attend, organizer Leora Smith told *The CJN*. The Grade 12 student at the Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto's Richmond Hill branch is a leader of Project Equity (www.projectequity.org) along with David Berkal of William Lyon Mackenzie Collegiate Institute, Ben Singer of CHAT's Tanenbaum campus and Assaf Weisz of York University.

"Whenever we learn about the Holocaust, we spend hours talking about, 'Didn't anybody know?' and 'Why didn't anybody do anything?' and now we do know [about Darfur, where violence, malnutrition and disease have killed 400,000 people]," Smith said. "It's ridiculously hypocritical if we stand by and don't do anything."

Project Equity has also organized an information assembly that is travelling to schools in the Toronto area over the next few weeks.

SMILING SONGSTERS: The musical talent of students at Netivot HaTorah Day School was featured recently in the school's "Whole Notes" program, which included musicians from senior kindergarten to Grade 8. [Rebecca Ansel photo]

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SUNDAY SCHEDULE: 9 AM - 4 PM

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RAISING JEWISH CHILDREN IN A SECULAR WORLD - MODERATED BY RABBI MOSHE SHULMAN, PANEL: RABBI ELLIOTT DIAMOND, DR. JANICE HALPERN, AND RABBI MICHAEL SKOBAC

DOES MARRIAGE HAVE TO BE EXCITING? - RABBI DR. BULKA

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE JEWISH DATING WORLD: WHAT IS THE COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY? ARE WE CURRENTLY HELPING OR HURTING THE SITUATION? - RABBI JOSHUA JOSEPH

NOT IN OUR BACK-YARD: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY - ROBBIE SCHWARTZ

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Jewish motorcycle club heads to Tennessee

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Yidden on Wheels to honour staff and students who collected paper clips to build children's Holocaust memorial

The Yidden on Wheels Motorcycle Touring Company will be hitting the road once again to commemorate the Holocaust as part of the "Paper Clip Ride to Remember 2006" next week.

About 350 Jewish Motorcyclists Alliance (JMA) members from Canada, the United States and Australia will ride to the Whitwell Middle School in Whitwell, Tenn. on May 5 to honour the staff and students who collected millions of paper clips to build a children's Holocaust memorial at the school.

Last year, the JMA, an association of 10 Jewish motorcycle clubs across North America and Australia, went to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. to commemorate Yom Hashoah, but Steven Stein, the president of Toronto-based YOW said that although the JMA wanted to go back to Washington and do the same thing they did last year, Stein didn't want Ride to Remember to have a "been there, done that" feel to it.

"I wanted to maintain the novelty of the ride," Stein said.

He said he first heard of the Paper Clip Project – a campaign initiated in 1998 by the staff and students of the Whitwell Middle School to collect a paper clip for each of the six million Holocaust victims – on last year's Ride to Remember.

"Some members told us about the Paper Clip Project," Stein said, adding that a documentary was filmed in 2004 about the project. "Most of us hadn't heard of it. So we wanted to honour what they had done."

He said he and Sid Rochwerg, co-chairs of the "Paper Clip Ride To Remember 2006," organized the event to honour the staff and students in the small town that doesn't even have a Jewish community.

He said that the first night, on May 4, the Toronto contingent of almost 70 bikers will stay in Chattanooga, Tenn. which is about 30 miles away from Whitwell, because the rural town of about 1,600 can't accommodate so many people.

The next morning, the bikers will converge at the Jewish Community Federation of Greater Chattanooga. After a departure ceremony and a breakfast sponsored by the federation, they will begin the ride to Whitwell, where members of the community, staff and students of the school will be awaiting their arrival.

"We'll meet the kids and staff and we plan on having a ceremony. They're setting aside the day for us," he said adding that the JMA will provide a barbecue at the school and will screen the documentary called *Paper Clips*.

"We didn't want to come and talk about the Holocaust, we wanted to come and honour them because we knew that they had many survivors come to the school to talk about their experiences. With the rise in anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial, we wanted to honour them," Stein said.

Although last year's ride wasn't a fundraising event, Stein said that this year, they wanted to do something special for the Whitwell Middle School.

He said he got in touch with the principal of the school, Linda Hooper, and said, "We know how to fundraise. What can we do for you?"

He said she asked for Promethean boards, which are electronic teaching aids, priced at $4,000 each.

Stein promised he would raise enough money to buy one for the school.

By November of last year, they raised enough money to buy three, and as of this month, raised enough to buy two more.

After the official presentation ceremony at the school on May 5, the bikers will ride back to Chattanooga for a Shabbat banquet at the Chattanooga Clarion.

The trip will conclude with Saturday morning services on May 6 conducted by the the "official" JMA Rabbi Zachery Betesh, or Rabbi Zigzag, as he is affectionately called, from the Florida-based King David Biker gang.

"We hope to let the world know that we remember the victims that perished in the Holocaust and to honour these wonderful people. We also hope to dispel stereotypes [of small-town people] and foster a sense of awareness among members of Jewish communities about what we're doing."

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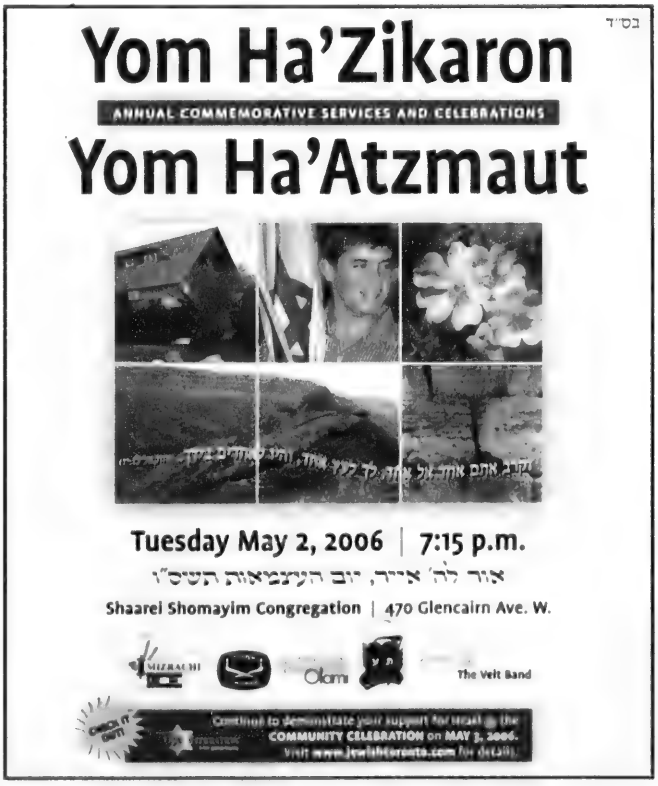

Photo exhibit documents terror victims, families

Nava Siboni holds a photo of her daughter Liron, 19, who was a terror victim.

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Local photographer Jason Schwartz is attempting to put a human face behind every Israeli terror victim.

With the help of One Family Fund, a non-profit organization that helps terror victims and their families, Schwartz, 35, met and photographed about 150 victims or their family members over a recent three-week period in Israel.

The result is a photo exhibit of about 25 images and text, on display from May 1 to 31 at the Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, as part of Contact, Toronto's annual photography festival.

Several of the subjects who have been helped by One Family Fund will be on hand to share their stories at a community event sponsored by the organization on May 15.

Schwartz, who in 1997 published a book of portraits titled *The Ghosts That Haunt Us – Portraits of Holocaust Survivors*, and completed a commission on behalf of the Florida Holocaust Museum in 2001, photographing 115 Holocaust survivors in southwest Florida, says he started his current project because he was "frustrated and angry that the media was not telling the story of Israel victims of terror.

"I have family there who go to work, ride buses and eat in restaurants. I wanted to tell their story and let people know that anyone is a target."

His photos included everyone, he says, "Jews, Bedouins, Muslims, Christians."

By creating a photo document, he says, he is letting people identify with what it means to live in Israel. "Through these pictures, we are giving a voice to the departed. We are also bringing a human story to every statistic."

Every photograph has a handwritten message along with it, says Schwartz, "so people can 'meet' the subject. The 150 pictures I took only scratch the surface. I could have worked for three years."

Pam Albert, Canadian executive director of One Family Fund, says her organization got involved in the project because they wanted to create a memory of the intifidah.

"We wanted a concrete way to look at [both the sorrow and the life in Israel]. We wanted people to see how Israelis are dealing with tragedy and also moving forward. They have a strong conviction to move on."

Meeting with his subjects – he was accompanied by a One Family caseworker – Schwartz had to be more than a photographer, says Albert.

"He needed to be compassionate and sensitive. These people wanted to tell their story – he couldn't just take their picture and leave. [In some cases] they showed him where the attack occurred and how it happened.

"It was a very intense time for him. It was emotionally and physically draining. He got so much out of it, but he also had to find a way to separate from them and leave his feelings behind."

She says that there has been a decline in our generation in terms of helping Israel. "Jason serves as a role model in terms of what we can do."

Tickets for the May 15 event are $18 including a kosher dessert reception. For information, call 416-644-4955, ext. 2051, or e-mail linda@onefamilyfund.org.

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To remember, honour and act

It is a melancholy moment. We light the memorial candle on *Yom Hashoah v'Hagvurah*, focus our thoughts and try to imagine the unimaginable. For most of us, born in the second half of the last century, it is a nearly impossible imagining. Our minds resist. Our eyes tear. And our hearts break. As former justice minister Irwin Cotler once noted, the events of the Shoah are too terrible to imagine, but not too terrible to have happened.

For some of our parents and grandparents, alas, the imagination is not the faculty they need to summon. They were there. They remember. They remember constantly. Every day. Until the end of their days. A sound, a colour, an expression, a photo, a fragrance, the quiet of the night, the noise of the day, the laughter of a friend, the sobbing of a child – anything and everything evokes memories.

That they survived may have owed as much to their luck as to their character. However, that they rebuilt their lives – and in the process, contributed to and helped to rebuild the various societies of the post-World War II, post-Shoah world in which they settled – owes only and exclusively to the determination, strength and goodness of their character.

They affirmed every day, in the forward-moving ordinariness of their lives, a hallowed enactment of the psalmist's exhortation, "We shall not die, but live." That remarkably courageous affirmation has been our inheritance.

But can it be said that we are, truly, in a post-Shoah world?

Can we point to a world free of ethnic hatred?

The leader of the government of Iran refers to the Shoah as a "myth" and assiduously, obsessively applies the resources of his people to achieving "a world without Zionism," to "wiping the Jewish state off the map."

Can we point to a world free of genocide?

Some 400,000 people are believed to have been killed in the Darfur region of Sudan since 2003. As many as 6,000 people die or are killed there each month. The sadistic murder and marauding by Janjaweed militias have displaced more than two million people from their homes.

We will indeed remember the victims of the Holocaust. We will honour the survivors. But remembrance and honour alone in a world terrorized by fundamentalist harbourers of hate and radical, state-sanctioned champions of violence – are frail, ineffective bearers of the precious, life-affirming inheritance that it is our sacred duty to protect and pass on.

We must act

It falls to us, too – more than 60 years after the gates of the Nazis' concentration camps were thrown open – as it will fall to our children and to their children after them, to live, rather than simply say, the phrase, "Never again."

25 years ago in *The CJN*

• Canadian Council of Christians and Jews president Victor Goldbloom and fundraising chairman George Cohon said they were taking steps to reverse the organization's shaky finances by reducing staff and activities, and by corporate fundraising

• A new Israeli organization was started by children of Holocaust survivors with the motto, "To remember and never to forget." Its aim was to honour survivors who established new lives and families, and to make sure that the world remembers the Shoah.

Dry Bones
OSAMA BIN LADEN JUST SAID ON AL-JAZEERA TELEVISION THAT ISLAM IS AT WAR WITH THE US AND EUROPE.
YOU'VE GOT TO FEEL SORRY FOR THE GUY . . .
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES HE SAYS THAT ISLAM IS AT WAR WITH THE WEST. . .
NOBODY IN THE WEST BELIEVES HIM.

Editorial Advisory Board: **Isaac Apter, Michael Brown, Sandra Brown, Donald Carr, Daniel Held, Zac Kaye, Igor Korenzvit, Keith Landy, Andrea Most, Lou Ronson, Jacques Sayegh, Mike Shriqui, Pamela Medjuck Stein, Rabbi Michael Stroh, Rabbi Reuven Tradburks**

A latter-day Haggadah

The front-page editorial "The Haggadah inspires hope for a better life" (*CJN*, April 12) is accompanied by a photograph of a gentleman in a suit and tie standing next to an elderly lady, to illustrate the meaning of a "better life." One of the lady's hands is outstretched, as if she is counting, and in the other hand she is holding a food basket. Behind the suited gent looms large a poster that identifies in Hebrew letters the recipient of the food basket: "Food baskets for Holocaust survivors."

And once more survivors are lining up, this time not for soup but for food given in the spirit of Pesach charity. According to recent statistics, 35 per cent of survivors live below the poverty line, while enormous sums of money from Germany have been pouring into the coffers of the Israeli government and into the vault banks of the Claims Conference

This photograph is a pictorial emblem of what has been done to the survivors of the Holocaust – a latter-day Haggadah.

Eli Pfefferkorn
Toronto

* * *

Many Jews lost to intermarriage

Jews, in prewar years, in Germany and Austria, toyed for more than a century with the theory that reform – the distancing ourselves from traditional Judaism, as manifested by intermarriage – is the panacea to maintain a strong Jewish existence ("Jewish regeneration depends on intermarriage: prof," *CJN*, April 12). Unfortunately, we are cognizant today that it was a total failure and caused many thousands to be lost permanently to Judaism.

Edward von Hofbauer
Toronto

* * *

Intermarriage to resuscitate 'sickly Jew'?

I was shocked to read the coverage of Sander Gilman's recent talk ("Jewish regeneration depends on intermarriage. prof," *CJN*, April 12) for two reasons. First, I was surprised that you printed the "sh-word" he used for a non-Jewish woman, which in my vocabulary is as derogatory as using a certain "n-word" for blacks. Secondly, I fail to understand his thesis that intermarriage is what will resuscitate the sickly Jew. It would be comparable to me trying to save the life of one of my chronically ill patients through euthanasia!

Judith Weinroth, MD
Toronto

* * *

Jewish events promote materialism

Recently my children came home from their Toronto day school with the forms for a UJA Walkathon. I, too, participated as a child and have fond memories. However, I am tempted to discourage them from participating on the walk, and here's why.

In the last few years, participants are being motivated with the promise of various toys. That's right. God forbid, we should teach our children to perform a selfless act of raising money for a worthwhile cause without personal gain. No. Instead the Jewish establishment wants to turn a low-key, honourable event into a materialistic feeding frenzy. Instead of children concentrating on the needy within the Jewish community, they are entirely focused on getting enough donations so they can get some piece of junk to throw on their already too-high pile of toys at home. This goes completely against my (and I hope they are Jewish) values!

When Feed the Children or War Child Canada solicit for funds, they don't do so with the promise of a Playstation or a Blackberry or a fitness-club membership. The cause stands on its own, as should the UJA's. Why is it we have to turn all these Jewish events (yes, bar mitzvahs, etc.) into orgies of conspicuous consumption. Why are we afraid to be serious with our children? Is this what the rabbis had in mind when they discussed modes of tzedakah?

Deborah Maes
Toronto

* * *

Writer not credited

The book *Solomon and the Ant and Other Jewish Folktales* was written by Sheldon Oberman, a very talented Jewish storyteller from Winnipeg ("Fun stories that make you think," *CJN*, April 6). Unfortunately, he did not have the opportunity to complete the book due to his death. That task was left to Peninnah Schram, a world-renowned Jewish storyteller. She should have been acknowledged, so that she can get the credit she so richly deserves.

Barry Rosen
Hamilton, Ont.

* * *

Iran's nuclear program

We are postponing the inevitable if Iran is permitted to continue with its uranium-enrichment program. Russia and China are appeasing Iran for economic reasons. Once Iran becomes a nuclear power, not only the Middle East, but also the entire world will be threatened. Iran's nuclear program is a step toward Armageddon, the end of society as we know it today. Iran must be stopped before it is too late. This is one time when the United Nations must show a strong front and put a stop to this madness.

Sol Raibmon
Thornhill, Ont.

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info@cjnews.com

The March of the Living: healing wounded memories

By ELI RUBENSTEIN

It was a breathtaking winter day – we were standing in the middle of a pristine body of water, on the thick, solid ice of Maple Lake near Parry Sound, Ont., breathing in the fresh, bracing winter air and the extraordinary scenery. We were all entranced by the exquisitely blue sky, the snow-tipped trees glistening in the midday sun and the endless carpet of untouched snow that covered the lake.

Our small group was made up of about 15 students, a few staff members, and two Holocaust survivors: Bill Glied and Nate Leipciger. We were part of a larger group of more than 200 students and chaperones who had gathered in Camp George for a weekend Shabbaton in preparation for our two-week journey to Poland and Israel on the March of the Living.

Suddenly, one of the survivors, Bill, came up from behind Nate and pulled him close, so that they stood almost like one unit on the frozen lake. Then Bill laughed and said: "OK, now it's your turn – you stand in front of me… Do you remember?" Nate laughed and said, "Of course, I remember."

Both of them then turned to me and patiently explained the "inside joke." Nate and Bill had been prisoners in Auschwitz-Birkenau, and although they never met there, they shared similar experiences. They used to stand at the Appelplatz for hours, at times for an entire day or night, in the bitter cold, without proper clothing, at the whim of their Nazi overseers. The wind was sometimes so terrible that they would take turns standing in front of each other to give some relief from the freezing wind.

Sixty years later, facing a frozen Ontario lake, both Nate and Bill were reminded of their experiences in Auschwitz-Birkenau. They were able to laugh about the memory, and even contrast it with the glorious setting and the friendly company they were in. But it is not always that easy for the survivors.

Sometimes the mental images of events are so searing, so indelible and so haunting that one wonders if those who have experienced these traumas will ever be able to cope with the terrible sights they witnessed and experienced.

On a recent trip to Montreal, I had occasion to hear survivors of the Holocaust, the Cambodian genocide and the Rwandan genocide speak about their experiences.

Holocaust survivor Faiga Burman Wajcer was speaking to a small group of Montreal March of the Living students. One of her many anecdotes concerned a cattle car from Hungary whose arrival she happened to see at Auschwitz-Birkenau on a summer day. The doors clattered open, revealing inside an entire wedding party peering out to the smoke-filtered sunlight. The bride was in her white wedding gown, the groom in his finest chassidic clothing, the rebbe in his streimel and white stockings, all the guests wearing their best wedding finery. As the Auschwitz orchestra played, the shocked and terrified wedding party was marched directly into the gas chambers.

The following day in Montreal, at a conference marking the anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, Youk Chhang, a survivor of the 1975-79 Khmer Rouge genocide in Cambodia, talked about his childhood experiences in the infamous killing fields of his native country. While still a young boy, he and his fellow Cambodian slave workers were called to attention as two blindfolded young people were brought out to face disciplinary action. The Khmer Rouge representative told the crowd the two had committed the unforgivable crime of "falling in love without permission."

"What should their penalty be?" he baited the crowd.

The crowd yelled: "Death. Death."

Before Youk Chhang's eyes, the two young lovers were beaten almost to the point of death – then buried while they were still apparently alive.

Esther Mujawayo, a survivor of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, described her narrow escape from the hands of the Hutu murderers. Unfortunately, many members of her family, including her husband and her pregnant sister, were brutally butchered. Like many innocent victims, they were hacked to death. "It was considered a privilege to be shot," she quoted painfully. For years, the image that most haunted her was of her sister's body lying in a filthy latrine, never having been given a proper burial.

For many of the survivors, speaking about their experience is helpful. And we, the next generations, must listen well and lend an empathetic ear as they recount their life stories.

But sometimes, on rare occasions, we can do more than listen.

During that same weekend at Camp George, the four survivors present – Canadian March of the Living chair Anita Ekstein, Amek Adler, Bill Glied and Nate Leipciger – shared their moving memories with the students.

Anita began the weekend by describing how her father smuggled her (she was then eight years old) out of the ghetto to live as a Christian with a Polish family. "His last words were: 'Always remember who you are,'" Anita recalled. "And in truth I never forgot who I was – I was a Jew."

Perhaps the most poignant moment – among many – came when Amek Adler rose to speak. During Shabbat services, when the students recited the *Shema Yisrael*, the words stirred the most painful of memories inside of Amek.

"I was about 14 years old and was a slave labourer in a concentration camp set up by the Nazis near Radom," Amek told the hushed gathering. "One day, the Nazis learned that a young man had escaped the camp. The Nazis rounded up the escaped man's remaining family, a mother and father, and two girls and one boy, ages seven to 14, and forced them onto their knees in front of the all the rest of the camp inmates who had been assembled to witness their punishment. The Nazi – he had a black patch over one of his eyes – then shouted to the prisoners, 'This is what we do to the family of someone who decides to escape.' And then he shot each family member in the head once, then back over them again to ensure they were all dead. As the parents and the children slumped over, each proclaimed the words of the *Shema* on their lips before they died.

"And since then, each time I hear the *Shema*," Amek told us, "that is the picture that comes to mind. That poor family, the parents and the children on their knees reciting the *Shema* as they were being executed – I can't get it out of my head."

We all listened in stunned silence, wondering what it must be like to carry that kind of burden, that constant memory, for an entire lifetime. But something even more remarkable was about to happen later on the weekend.

On Saturday evening, the lights were dimmed, a braided candle was lit, and all of the Marchers formed a circle in middle of the dining room to sing *Havdalah* in unison. Then Rabbi Glenn Black invited Amek into the centre of the circle and said to him and all present: "Amek, you shared with us a very personal and difficult memory. But with your permission, we are now going to try and heal that memory. We are all going to sing *Shema Yisrael* many times over, so the picture you will have in your mind from now on, whenever you hear the *Shema*, will be of Jewish children marching towards a brighter future."

Amek Adler, centre, and participants on the March of the Living

Then the entire group of teenagers and chaperones broke out into a spirited rendition of *Shema Yisrael*, singing it perhaps 20 or 30 times, before launching into a medley of other Jewish songs. Amek was joined by his nephew, Mark, his fellow survivors and their grandchildren, and the Marchers kept singing around them, as if their singing alone could carry the world into a better future.

A few weeks later, Amek addressed the group, briefly: "You know, it's working. I was in synagogue last week and I heard the *Shema* being recited, and for a moment, I saw the image of the family in Radom, but after only a few seconds, it was replaced by all of your smiling faces…"

A memory that once seemed inconsolable, had received redemption.

As you are reading these words, 500 Jewish teenagers from across Canada, together with a group of Holocaust survivors, will be travelling through Poland taking part in the 2006 March of the Living. After visiting Israel, they will return home with a renewed commitment to Israel, to preserving the memory of the Shoah, to raising their voice against injustice, such as the ongoing genocide in Darfur, and to healing the world for future generations.

We, the Canadian Jewish community, should feel proud that within our midst, there are young people who care so deeply about the world and about the past and future of the Jewish people.

And for all the Holocaust survivors reading this article, know there is a generation of committed, courageous and caring Jewish youth who will never forget what you lived through and will work to heal the world from a scar even as terrible as the Holocaust.

Nachamu, nachamu ami: Be comforted and be consoled my people! ((Isaiah 40:1)

Eli Rubenstein is national director of March of the Living Canada.

Opinions

When is enough, enough?

When is enough really enough? When are we satisfied with what we have?

We humans constantly seek more, and yet we know that our needs are no longer dictating our appetites and acquisitiveness. In order to diet and even eat properly, nutritionists tell us to listen to our stomachs. Stop when you are full. Leave some over in your plate. (As though any of us can dismiss that insistent voice: "Finish what's on your plate!") But we tend to overeat, over-prepare, over-accumulate. We are greedy and told to feel guilty about it. Greed is, after all, a basic vice. But no one has taught us how not to want more: more kids, more clothes, more houses, more vacation, more money. Is there a point at which enough is really enough?

Norma Baumel Joseph in Montreal

On Passover, we sing the lovely and lively song *Dayeinu*, "It would have been enough for us." The song is fun, but its meaning confuses and even misleads. Can we honestly say enough? If this had happened, it would have been enough. If that had happened, it would have been enough. What nonsense. Clearly it was all necessary. We want, expect and need it all. Yet, by focusing on each individual item, rather than on the totality of the experience, the song elicits a sense of gratitude and appreciation. We really would not have wanted just one item – all were necessary – but let's give thanks, one by one.

It sounds nice, but I wonder about the practicality of it. It seems to go against our very nature.

And I don't think that's all bad. In other words, I think we need a dose of "more" please. All the great innovations and advances of our civilizations are associated with human acquisitiveness. Seeking more, and looking for new and additional ways to eat and live, promotes progress and development. Even at the more quotidian level, if we were so satisfied with our existence, what would motivate us to marry, have kids, build houses, work, create, etc. Appreciating life is a very special gift, but so is building and growing and producing. So the challenge is to find an appropriate way to combine our greed with gratitude and satisfaction.

On a personal level, I am happy with my portion. I have a great life by any standard. My husband and I have been married for 41 astonishing years. I love my job, even if it exhausts me. I have four wonderful kids who married great spouses. They have given birth to seven wonderful grandchildren.

I am happy, grateful and fulfilled, but I don't want it to stop. I want more. Enough is not yet enough.

Reflections on Yom Ha'atzmaut

Just as we finish putting away the dishes from the celebration of Pesach, our founding story of liberation, suddenly it is time to celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut. It fittingly follows our first festival of national liberation, making Israel the latest stage in the fulfilment of a national dream.

Jean M. Gerber in Vancouver

In looking through Haggadah commentaries dealing with the cup of Elijah, I came across notes I had made on the atmosphere around the seder table that varied depending on the situation in Israel. Those notes certainly apply just as aptly to the mood on Yom Ha'atzmaut through the years.

"Some years anger. Some years hope," I wrote. "Some years anxiety, some years sorrow, some years shame, some years ambivalence."

We know that the cup of Elijah is filled just before the recitation of the curses in the Shfoch section of the Haggadah: "Pour out your wrath upon the nations that know you not, for they have devoured Jacob." This year at the seder it was my turn to comment on this strangely compelling – and repellent passage.

How do these notes belong to the time of *atzmaut* (independence)?

Some years, anger. These were the years right after World War II, when it seemed the whole world was our enemy, and we were torn between weeping at the loss of six million, and joy at the rebirth of the Jewish state. More recently, there was anger at the deaths of so many in pointless suicide bombings.

Some years, hope. I wrote last time about our first year in Jerusalem, when, despite the losses in 1967, we were once again reunited with the Western Wall, and it seemed possible that we could make peace with the Palestinians. It was the same feeling after Oslo, when resources poured into the Palestinian areas, when Jews and Arabs were making if not love, then business, but not war.

Some years, anxiety. Those were the days before the '67 war, when it seemed possible Israel would be destroyed and the world did nothing. Also the terrible years of the Yom Kippur War, 1973-74, when again it seemed Israel was in that slough of despond.

Some years sorrow. Sorrow for the thousands of Israeli soldiers who died to protect Israel. Grief over the many more shattered by the wounds they received. Tears for grieving families of those thousands, and the families whose children, parents and elders died when bombs tore them apart. The War of Attrition. The intifadah, parts I and II. The fear that one would sit down to eat pizza and never rise again, when buying a cup of coffee could be fatal.

Some years, shame. The great shame at the assassination of former prime minister Yitzhak Rabin by one of our own. Shame for the death of Palestinian children. Shame for the war in Lebanon that led to massacre – not by Israel, but on her watch in that tortured country. The continuing economic, social and cultural gulf between Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs. The shrill cries from a few for expulsion of those Israeli citizens.

I think this is a year of ambivalence mixed with anxiety and hope. So what do we pour into this Elijah's cup?

Into that cup we pour our hope for the new government. Hope that Hamas will yet see the light, stop torturing its own people, and build, rather than destroy. Anxiety over the failures of the past that will haunt the future. Hope that all of Israel's citizens will enjoy a more equitable share of her prosperity.

The worst outcome would be a cup of despair. Rabbi Nachman warned against despair. It leads to a numbing blanket of indifference, indifference to one's own fate, to the fates of others, and to withdrawal from the challenges of life. People sunk in depression feel this numbness.

Israel is heralded as the first sign of our coming redemption. In the seder service, Elijah has been transformed, from an avenger taunting the recalcitrant people of Israel who were seduced by the colourful rituals of Baal, into the prophet of that redemption. I do not want to exclude or modify the curse – the pain is still too new. But I also want to celebrate Israel's 58th with the joy and hope that Israel will behave with its own high ethical and moral principles.

A giving community

Tzedakah. This Hebrew term is most often translated as "charity." However, since the word shares a root with the Hebrew word for "justice," the word tzedakah has a deeper meaning than that of simple charity. Indeed, the concept of tzedakah is central to living a righteous Jewish life.

Gerald L. Gall in Edmonton

Tzedakah takes many forms. Maimonides outlined eight levels of giving tzedakah, distinctions that have become well-known to many people.

At Pesach, we traditionally welcome to our table the stranger who has no seder to attend. And there are a variety of ways that we can offer tzedakah to others in our community. It might entail the donation of money or non-monetary resources. Or it might involve the expenditure of time and talent.

In particular, it is this last gift, of time and talent, that most dramatically enriches the everyday lives of members of our community. Volunteers provide invaluable service, whether by assisting in classrooms or helping new Canadians settle in their new, often frightening environment. In many respects, although raising money is of great value, the gift of time and talent provides an immeasurable, tangible support to many parts of our community.

Volunteerism also serves to unite people within discrete communities, people who have common interests; and it promotes the notions of sharing, participation and fellowship.

Volunteering has become a way of life for some people. In Edmonton, there is a wide base of individuals who regularly volunteer for large events that bring colour and excitement to the whole city. Whether it is for one of the many festivals that define our city, such as the annual Fringe Theatre Festival, the multicultural Heritage Festival or colourful folk festivals; or the national and international sporting events, such as the World University Games, the Commonwealth Games or the recent Edmonton 2005 World Masters Games, people of our city take the time from their busy careers to contribute to the success of these endeavours.

This phenomenon may be described as volunteerism on a grand scale. But the commitment to grassroots advocacy is seen every day throughout the country on a smaller scale. We see this primarily with respect to the delivery of charitable services, including the day-to-day operation of food banks across the nation. We also see it in times of distress and in times of crisis, such as during last year's horrific tsunami in Asia. We also witness it in non-emergency scenarios in the many institutions that serve us daily – schools, synagogues and community organizations.

Volunteers keep many of Canada's Jewish community organizations running efficiently. For example, volunteers have worked diligently in Canadian Jewish Congress, B'nai Brith, the Canada Israel Committee, Jewish family service programs, seniors drop-in centres and other places. And even though many of these organizations advocate for causes related to the organized Jewish community, they have also gone further to advocate for causes that benefit society as a whole.

As I have written earlier, for example, in the 1980s, the national law and social action committee of Canadian Jewish Congress took positions in connection with employment equity, immigration quotas, gun control and capital punishment. It also played a major and historically significant role in the debate leading up to the formulation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Clearly, the Jewish agenda is not a one-issue agenda, but rather one that looks further to benefit society as a whole.

Returning to the basic notion of volunteerism in general, we see a proliferation in Canada of public service advocacy groups, all of which work toward the improvement of the quality of life and the fabric of Canadians living throughout society.

To be sure, there are many reasons why people do not choose to volunteer in their communities. Perhaps it is because of the hectic pace of our everyday lives. Some might even ascribe it to apathy. But the rewards of volunteerism not only provide personal satisfaction, but also contribute to a qualitative difference in the fabric of Canadian life.

In defining some of the values that are truly Canadian in nature, volunteerism ranks as a hallmark of responsible citizenship.

The Kirshner File

Letter from Jerusalem

The wind-swept hill containing the tomb of the biblical prophet Samuel attracts a steady stream of pious Jewish visitors and offers unsurpassed vistas of Jerusalem, an astonishingly diverse city torn by political intrigue and ethnic strife.

Sheldon Kirshner in Israel

On a cool morning in the first week of March, the sky was crystal blue and the views were sharp and clear from Nebi Samuel, captured by Israel during the Six Day War and requisitioned by Gen. Edmund Allenby's conquering British army as a base during World War I.

Looking straight ahead, I saw the Jewish neighbourhoods of Ramot and French Hill, which were built on land claimed by Palestinians that Israel annexed as part of its master plan to enlarge Jerusalem's boundaries.

Further in the distance were Mount Scopus, an isolated Jewish outpost in Jordanian territory from 1948 to 1967; the Mount of Olives, a venerable Jewish cemetery partially desecrated by Arabs during that period, and Givat Ze'ev and Ma'aleh Adumim, massive settlement blocs that figure prominently in Israel's future calculations. The newly elected Israeli prime minister, Ehud Olmert, has declared that both Givat Ze'ev and Ma'aleh will eventually be absorbed into Israel.

In addition to these settlement blocs, Olmert wants to retain Ariel, which was established in 1978 and is approximately 40 kilometres from Tel Aviv, and Gush Etzion, which was destroyed by the Arab Legion during the War of Independence and rebuilt by the children of the original settlers.

Both Givat Ze'ev, population 11,000, and Ma'aleh Adumim, population 30,000, are remarkably close to Jerusalem, which has been repeatedly targeted by Palestinian suicide bombers since the outbreak of the second intifadah nearly six years ago.

In geographic terms, these are not remote settlements far from the public eye, but sedate bedroom suburbs minutes away by car from the centre of town that Israel intends to amalgamate into greater Jerusalem sooner or later.

Ma'aleh Adumim, which is only seven kilometres from Jerusalem and commands the heights between the Judean Desert and the Jordan Valley, is strategically one of Israel's most important settlements.

Founded on the seventh night of Chanukah in 1975 by 23 families, it is Israel's largest outpost in the West Bank, and has been continually expanding.

More than a decade ago, in an unmistakable signal of its importance, the then Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, announced his intention to close the gap between Ma'aleh Adumim and Jerusalem with 3,500 new homes.

But when the United States, Israel's chief ally, complained that its unilateralism was an obstacle to peace and an impediment to the territorial contiguity of a future Palestinian state, Israel quietly shelved the scheme.

Ariel Sharon, the former prime minister, revived the plan, spending tens of millions of dollars in 2003 to pave a road from Ma'aleh Adumim to Jerusalem.

Last November, following a statement by U.S. President George W. Bush suggesting that he accepted Israel's facts on the ground in the territories, Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz said that Ma'aleh Adumim would be connected to Jerusalem under the E-1 plan.

More recently, the Israeli media reported that construction had begun on a police headquarters in the E-1 zone.

The Palestinians, of course, have railed against the E-1 proposal, just as they were vehemently opposed to the Har Homa housing project in eastern Jerusalem.

Ostensibly designed to alleviate Jerusalem's housing shortage, with some 28,000 units for Jews and Arabs alike, Har Homa was a bold, provocative act by Israel to assert sovereignty over a hotly disputed area.

"We will build in Jerusalem, without conditions, without restrictions," said the then prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu.

His controversial 1997 decision prompted the Palestinian leadership to suspend peace talks with Israel and induced major countries such as Britain, France, Germany, Russia, China and Canada to criticize Israel. Nevertheless, Israel went ahead with the project, which necessitated the expropriation of land from both Jewish and Arab landowners.

Today, Har Homa is almost finished, its stark white Jerusalem stone buildings gleaming in the light and its dearth of greenery quite out of character with the surroundings.

The third and apparently final stage of construction is now well under way on a bare, dusty slope facing an Arab village and Israel's separation barrier, which is supposed to keep terrorists out and may yet define Israel's final border, as Olmert said in March.

An unfinished part of the separation barrier in eastern Jerusalem [RNS/Reuters]

But as Olmert knows, the barrier has caused an uproar. In an advisory judgment, the International Court of Justice in The Hague ruled that it is illegal and should be dismantled.

In Jerusalem's fast-growing metropolitan centre, the barrier takes the form of an imposingly high, ugly concrete wall that snakes through the city ominously and divides neighbourhoods.

This portion of the barrier is but a small section of the 740 kilometre long security fence, whose route along the old Green Line and through the West Bank is determined by topography, population density, threat assessments and political considerations.

Although the government set 2005 as the deadline for completing the barrier in Jerusalem, less than half of it has been finished. Appeals being considered by Israel's Supreme Court mainly account for the delays. In a few cases, the court has ruled that the route should be revised to accommodate the needs of Palestinians.

When the barrier in Jerusalem is completed, an estimated 55,000 Arabs from four neighbourhoods are expected to end up on the Palestinian side of the security fence, while 180,000 Palestinians will find themselves on Israel's side.

According to a report released last October by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, the barrier may well increase hostility among Palestinians cut off from Jerusalem, even if it succeeds in preventing the infiltration of suicide bombers, this city's bane. In the past decade, Jerusalem has been rocked by more such bombings than any other city in Israel.

That the route of the barrier in and around Jerusalem is intrusive and has caused considerable inconvenience and hardship to Palestinians is obvious to a visitor.

In New Givon, a settlement in the Givat Ze'ev bloc, a lone Arab house and its inhabitants are grotesquely enclosed by the fence, as if they were lepers.

Judging by graffiti on the wall in Abu Dis, an Arab town adjacent to Jerusalem once touted by Israeli politicians as a substitute capital of a Palestinian state, the barrier arouses immense indignation and anger.

"This wall will soon fall," blares one typical message, scrawled in thick black letters. "Norway supports Palestine," cries another.

Israel has not been deterred by such strident opposition.

The first 300 kilometres of the barrier were completed three years ago and are now operational. The second phase, consisting of 143 kilometres, is currently under construction. Work on an additional 58 kilometres is scheduled to start imminently.

For better or worse, these costly national construction projects – the barrier and Har Homa, among others – are changing the status quo, as well as the face of Jerusalem.

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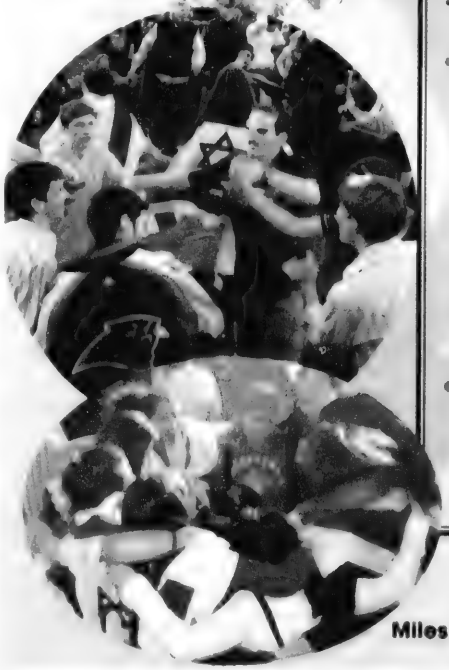

At these community events:

- **Yom Hazikaron**

  Join the Consulate General of Israel in a Yom Hazikaron Assembly to honour Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror
  Monday, May 1 @ 7:00 PM
  Beth David B'nai Israel Beth Am Congregation, 55 Yeomans Rd.

- **From Yom Hazikaron to Yom Ha'atzmaut**

  Commemorate and celebrate with the Mizrachi Organization of Canada as we move from remembrance to rejoicing
  Tuesday, May 2 @ 7:15 PM
  Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, 470 Glencairn Ave.

- **Israel's 58th Birthday Celebration**
  - **Tuesday, May 2 @ 9:30 PM** -Young Adults of Toronto (19 plus) Mega Bash 2006 @ Afterlife Nightclub
  - **Wednesday, May 3 @ 11:00 AM** - Cake, Dancing & Singing Bathurst JCC, 4588 Bathurst St.
  - **Wednesday, May 3 @ 11:30 AM** – Israeli-style lunch Miles Nadal JCC , 750 Spadina Ave.
  - **Wednesday, May 3 @ 6:30 PM** – Happy Birthday Israel behind the Bathurst JCC, 4588 Bathurst St.

- **UJA Federation Walk With Israel**

  Sunday, May 28 @ 9:30 AM
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  Visit www.ujawalkwithisrael.com

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Celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut

Wednesday May 3

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Yom Ha'atzmaut party co-sponsored by Bathurst Jewish Community Centre, Canada-Israel Committee, Miles Nadal Jewish Community Centre, Schwartz/Reisman Centre, UJA Federation Board of Jewish Education and UJA Federation Latner Centre for Jewish Knowledge & Heritage and Wolfond Centre for Jewish Campus Life

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Greater Toronto Area

Mosaic festival to celebrate Jewish diversity

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Lorelei (left) and Rosalind Silverman

Cultural groups from across the city are coming together to celebrate Jewish diversity at the Jewish Mosaic Festival, to be held June 11 at the Bathurst Jewish Community Centre.

The free daylong festival is hosted by BJCC, Jewish Immigrant Aid Services Toronto and the Bernard Betel Centre for Creative Living, and supported by Chartwell, United Way of Greater Toronto and UJA Federation.

It will feature dance, music, lectures, photo exhibitions, book presentations and a marketplace, as well as a kids' zone, kosher food and movies.

In the evening, there will be a screening of Simcha Jacobovici's movie *Quest for the Lost Tribes*. Tickets for that program are $10 and reservations are required.

Janet Klein Slavens, supervisor of Fifty-Five Plus, the department of adult services at the BJCC, said that originally, the festival was to be a joint seniors' program between BJCC and Bernard Betel.

"We quickly realized, though, that it was something the whole community could appreciate, and now it has grown and blossomed."

Currently, she says, about 20 countries are confirmed to participate in the festival including China, Jamaica, Turkey, Morocco, Argentina, Uruguay, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, Poland and Romania, and each community planned their own exhibit.

Rosalind Silverman, who moved to Canada from Romania nine years ago, is presenting her country's exhibit with her sister Lorelei. It will include a PowerPoint presentation about Romania along with a display of Romanian books and ritual artifacts.

"We want people to know that Romania had a vibrant Jewish community. I don't know how many know that the lyrics for *Hatikvah* were written there, and the Yiddish theatre, which is still active, was the first in the world."

Tony Alberga, a Jamaican Jew who has lived in Canada since 1976, is putting together a photographic exhibit that shows the Jewish presence in Jamaica over the last 350 years.

"Jews have been practising their religion, and been involved in island politics since 1665. My own family goes back 200 years," he says.

"The beauty of this festival is that it shows people that Jews have come here from every corner of the world."

Klein Slavens says that the three agencies involved have brought the festival to life, "but the volunteers from within the various communities have made it happen. To me, that is what community is all about – when everyone works together."

For information on the festival or to volunteer, call 416-636-1880, ext. 296.

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Move to day school came as 'a shock' at first

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Superficially, jewelry-making and education don't have a lot in common.

"They are our teachers..."

In fact, Isaac Hollander – a teacher at Yeshivat Or Chaim and its sister school, Ulpanat Orot, who is also a sessional lecturer at the University of Toronto – was inspired in part to take his first jewelry course because he saw how satisfying it was for a physics professor he knew to spend time absorbed in wood-turning, a hobby completely unrelated to his field.

Hollander took a night course in jewelry-making at a local high school a few years ago, after moving back to Toronto from Ann Arbor, Mich., where he completed work on his PhD in Jewish Social History. He received the degree from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2001.

His interest in jewelry led to increasingly advanced courses at George Brown College, and his hobby has since grown into a business sideline called Kito Creations.

But when Hollander talks about the wedding rings he creates, there is a marked similarity to his observations about his high school students.

Isaac Hollander

"The gold and silver are entwined [in a] seamless connection, but each element maintains its uniqueness," he says of the traditional Japanese technique, Mokume Gane, that he uses to fuse the two metals.

Similarly, he is conscious of the different backgrounds of the students he teaches, and tries to bring that out when it is relevant to his lessons – a likely possibility in his Grade 12 "History of the Modern Middle East" class, in which some students may have family roots in Middle Eastern countries. By highlighting those connections, "they can celebrate their background in this environment," he said.

"I like them to realize what their own traditions are," said Hollander, who also teaches Hebrew language and Canadian geography. He is the only teacher at the school to teach both Jewish and general studies.

Hollander's own background is somewhat eclectic. The 41-year-old author of *Jews and Muslims in Lower Yemen: A Study in Protection and Restraint, 1918-1949*, whose wife is of Yemeni background, was born to a British father and an Egyptian mother. "We are a family that meshes together both modernity and tradition, as well as the east and the west."

As a child attending Eitz Chaim Schools (he later attended Associated Hebrew Schools), he felt "exactly in the middle" between the mainstream Ashkenazi demographic and North African newcomers.

Before high school, Hollander spent most of his childhood in Toronto – with the exception of a year in London, England and another year in Florence, Italy, when his father Samuel, an economics professor now at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, was on sabbatical. He attended high school in Jerusalem.

A lesson from the teacher: *"One of the most valuable things I think kids can get at home is for the home to cultivate curiosity and wonder at whatever is around you."*

Hollander was finishing post-doctoral work when he was asked if he could fill in for a teacher on maternity leave at Netivot Hatorah Day School. Previously, he had never considered teaching outside of a university.

"It was a serious shock, like being hit by a tidal wave," he said of juggling seven Grade 6, 7 and 8 Hebrew and Jewish studies classes. "It took me a week or two to kind of surface."

Once he did, he said, it was "a lot of fun." He is now working on a Master's degree in education and administration at Yeshiva University.

At the end of his stint at Netivot, he was approached by Frank Samuels, principal of the B'nai Akiva schools where he is currently on staff, to teach geography and anthropology.

It was a good fit. "I've been able to bring my methods and the themes I care for to this school. I'm very fortunate that way," said Hollander. It was at his suggestion that the school began using a computer system called Geographic Information Systems in the geography course he teaches. Samuels says it is "incredibly powerful as a [learning] tool."

Hollander later began teaching Hebrew at the school, when a colleague went on maternity leave.

Although Hollander – despite his university teaching experience and academic expertise – had no degree in education initially, Samuels did not hesitate to hire him, confident that he was "a superb educator."

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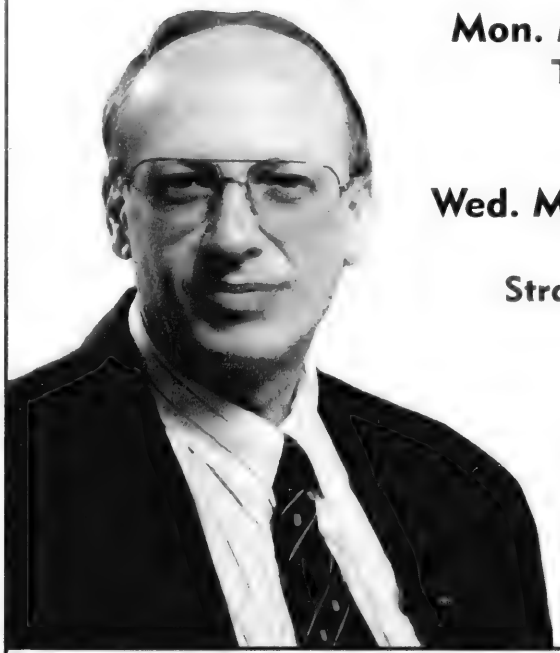

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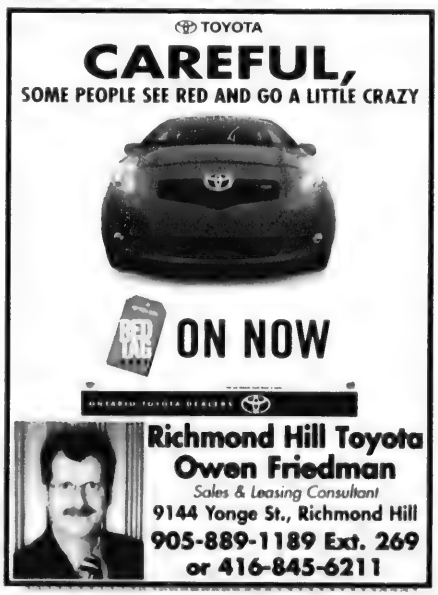

Jewish Life

Why we chose not to take part

By RABBI AARON FLANZRAICH

"'I have learned that the Holocaust was a unique and uniquely Jewish event, albeit with universal implications. Not all victims were Jews, but all Jews were victims."

–Elie Wiesel, April 19, 1985, on the occasion of his receiving the U.S. Congressional Medal of Honour.

Elie Wiesel's words hold particular meaning for me, in that all Jews, those now living and those yet to be born, are scarred by the horror of the Shoah. This is because we all understand that the Shoah as planned by the Nazis sought to annihilate the Jewish people from the face of the planet.

Guest Voice

Historian and author Rabbi Berel Wein writes of a massive warehouse that Adolf Hitler had filled with Judaica from all the shtetlach and cities that had been made *Judenrein*. Rabbi Wein writes that Hitler did this in order to one day have a museum to remind the world of what the Jewish people were. Yet, to accomplish this heinous and horrific plan, he would need to destroy every living Jew. Every Jew. Every man, woman and child alive.

And so, a proper memorial would embrace this simple, horrible truth. It would give proper significance to the threat that was over the heads of each Jew. For that reason, Yad Vashem and other Holocaust museums have special memorials to the children who perished, to the women who were abused and to the handicapped. They all need to be remembered.

For the past 10 years in Toronto, at the insistence of the former consul general of Israel, Jehudi Kinar, we have had a community-wide Yom Hashoah memorial service in Earl Bales Park. Prior to this, we had a roster of community memorials, each one frequently competing with another. The idea of having one large memorial was quickly supported by the Toronto Board of Rabbis, whose members are the spiritual leaders of many of Toronto's synagogues. It was believed that having the community draw together, and not apart, in these moments had great value and meaning. We still believe that.

However, this month, the Toronto Board of Rabbis withdrew its endorsement of the memorial and did not intend to participate. This was done with a heavy and sad heart.

This action was taken because we believe that the standards of this exceptional Jewish community are being threatened. Organizers of this year's program invited only the boys from a mixed children's choir, although this same choir had performed for the chief rabbi of Rome at the dinner celebrating the 40th anniversary of the *Nostra Aetate* in Toronto this past November. This year, the Toronto Board of Rabbis was also informed that women would be permitted to have only specific, limited roles in the community memorial.

Faced with this undermining of the most basic notions of what a Holocaust memorial should be, and ever-mindful of the fact that men, women and children perished in the Holocaust because they were Jews, we could not participate in a memorial that marginalized women or children in any way, shape or form.

The Toronto Board of Rabbis includes more than 45 rabbis from the Toronto area, rabbis from all streams of Judaism. The board is responsible for the accreditation of local rabbis and is the voice of mainstream religious Judaism in the city. The members of the Toronto Board of Rabbis lead our synagogues, educate in our schools, comfort the ill in our hospitals and guide our community in happy and challenging times. As Toronto's Jewish community continues to grow, the board is dedicated to ensuring that our Jewish values grow along with it.

It is our belief that we can find a way to gather as a community to commemorate and celebrate in a way that embraces unity without requiring uniformity. It is our belief that there should be no reason not to permit men, women and children to participate equally in a Holocaust memorial, if only because they were all equal victims of the Holocaust. It is our belief that such a memorial would be one that is not framed by the imposition of religious principles, but by recognition of what communal standards best reflect the diverse and rich fabric of our Jewish community.

This is the position of the Toronto Board of Rabbis, and it is also among our guiding values.

Rabbi Aaron Flanzraich is the vice-president of the Toronto Board of Rabbis. This statement is also endorsed by Rabbi Danny Gottlieb, president of the Toronto Board of Rabbis, and Rabbi Michael Stroh, executive director of the Toronto Board of Rabbis.

Our Internet seder

By ESTHER BUDD

As any woman who has ever prepared a seder can tell you, you have to be a caterer, shopper, event planner, furniture mover, dishwasher, choirmaster and photographer.

This year, we had to find a solution to a serious problem. Our son Nathan, who attends McGill University in Montreal, had an exam and couldn't join us for the second seder. Our daughter, Belinda Fireman, who lives in Calgary with her husband, J.P. Bechtold, and their children, Olivia, Zoe and Cyrus, couldn't join us because Cyrus is just two weeks old.

Guest Voice

We had to find a way to make Nathan, our daughter and her family a part of the seder. To solve the problem, I suggested we use our webcam to bring us all together. My husband, Stan, loved the idea, but because he isn't exactly computer savvy, and I am the resident computer guru (not hard when there are only two of you), I had to add organizing the technical aspect of the seder to my other duties.

After a full week of cooking, cleaning and preparing, it all seemed to come together. But the seder looked iffy an hour before the service was to begin.

We asked my two brothers and their families along with my eldest son, James Fireman, and his fiancé, Emily McKernan, to be at our house by 6 p.m.

One problem was that everyone was coming from Toronto. They all left on time, but as luck would have it, traffic that night was different from all other nights. My brothers and my son called to tell us they would be at least an hour late, which meant we wouldn't get started until close to 8 p.m.

The second problem was that an hour before the appointed time, I was unable to connect to both of my children on the Internet. I tried everything, but the signal was not good, and I became very frustrated. Add to that, the fact that every five minutes, one of the families travelling from Toronto called to say that they would be late, very late in fact. By then, I was wondering why on earth I had put so much effort into preparing the seder. Stan and I thought of sitting ourselves down at either end of the seder table and taking a picture to show the seder for which no one came.

Someone was looking out for us, though. At about 6:30 p.m., I decided to try to connect to my son and daughter through the Internet again and was surprised, and pleased, to discovered that I got through. We all chatted a bit, and I kept going over to the ovens and turning the heat down lower.

By 7:15, my brother Bob and his family arrived at the same time as my brother-in-law Howie, who was followed very quickly by James and Emily. My brother Tom called to say he had taken a wrong turn and was in Hamilton. We were so late already that it really didn't matter. By the time we all sat down to the table, it was well past 8 p.m. It was so wonderful, then, to see everyone together.

The women lit the candlesticks in front of them and said the brachah. Nathan in Montreal said the *Kiddush*, and we had three renditions of the four questions. My nephew Jacob, the youngest at the seder, asked the questions first, next came my granddaughters Olivia and Zoe in Calgary, followed by Emily, who has been teaching herself to read Hebrew. Awesome. That made the whole experience worthwhile.

We sang and enjoyed one another's company until quite late. It was a wonderful evening. Throughout the seder, the kids in Calgary and Nathan in Montreal were there watching and participating, or talking to us. I'm sure from their end it wasn't as much fun, but from our point of view it helped us feel that the whole family was together on one of our most important holidays.

When your family cannot be together, an Internet seder is definitely an option worth considering.

Esther Budd lives in Kitchener, Ont.

Jewish Life

Hirings and firings

Money Matters

Jay Kelman

Earlier this month, French authorities faced fierce opposition to a proposed law granting employers the right to dismiss young workers after two years on the job. Under current French law, it's next to impossible to fire workers, and employers are understandably hesitant to hire workers they can't fire, leading to extremely high unemployment rates, especially among youth. (This reality has hit the Muslim youth of France hard, leading to its own set of social issues.) The new law was meant to give youth the opportunity to find employment, but it created an extreme backlash.

The proposed law would find much favour in Jewish law. The Talmud was faced with a similar dilemma regarding loans. Jewish law states that the testimony of two witnesses is required in order to collect a debt, and these witnesses must be thoroughly cross-examined. In order to avoid the hardship of this demanding process, lenders simply stopped granting loans. It was just not worth their while.

The sages of the Talmud, realizing the social harm that was being caused, relaxed the requirements necessary to collect outstanding loans. In order "not to close the door on borrowers," the sages no longer required detailed cross-examination (*drisha v'chakira*) of witnesses and also allowed non-licensed (i.e., those without proper smichah) people to serve as judges. While there was some potential risk of unwarranted collection, the overall benefit to society was undeniable, opening up the way for economic opportunities for the needy.

A similar problem prompted the great talmudic sage Hillel to introduce the *pruzbul*, a legal mechanism that allows lenders to collect loans that were left outstanding during the shmittah (sabbatical) year. As part of the laws of the shmittah year, all outstanding loans are cancelled. The Torah warns against the "evil" of denying loans prior to the beginning of a sabbatical year out of fear the borrower will purposely not pay it back before the end of the year, rendering the loan uncollectible. Despite the warning, human nature being what it is, many people did avoid granting loans, and Hillel enacted the *pruzbul* not only to protect lenders, but to ensure that funds would be available for borrowers.

Similarly, the *heter iska*, developed during the Middle Ages, allowed Jews to charge "interest" on "loans" to fellow Jews, ultimately benefiting society as a whole. In matters of civil law, it's the right and duty of our sages to examine the overall impact of current law and to make adjustments where necessary. This is what the Talmud refers to as tikkun olam, repairing the world. It appears quite obvious, to me at least, that in the case of the French legislation, while some youth may have been fired from jobs they received, many more, including those to be dismissed in the future, would have attained jobs they otherwise would not have had. And that is a law worth having.

Most likely, Jewish law sees no need for such a law in the first place. Judaism does not grant automatic tenure. According to most authorities, an employer has no obligation to renew an employee's contract after its termination date. Terms of the contract indicate that the job is of a temporary nature. Even Rabbi Moshe Feinstein – who argued that absent incompetence, a worker retains a right to his or her job when a contract expires – agreed that by specifically stating in a contract that a job is of a temporary nature, an employer can avoid the granting of "tenure." And all agree that an employer may lay off workers in cases of economic distress.

The goal of Jewish employment law is finding the proper balance between the rights of employers and employees.

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Remembering Israel's fallen

By MARK MIETKIEWICZ

At 11 o'clock on the morning of May 2, Israel will come to a standstill.

On that day, sirens will blare and Israelis and Jews around the world - will pause to remember the thousands of soldiers who paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Today, a look at Yom Hazikaron, Remembrance Day for the fallen of Israel's wars.

Start by looking at their faces. Israel's Ministry of Defence has created a moving site to remember the fallen. Even if you cannot read Hebrew, it is heartbreaking to flip through the yizkor pages and look at photographs of the young men and women who gave their lives for the country. And if you can read Hebrew, pause to read a few biographies to learn about the lives cut short. **[http://www.izkor.gov.il/izkor40.htm]** (Click on the alphabetical links at the centre of the screen to go to the biographies.)

More than 20,000 soldiers have fallen since Israel's War of Independence. The Orthodox Union site traces the number of casualties and summarizes the major battles from pre-State battles through the next 50 years. **[http://tinyurl.com/kuox2]** The most casual tourist to Israel will no doubt have noticed the many striking monuments that dot the country. You can look at photos of 29 of those memorials at the Yad Labanim website **[http://tinyurl.com/fdt3w]**

As those monuments become the focus of services on Yom Hazikaron, *Yizkor* will be chanted, *Kaddish* will be uttered and poetry will be recited. A Hebrew poetry page has collected the works of some of the country's premier poets including Natan Alterman, Naomi Shemer and Chana Senesh. It includes King David's lament from the Book of Samuel II upon hearing of the deaths of Jonathan and Saul, "How the mighty have fallen." **[http://www.izkor.gov.il/izkor30a.htm]** You can read selected poems in English at the American Zionist Movement page. **[http://www.azm.org/yh_program.shtml]**

"The sword is worse than death, famine is harder than the sword, captivity is worst of all..." (Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Bava Batra 8b) – from the homepage of The International Coalition for Missing Israeli Soldiers

Ron Arad is Israel's best-known missing soldier. Unfortunately, he is not alone. This site also tells the stories of Zvi Feldman, Zachary Baumel and Yehuda Katz. According to the site, in June 1982, Feldman, Baumel and Katz were captured at the battle of Sultan Yakoub, Lebanon. There have been many conflicting reports regarding their whereabouts and condition, but they remain unaccounted for. The coalition continues to work for their release. **[http://www.mia.org.il/]**

For children living outside Israel, it can be difficult to understand the importance of Yom Hazikaron. Several sites provide lesson plans, activities, readings and suggestions such as twinning programs with Israeli schools in order to make the day relevant. **[http://tinyurl.com/hg6yk]** and **[http://tinyurl.com/mx4b7]**

It is almost impossible to understand the grief of a small country that has given up 20,000 of its young. That's why an article about the loss of one soldier has such an impact. In His Name was Nachshon Wachsman, Esther Wachsman tells about how her son was kidnapped and held ransom by the Hamas in October 1994. The IDF launched a military rescue that failed and Nachshon and the commander of the rescue mission were both killed. **[http://tinyurl.com/h72tl]**

"The entire nation mourned with us," Esther Wachsman writes. "Thousands came to comfort us, though no one can comfort a bereaved parent... Food and drink were delivered non-stop to our home; bus and taxi drivers who brought people from all over the country who wished to express their condolences left their vehicles and joined their passengers in our home. That unity, solidarity, caring, compassion and love with which we were showered gave us strength and filled our hearts with love for our people. After the shivah, we all returned to our routines... for that is what the Jewish people have always done – rebuilt after destruction, began new lives from the ashes and blood of the old."

Mark Mietkiewicz is a Toronto-based Internet producer who writes, lectures and teaches about the Jewish Internet. He can be reached at highway@rogers.com

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There's good reason to fear Iran's president

Iran's recent announcement that it had enriched a small quantity of uranium received extensive media coverage. While the uranium was reportedly only enriched to 3.5 per cent purity, and weapons-grade uranium requires 90 per cent purity, Western analysts estimate that it's only a matter of two to three years before Iran reaches the needed threshold.

According to Reports

By PAUL MICHAELS

Israel has warned that it won't stand by while its sworn enemy accelerates its nuclear program in defiance of the international community. Iran's nuclear ambitions are also opposed by the United States and some European countries, including Britain, France and Germany.

The *National Post* news brief "Israel will be annihilated by 'one storm,' Iranian president warns" (April 15) reported: "President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran appeared to threaten Israel with a nuclear attack yesterday when he described it as a 'rotten, dried tree' that would be annihilated by 'one storm.'" The story said Ahmadinejad's comments were "his most vitriolic and anti-Semitic to date."

Some analysts downplay reports of Iran's determination to develop nuclear weapons. For example, in an interview on *Newshour* (PBS, April 14), Prof. William Beeman of Brown University assured host Margaret Warner that even if Iran were to develop such weapons, "its primary purpose would be defensive, as Iran has continually asserted in its presentation of its conventional weapons program."

When Warner asked Beeman specifically whether Ahmadinaejad's repeated threats to "wipe Israel off the face of the Earth" and "annihilate" it would not cause Israel great concern should Iran acquire nuclear weapons, Beeman dismissed Ahmadinejad's extreme anti-Israel statements as a defensive reaction "to the attacks and extreme statements that have been made against Iran by the United States."

Beeman should read "Ahmadinejad's Demons" by Matthias Küntzel (*New Republic*, April 24). A German political scientist and author of *Jihad and Jew-Hatred*, Küntzel makes the case for taking Ahmadinejad among other Iranian leaders at his word.

Küntzel points out that during the Iran-Iraq war of the 1980s, Ahmadinejad was an instructor in the Basiji, a "volunteer militia" that used Iranian teenagers and children, some as young as 12, to clear minefields or sacrifice themselves in human waves against heavily armed Iraqi soldiers. Over the years, they were killed in the tens of thousands and lauded as "martyrs."

Today, the Basiji legacy "is a source not of national shame, but of growing pride" and members have achieved political power. Explains Küntzel: "Since the end of hostilities against Iraq in 1988, the Basiji have grown both in numbers and influence. They have been deployed, above all, as a vice squad to enforce religious law in Iran, and their elite 'special units' have been used as shock troops against anti-government forces…

"And, last year, they formed the potent core of the political base that propelled Mahmoud Ahmadinejad… to the presidency."

Since Ahmadinejad became president, Küntzel writes "the influence of the Basiji has grown. In November, the new Iranian president opened the annual 'Basiji Week,' which commemorates the martyrs of the Iran-Iraq War. According to a report in *Kayan*, a [government] publication… some nine million Basiji – 12 per cent of the Iranian population – turned out to demonstrate in favour of Ahmadinejad's anti-liberal platform. The article claimed that the demonstrators 'form[ed] a human chain some 8,700 kilometers long… In Tehran alone, some 1,250,000 people turned out.' Barely noticed by the Western media, this mobilization attests to Ahmadinejad's determination to impose his 'second revolution' and to extinguish the few sparks of freedom in Iran."

Küntzel adds: "The Basiji's cult of self-destruction would be chilling in any country. In the context of the Iranian nuclear program, however, its obsession with martyrdom amounts to a lit fuse."

In Ahmadinejad's fanatical world-view, a nuclear conflagration, a form of Armageddon, might be just what is required to hasten his vision of an ideal afterlife. If he willingly sacrificed so many of Iran's own youth during the Iran-Iraq war, it's not hard to imagine what he has in store for Israelis

The article's chilling conclusion: "The history of the Basiji shows that we must expect monstrosities from the current Iranian regime."

Paul Michaels is communications director for the Canada-Israel Committee.

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Food, Scrumptious Food

Salad dressing recipe — pass it on!

BY SUE EPSTEIN
Special to The CJN

I am often asked, "Is this an original recipe?" But very few recipes are totally original. Most are variations on a theme, and usually bear the name of the person who gave it to you.

I had dinner one night with my friends the Shochats not too long ago, and Rhoda Shochat served the most wonderful salad. I obtained the recipe from her and have been making it non-stop ever since. I can't get enough of it… and neither can my guests. I call it Rhoda's Salad Dressing.

I brought this salad to the cast party of a local production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* and no fewer than six people asked me for the recipe. One woman was standing near the buffet table when I came to pick up the empty bowl after the party. She didn't know who had made it and decided to wait to see who came for the bowl to ask for the recipe.

I called Shochat to ask her if she minded if I used the recipe in my column. Her response was, "Only if you give credit to Estelle, the person who gave it to me."

So, here's Sue's/Rhoda's/Estelle's salad dressing… And I'm sure that Estelle got it from someone else! But by whatever name you call it, it's yummy!

2½ tbsp. lemon juice
1½ tbsp. vinegar
1 tsp. garlic salt or regular salt
½ cup sugar
½ cup oil
1 bunch dill, finely chopped
6 cloves or more garlic, sliced
¼ cup coarsely chopped almonds
1 head lettuce
½ cup dried cranberries, optional

In food processor, or with hand blender, process first four ingredients. Slowly add oil until well blended. Add chopped dill and blend well.

In a small amount of oil, fry garlic and almonds until lightly browned. Drain and set aside. When ready to serve, toss all ingredients together.

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Family Moments

only from The Canadian Jewish news

Mazel Tov to…

Happy third birthday to Jacob and happy first birthday to brother Joshua and cousin Ethan. Love from Papa Albert & Gigi Honey Ohana.

Mazel tov to Efran & Sandra Kazman on your wedding, which took place Feb. 26 at Beth Emeth Bais Yehuda Synagogue.

Dear Zaidy and Saba, mazel tov on your birthdays! Love, Yitzy and Ezzie.

Mazel tov Blake Ryan Greenwald on your bar mitzvah. Love always, Mom, Dad, Corbin and Holli, and grandparents Ray & Ethel Pasternak and Lena Greenwald.

Allen & Maxine Ritche, Arnie & Sheila Isaacman are excited to announce the engagement of Lisa & Eric. Thrilled grandparents are Jack & Helen Ritche.

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS!!

Label the back of all photos and keep wording to 25 words or less. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope for return. Mail to: The CJN, Family Moments, 1500 Don Mills Rd., Suite 205, North York, ON. M3B 3K4.

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What's New

By REBECCA NADLER

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What's New deadlines: Monday, May 1 is the deadline for the May 11 issue and Monday, May 8 is the deadline for the May 18 issue. I receive calls on deadline days only. Phone 416-391-1836, fax 416-391-0829 or e-mail rnadler@cjnews.com.

Thursday, April 27

BOUTIQUE NIGHT

Temple Sinai Nursery School presents its fourth annual Boutique Night to raise funds for the school. Purchase products and services not available in stores, including children's clothing, giftware, jewelry and home décor. 6:30-10 p.m. Admission free. 416-487-3281

BEING A MORAL BUSYBODY

UJA Federation Women's Campaign and Advocacy presents a "Being a Moral Busybody: How to Do the Right Thing," a panel discussion on matters related to children's safety and well being moderated by journalist **Ellie Tesher** with **Roz Prober, Constable Andrew Gibson, Dr. Bev Kupfert** and **Howard Hurwitz**. 7 p.m. at the Sala Caboto Banquet Hall, 42 Playfair Ave. $15, reservations recommended, call 416-847-1007 or email lsuydam@ujafed.org.

LIOR SUCHARD

Join ORT Toronto for **Lior Suchard**'s premier 'magic' performance in Canada. 7 p.m. at The City Playhouse Theatre, 1000 Westminster Dr. $36/$54. 416-787-0339 or www.liormagic.com

50 YEARS OF STRUGGLE

Beth David B'nai Israel Congregation continues the film series *Tekuma* with *From The Orange to The Chip: Israel's Economic Revolution*, with **Dr. David Goldberg**, of the Canada Israel Committee. 7:30 p.m. 416-633-3988.

UNDERSTANDING ISLAM

Join Kollel for "Understanding Islam for Jews," with **Prof. Isaac Hollander**, a course that investigates the relationship of Islam and the Qu'ran to Jews today, through June 8, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Register at 416-485-7007, ext. 0.

HELP PEOPLE OF DARFUR

Find out how you can help the people of Darfur at an evening of speakers who have personally visited the refugee camps, and witnessed the atrocities that continue to threaten the lives of people in Sudan today. 7:30 p.m. at Temple Emanu-El. 416-449-3880

Saturday, April 29

BETH TIKVAH WEEKEND

Dr. Ronald Zweig will speak on "Knowing and Not Knowing: Choosing to Ignore Evil" during Shabbat services at Beth Tikvah Synagogue. 416-221-3433

Sunday, April 30

MENDELSSOHN & DVORAK

The New Arts Trio consisting of **Jacques Israelievitch** on violin, **Arie Lipsky** on cello and **Rebecca Penneys** on piano will perform works by Mendelssohn and Dvorak at Temple Sinai Congregation. 4 p.m. $10, non-members $15. 416-487-4161

63RD COMMEMORATION

The Winchevsky Centre commemorates the 63rd anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising at 7:30 p.m. 416-789-5502

SINGLES EVENING

Shaar Shalom Singles 35+ host "An Evening of Song." Enjoy Yiddish and English songs with **Gloria Valentine**. 7:30 p.m. $15. 416-224-9494

A PUBLIC TRIAL

Join Shaarei Shomayim Congregation for "An Evening of Distinction." Come act as members of the court, hear the pleadings and make a decision when a religious IDF officer is expelled from his shul because of his active participation in the disengagement. He sues the shul in a rabbinical court, claiming he fulfilled orders and did nothing wrong, with **Dr. Arie Reich** and **Brian Morris**, moderated by **Rabbi Moshe Shulman**. 8 p.m.

Continued on page 21

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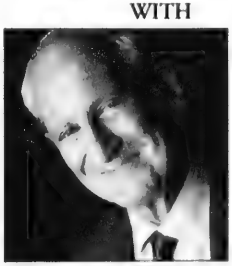

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Continued from page 20

Monday, May 1

BOOK AND FILM CLUB

Beth Tzedec Library's Contemporary Jewish Book and Film Club presents **Heather Kassel** discussing the film *Walk on Water*. 1:30 p.m. $14. Dessert served. 416-781-3511 or library@beth-tzedec.org

OSTEOPOROSIS PROGRAM

Baycrest Centre offers "POWER: Promoting Osteoporosis Wellness Through Exercise and Resources." A 7-week education and exercise program for seniors begins today at 55 Ameer. $70. For info call **Maureen Smith**, 416-785-2500, ext. 2588.

ISRAEL CULINARY TOUR

Come and hear about Kolel's Israel Culinary Tour, October 9-18, 2006 co-led by **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** and **Bonnie Stern** at an info night at Bonnie Stern School of Cooking, 6 Erskine Ave. 7:30 p.m. 416-485-7007, ext .231

ISRAEL IN 2006

Beth Tikvah Synagogue presents the **Frances Bitterman** Memorial Lecture "The State of the State of Israel 2006," with **Dr. Arnold Ages**. 8 p.m. 416-221-3433

Tuesday, May 2

LUNCH AND LEARN,

Leo Adler will discuss "The Resurgence of Anti-Semitism in Europe With Implications for Canada" at Beth Tikvah's Lunch and Learn. 12:15 p.m. By pre-paid reservation only. $10. 416-221-343 ext. 352

RAISING THE BAR

Join Kollel for "Raising the Bar: Beyond the Party" with **Rabbi Elyse Goldstein** and **Karen Haber**, an exploration of the history and significance of bar and bat mitzvah. Learn strategies for making both the time prior to and the day of this milestone a strong and positive Jewish experience. 7:30-9:30 p.m. $10. 416-485-7007, ext. 0

ISRAEL'S WORST FEAR

Beth Tikvah Synagogue presents **Dr. Emmanuel Adler** on "Israel's Worst Fear, The Suicide Bomber or The Iranian Nuclear Bomb: Israel's Security in the 21st Century. 8 p.m. 416-221-3433

Wednesday, May 3

YOM HA'ATZMAUT FETE

Join thousands of people from the GTA in the "backyard" of the Lipa Green Building as the community celebrates Israel's 58th birthday. Enjoy live music, food and games. Festivities begin at 6 p.m. 4600 Bathurst St.

MUSICAL EVENING

Beth Sholom Synagogue presents "A Night at the Opera/A Day in Shul," an evening of opera, Yiddish, synagogue and contemporary Jewish music featuring siblings, **Cantors Amy Goldstein**, and **Martin Goldstein**, followed by a dessert reception. 8 p.m. $18. 416-783-6103

Other news

MUSSAR AND GROWTH

Join Mekorot for a 4-week course with **Rabbi Michael Skobac** on "The Mussar Path to Personal Growth." Thursdays, beginning May 4, 9:30-10:30 a.m. 3768 Bathurst St. # 308. To register 416-877-2050 or www.mekorot.ca.

WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN...

Rabbi Yossi Jacobson will speak on "When Bad Things Happen To Good People," at the **Rabbi Levi Bialo** memorial and lecture. 8 p.m. at Chabad Lubavitch of Markham. $10. 905-886-0420

SHABBAT CELEBRATION

United Synagogue Day School invites parents, toddlers, and preschoolers for a Shabbat program, "Song, Circle and Celebration." Friday, May 5, 9:30-10:30 a.m. at 3080 Bayview Ave. Open to all. RSVP 416.224.8737, ext. 137.

WEEKEND WITH VISOTZKY

Beth Tzedec Congregation presents "Finding Ourselves in the Bible," a weekend with **Dr. Burton Visotzky**, professor of midrash and interreligious studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He will speak on Friday, May 5, at Shabbat dessert on "The Dysfunctional Biblical Family as Moral Exemplar" at 8:30 p.m. During Shacharit services on May 6 on "Abraham and the Paradoxes of Leadership," at a study luncheon on "Jacob Does Lunch, Deception as a Family Strategy," and at 7:30 p.m. at seudah shlishit on "The Sins of Sodom are not What You Think." Reserve for meals by Tuesday, May 2 at info@beth-tzedec.org or call 416-781-3511.

RELATIONSHIPS WEEKEND

Shaarei Shomayim Congregation presents "Relationships in Jewish Life," a weekend with **Rabbi Reuven Bulka** May 5-7. He will speak during services Friday night and Saturday, at a luncheon on Shabbat on "The Protocols of Shiva and Consolation. When You Don't Know What to Say." On Sunday he will participate in a day of study that will include a session with **Sara Chana Radcliffe**, on "Raising Your Children Without Raising Your Voice," a panel discussion on "Raising Children in a Secular World," a luncheon where Rabbi Bulka will speak on "Does marriage Have to be Exciting?" Other sessions on domestic violence in the Jewish community, long-term care for the elderly and dating in the Jewish community.Other participants include **Dr. Robbie Schwartz, Rabbi Ronald Weiss, Dr. Janice Halpern** and **Rabbi Joshua Joseph**. To register for Saturday lunch or Sunday program call 416-789-3213 or visit www.shomayim.org.

HEBREW CLASSES

Keren Hatarbut Institute offers Hebrew language classes for adults, teenagers and preteens at beginner, intermediate and advanced levels. Classes are taught on Wednesdays and Thursdays beginning the week of May 17. 788 Marlee Ave. For registration call **Joseph Klinger** at 416-787-0197.

VENDORS WANTED

Sunday, June 4 is Israel Day Festival 2006. Vendors interested in participating contact **Barbara Peters** at 416-633-3988 or e-mail czf@jazo.org.il.

SHALOM TORONTO

New to Toronto? Make your move to a new community a little easier. Shalom Toronto welcomes new residents to our Jewish community with a warm greeting and a gift basket. If you are new to the GTA or know someone who is call Jewish Information Service at 416-635-5600 or email jinfo@ujafed.org.

JF&CS GROUPS

Jewish Family & Child Service. 4600 Bathurst St. Information/registration 416-638-7800, ext. 215 or register online at www.jfandcs.com.

Teens and Depression, a lecture by **Dr. Amy Cheung** on how to recognize teen depression. Thurs. May 4, 7-9 p.m. at 4600 Bathurst St. Registration required. Call **Shawna**, ext. 215.

Parenting Children with Challenging Behaviour, a 6-week group for parents with children who frequently demonstrate difficult behaviours such as temper tantrums, aggression, not following your rules, trouble dealing with their emotions etc. Wednesdays, beginning May 3, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Lipa Green. Call **Diane** ext. 246.

FOR SENIORS

Beth Emeth Chai Shalom hosts a "Musical Interlude with The Jack Steinberg Trio," Thurs. Apr. 27, 7:30 p.m. $5, non members $7. For information call **Marlene**, 416-450-7199. Tickets available at synagogue office.

The Earl Bales Seniors In The Club House In The Park. Casino Niagara, Wednesday, May 24. Call Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 416-395-7881

LZA Seniors Cultural Club meets every Tuesday at 10 a.m. at the Borochov Centre, 272 Codsell Ave. 416-630-9444

Aluma Canadian Israeli Club meets 7 p.m. Thursdays at 15 Hove St. April 27, bingo. Call **Menachem Wallach** 905-731-7748.

BATHURST JCC

Bathurst Jewish Community Centre and Koffler Centre of the Arts, 4588 Bathurst St., 416-636-1880 or www.bjcc.ca.

Central registration is now starting for all fitness and recreation programs. Call ext. 235 or register at BJCC.

BJCC seniors online computer Lab workshop and mini-course event, "Word Processing: Using Microsoft Word," Friday, May 5 and 12, 9:30-11:30 a.m. Register at ext. 235.

Luncheon with entertainer **Rhonda Silver**, Tuesday May 9, tickets on sale at the reception desk or call ext. 235.

Shalom Singers performing choir looking for new members. Rehearsals every Thursday, 10-11:30 a.m.

"Boogie Babies and Jammin' Tots" Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m. in the Jewish Discovery Museum. Drop-in fee $10 for music class and free play in the Jewish Discovery Museum.

Blue Republic: Nostalgia for the Present at The Koffler Gallery through April 30.

Casino Niagara, Wednesday, May 17, tickets on sale at the reception desk or call ext. 235.

The Koffler Centre of the Arts Gala presents Stars of the 21st Century on May 7 at the Toronto Centre for the Arts. For tickets call ext. 271.

Bathurst JCC has a block of tickets to *Golda's Balcony* with **Valerie Harper**, Thursday, May 25 at 8 p.m. at the Elgin Theatre. Proceeds from this evening will help send disadvantaged children to Centre Camp at the Bathurst JCC. For tickets call ext. 271.

Try-outs for the Toronto Maccabi Team, boy's basketball, baseball and swimming and girl's soccer and swimming. Contact **Grant Smith**, ext. 257

Help Support Maccabi Athletes, at the JCC Maccabi Spin-a-thon, Sunday, May 14, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Call **Grant** ext. 257

SINGLES EVENTS CAN BE FOUND ON PAGE 23

OBITUARIES
and Related Notices

The family of the late
MIRIAM AMMAR ז"ל
would like to thank family and friends both here and in Israel for the tremendous outpouring of love and support during this difficult journey. By honouring her memory, you have warmed our hearts.
Forever loved and sadly missed by
Sam & Norma Orlan, the Ammar, Ross and Shelson Families

BENJAMIN'S PARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Beverley Tepperman	Apr 9/06	9 Nomad Cres
Harry Cooper	Apr 8/06	10 Torresdale Ave
Lionel Balinsky	Apr 10/06	296 Torresdale Ave
Jamie Flanz	Apr 8/06	45 Hattie Crt
James Lewis	Apr 10/06	131 Bloor St W
Virginia Zelinger	Apr 11/06	1101 Steeles Ave W
Gord Epstein	Apr 12/06	55 Skymark Dr
Ethel Raicus	Apr 11/06	55 Ameer Ave
Marty Stein	Apr 14/06	166 Rust Crestway
Lilyan Fielder	Apr 15/06	5 Fisherville Rd
Martin Klein	Apr 11/06	131 Torresdale Ave
Joel Harris	Apr 15/06	3560 Bathurst St

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The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
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will take place
Sunday, Apr. 30th, 11:00 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Kielcer Society Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
SHIRLEY KIRSHENBLATT ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, Apr. 30th, 11:00 a.m.
Mount Sinai Memorial Park
Farband Section
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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The unveiling of a monument to the memory of the late
SIMON KOROLNEK ז"ל
will take place
Sunday, May 7th, 11:00 a.m.
Bathurst Lawn Memorial Park
Stashover Society Section #48
Relatives and friends are invited to attend

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To place an unveiling notice, please call at least 15 DAYS prior to the date of the unveiling

For all other notices, please call at least 10 DAYS prior to the issue date

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Obituary

Raicus was principal at Holy Blossom

By FRANCES KRAFT
Staff Reporter

Ethel Raicus believed that the senior years could be the richest period of a person's life. The translator, award-winning artist and former principal of Holy Blossom Temple's Hebrew school, who died April 11 of a heart attack at age 86, lived that philosophy.

In her 70s, she studied Yiddish at Oxford University, later serving as a translator and editor of *Found Treasures: Stories by Yiddish Women Writers*.

Ethel Raicus [Irene Borins Ash photo]

"Her place was filled with books, her [modern, abstract] artwork, and musical instruments," said social worker and photographer Irene Borins Ash, who profiled Raicus in her book *Treasured Legacies*, which features stories about positive aging, even in the face of difficulties.

Raicus had "a tremendous range of passions," said Margie Wolfe, publisher and president of Second Story Press, which published both of the aforementioned books.

Wolfe, a friend for the past 16 or 17 years after meeting Raicus in a Yiddish study group, said the older woman "was frail in her body, but her mind was sharp as a tack.

"She loved learning and she loved talking to younger people about what they were learning and about what they were interested in. She was an extraordinary personality."

Raicus also enjoyed going to new places. "We were always trying new restaurants," said Wolfe. "She went to theatre and movies, and had a tremendous passion for opera."

In fact, in recent years Raicus travelled to Vienna and New York to attend performances by opera singer Adrianne Pieczonka, a relative on her mother's side.

Raicus was born in Toronto, and raised by her mother Slaava, a Russian immigrant who had a grocery store on Queen Street, and who worked as a cook in the 1930s and late 1920s at a Jewish summer camp for mothers and children. Her parents separated when she was six.

As a child, she took art lessons at what was then the Art Gallery of Toronto (now the Art Gallery of Ontario) from renowned painters Doris McCarthy and Arthur Lismer, Wolfe said.

Raicus graduated high school from Central Technical School, said her cousin Elizabeth Cooper. She was the first woman to graduate as an industrial designer from the Ontario College of Art, and one of the first women to work as a graphic artist in advertising.

In the late 1940s, she moved to Israel, where she worked on a kibbutz, teaching European immigrant children. She returned to Toronto only because she had contracted polio and was advised she would receive better care here, said Wolfe.

Raicus, an only child who never married and who never had children of her own, was "a very devoted daughter and niece," said Cooper. She was also "a very devoted and conscientious teacher and principal," said Rabbi Michael Stroh, who spent five years at Holy Blossom from 1966 to 1971 during part of Raicus' 35-year tenure. "She had high standards and expected the kids to live up to them. And they did."

She also had a wide circle of friends and admirers, evidenced by the turnout at her funeral, which necessitated the use of the Holy Blossom sanctuary rather than a smaller room.

On Campus

Moderates win Concordia undergrad elections

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — In a record turnout of 30 per cent, Concordia University undergraduates voted for a moderate executive of the Concordia Student Union (CSU).

The slate, called Experience and headed by Kahleed Juma, received 3,725 votes compared to runner-up Conscious, which got 3,188 votes. A total of 7,887 ballots were cast over three days for five slates. The university has 26,136 undergraduates.

Experience will take office for one year at the end of this term.

Experience was all but officially endorsed by the Hillel Jewish student association, which regards it as similar to the Evolution group that has been in office for the past three years. Hillel has credited Evolution with helping to restore harmony on campus after the turbulent 2002-2003 school year that began with a violent protest against a speaking engagement on campus by former Israeli Benjamin Netanyahu.

Hillel conducted an active campaign to get the vote out this year.

The CSU had been dominated for a few years by highly politicized left-wing factions, which critics considered anarchist, corrupt and anti-Israel.

"I couldn't ask for a better result. It's a big mandate," said Steven Rosenshein, the CSU's current vice-president of communications and a former Hillel vice-president. He believes the turnout may be a record for a Canadian university, even those that have online voting. Voting at Concordia is by traditional paper ballot.

Rosenshein was defeated in his bid to be one of two student representatives on the university's board of governors, but he was successful in getting a seat on the senate.

Rosenshein had charged that Conscious was a moderate front for a number of radicals from the past seeking to regain their influence.

The election, however, was not without controversy.

Conscious leader Svetla Turnin protested the late appearance on the ballot of a slate with a very similar name to her group.

Conscious Concordia, headed by David Zand, who has been active with Hillel, was removed from the ballot after the first day of voting. The slate reappeared for about 90 minutes the following day, apparently after a threat of legal action by Conscious Concordia, but was then taken off again.

The CSU's judicial board ruled that chief electoral officer Danniella Brazel did have the power to strike the slate from the ballot because of the potential for confusion among voters.

B'nai Brith drops rights complaint

B'nai Brith Canada has withdrawn a human rights complaint against Concordia University that said the school discriminated against Jewish students and the community in general.

In a complaint lodged with the Quebec Human Rights Commission 1½ years ago, B'nai Brith alleged Concordia was suppressing "the Jewish voice" on campus by balking at inviting former Israeli prime minister Ehud Barak because of security concerns.

Gerry Weinstein, B'nai Brith's national president, and Allan Adel, national chair of the organization's League for Human Rights, said in a joint statement that the complaint has been dropped "in consideration of the positive steps being taken by Concordia University's new administration... We have come to the conclusion that our concerns are being met."

B'nai Brith has been in discussions with Concordia president Claude Lajeunesse, who succeeded Frederick Lowy in August 2005.

In its complaint, B'nai Brith cited violations by Concordia of the Quebec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, which protects freedom of expression and assembly, and also protects access to public places and against harassment. The complaint also spoke of a "poisoned atmosphere" for Jewish students since 2001, "when the university allowed the dissemination of a student handbook that contained anti-Semitic material, glorified violence and advocated civil disobedience" by the Concordia Student Union.

B'nai Brith alleged this permission led to the violent demonstration the following year against another former Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, who was prevented by protesters from speaking on campus. After that, Jewish students were "subjected to harassment, intimidation and even assault, which the university has refused or neglected to prevent," B'nai Brith stated in its complaint to the commission.

B'nai Brith now sees a less menacing atmosphere at Concordia.

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Toronto Jewish Film Festival

Opening Night Film
Saturday, May 6

BLOOR CINEMA

9:30 PM SARAH SILVERMAN: JESUS IS MAGIC
No subject is taboo in this gutsy one-woman comedy show. Not for the faint of heart. With IRENE WILLIAMS: QUEEN OF LINCOLN ROAD

Closing Night Film
Sunday, May 14

BLOOR CINEMA

9:30 PM AS WE ENTER IN THE BEGINNING: DANIEL BARENBOIM & THE WEST-EASTERN DIVAN ORCHESTRA
An emotionally powerful documentary about "The Peace Orchestra" as it travels across political boundaries in the name of music

Saturday, May 6

11:45 PM IMMACULATE FUNK ♪
Profiles legendary music producer Jerry Wexler and his collaboration with Ray Charles, Etta James, Artetha Franklin and others from his early days at Billboard Magazine.

9:30 PM
Three men fall in love with the same woman with one Hungarian "suicide hymnsong" linking all of them. Fifth year at the TJFF!

Sunday, May 7

10:30 AM IN THE LAND OF THE JEWS
A loving documentary on legendary Yiddish comedy duo Dzigan and Shumacher. With JOLLY PAUPERS

1:00 PM THE CHILDREN'S HOUSE
A nostalgic film about growing up on an Israeli kib butz. With KIBBUTZ

3:15 PM FROM SHTETL TO SWING
A MUSICAL ODYSSEY ♪
A film that traces the evolution of American music and its Jewish roots.

5:00 PM 39 POUNDS OF LOVE
The remarkable life story of animator Ami Ankilewitz, diagnosed with a rare form of muscular dystrophy at birth, but still going strong at age 34—and weighing only 39 pounds.

7:00 PM WRESTLING WITH ANGELS: PLAYWRIGHT TONY KUSHNER
A loving portrait of the Pulitzer and Tony prize-winning playwright and his political activism

9:30 PM 51 BIRCH STREET
"Do we really know our parents?" Filmmaker Doug Block tries to make sense of some devastating revelations about his parents

AL GREEN THEATRE

NOON WINNING WITH MIKI FREE
A slighted tomboy and a reclusive basketball legend forge a friendship and alliance in this charming girl-power tale. With SUNDAY SCHOOL LOCKOUT

2:00 PM BETTY BOOP'S YIDDISH ROOTS FREE
An entertaining talk with clips by Dr. Amelia Holberg about Betty Boop and her Yiddish immigrant roots.

6:00 PM
Part 1 and 2 of Chaim Yavin's epic documentary about the conflicts between Palestinians and Jews in the West Bank and Gaza.

8:30 PM
A composer is torn when he is faced with writing a symphony for Hitler's birthday.

Monday, May 8

1:00 PM
A film about the deceit that led to the deaths of 80% of Holland's 100,000 Jews during the war.

3:00 PM
A provocative film that raises questions about the meaning of being Jewish.

5:00 PM
Joy's meager life takes an interesting turn when she has to open up her life to the world for a game show

7:00 PM
A performance driven tribute to the late Harold Leventhal, revered music promoter, that will get your feet moving!

9:30 PM
A blossoming love triangle sets off a chain reaction of romantic hijinks—and sweet delicacies

11:00 AM FREE
A free programme of animation for children based on the work of author/illustrator, Maurice Sendak

2:00 PM PORGY AND BESS ♪
The highly acclaimed version of the George Gershwin opera classic. Directed by Trevor Nunn.

6:00 PM
Part 3 and 4 of Chaim Yavin's epic documentary about the conflicts between Palestinians and Jews in the West Bank and Gaza

8:30 PM
Two new friends, both named Avi, who have the same dreams and childhood goals, return to Israel to make old fantasies come true.

Tuesday, May 9

BLOOR CINEMA

1:00 PM ABE NATHAN: AS THE SUN SETS
A profile of the peace advocate and rebel who was one of Israel's most beloved heroes.

3:00 PM THE MAN WHO SOLD EICHMANN AND MENGELE
The story of Willem Sassen and how he became the key to Adolf Eichmann's conviction and the search for Josef Mengele. With TORTE BLUMA

5:00 PM ROOTS
A black comedy about a con man with a fake WWII shtetl who tries to dupe unsuspecting Jews looking for long lost relatives.

7:00 PM MELTING SIBERIA
Filmmaker Ido Haar embarks on a quest to find his grandfather who abandoned his mother before she was born. With A SHTETL THAT'S NO LONGER THERE

9:30 PM OLGA
The true story of how the German-born wife of a Brazilian leader was arrested and sent to Nazi Germany.

10:00 AM PAPER CLIPS FREE
An inspiring documentary about a rural school's project to understand the Holocaust.

NOON
An unusual and moving story about Vietnamese exiles who found sanctuary in Israel.

2:00 PM

An intimate and revealing documentary about the renowned author, his work and his childhood.

4:00 PM STRANGE FRUIT ♪
This is the fascinating story behind the haunting song about the lynching of Blacks in the American South

6:00 PM
Part 5 of Chaim Yavin's epic documentary about the conflicts between Palestinians and Jews in the West Bank and Gaza

8:00 PM FREE ♪
A panel discussion about some of the critical issues surrounding Black-Jewish relations in the creation of American music. See www.tjff.com for details

Wednesday, May 10

1:00 PM TWO LIVES OF EVA
Esther Hoffenberg wants to know more about her late mother's mental illness—what she finds is a chilling and fractured picture

3:00 PM THE STAR HIDDEN IN THE BACKLANDS
A fascinating film about the Marranos of rural Brazil, who practice Catholicism and Judaism at the same time

5:00 PM BELZEC
A look back at the Nazi death camp that existed less than a year, but killed 600,000 Jews

7:30 PM OUT OF SIGHT
A young blind girl finds secrets and lies when she returns to Israel to mourn her friend and cousin's suicide

9:30 PM STEEL TOES
Defending a Neo-Nazi skinhead in a murder trial forces a Jewish attorney to revisit his inherited values and faith

10:00 AM PAPER CLIPS FREE
An inspiring documentary about a rural school's project to understand the Holocaust

NOON KATZMEN
A poignant tale of an inquisitive boy searching for his deceased mother. With THE WITCH FROM MELCHET STREET

2:00 PM CLAIRE'S NOTEBOOKS
(Les Carnets De Claire)
A reflection on death, mourning and accepting loss, triggered by a mother's passing.

4:00 PM SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW HAROLD ARLEN ♪
A portrait of the talented composer who epitomized the Black-Jewish musical connection of the Tin Pan Alley era.

NOON
When workers at an Israeli chemical plant try to form a union, the plant owner responds with force.

2:00 PM
Survivors of Operation Moses reveal stories of abuses of power that resulted in rape, murder and torture. With SHALOM ASMARA

4:00 PM
A crisis of faith fuels a journey of self-discovery. Set against the backdrop of an Australian Hasidic community. With YOURS IVAN

6:00 PM

A compelling documentary chronicling the lives of Cuban Jews. With THE LAST GREEKS ON BROOME STREET

8:00 PM BROOKLYN BABYLON ♪
During rising racial tension between Jews and African-Americans, can love bring the communities together? With MATISYAHU and KHASENJAH: THE JAMAICAN JEWISH WEDDING

Thursday, May 11

1:00 PM
Yariv Nornberg travels to Auschwitz to search for sacred scrolls purported to be buried in the grounds of a once existing synagogue

3:00 PM
A simple task becomes difficult when Anna has to sell her deceased father's property. With veteran Spanish actress Angela Molina

5:00 PM
FREE
From the streets of Montreal to the top of the world, Joe and Ben Weider's achievements epitomize the Jewish Canadian dream. With DORCHESTER STREET

7:00 PM NE QUITTEZ PAS! (Local Call)
What happens when a mourning son accepts a collect call one day and...it's his deceased father?

9:30 PM THE TWO OF US
A classic and heartwarming comedy about a Jewish boy sent to a farm to avoid being rounded up by the Vichy government

11:45 PM GODFATHERS AND SONS ♪
Veteran and contemporary musicians unite to explore the Chicago blues and Chess Records

10:00 AM PAPER CLIPS FREE
An inspiring documentary about a rural school's project to understand the Holocaust.

NOON KATZMEN
A poignant tale of an inquisitive boy searching for his deceased mother. With THE WITCH FROM MELCHET STREET

2:00 PM CLAIRE'S NOTEBOOKS
(Les Carnets De Claire)
A reflection on death, mourning and accepting loss, triggered by a mother's passing.

4:00 PM SOMEWHERE OVER THE RAINBOW HAROLD ARLEN ♪
A portrait of the talented composer who epitomized the Black-Jewish musical connection of the Tin Pan Alley era.

6:00 PM WE WANT THE LIGHT
An illuminating look at the Jewish-German relationship through the prism of music. International award winner.

8:00 PM ISRAEL AND CANADA
ANIMATION CELEBRATION FREE
A free programme showcasing the immense talent of Jewish animators from Israel and Canada. See www.tjff.com for details.

Friday, May 12

1:00 PM UNTIL TOMORROW COMES
Israeli comedy about a dramatic week in the life of Lillian, the owner of a beauty salon in a small town in southern Israel. With KLEINEH MIRIAM'L

3:00 PM MIRACLE IN KRAKOW
Eszter is in Krakow searching for ancient Jewish artifacts, but may have found love instead.

10:00 AM
An inspiring documentary about a rural school's project to understand the Holocaust.

NOON
A provocative personal essay that follows the director as she questions returning to war-torn Israel to raise her family. With DRAFT

2:00 PM
What possible Jewish connection could there be in a lock of Beethoven's hair?

4:00 PM ALL ROBESON HERE I STAND ♪
An engaging documentary on the man whose music and political activism spoke to the hearts of Jews all over the world

9:30 PM ONLY HUMAN
A comedy about a Jewish girl and her Palestinian fiancé that makes you think about the differences and similarities between the two peoples

11:45 PM BLUE NOTE—A STORY OF MODERN JAZZ ♪
A dynamite musical tribute to the groundbreaking jazz record label and its Jewish founders.

9:30 PM PRIVATE
A man faces off with soldiers from the Israeli army, who are trying to seize his home.

Saturday, May 13

11:00 AM SUMMER STORY (Sippur Kayitz)
A tender coming-of age story of friendship and love, set against the war in Lebanon in 1982. With THE RED TOY

1:00 PM HINEINI: COMING OUT IN A JEWISH HIGH SCHOOL
The story of a group of high school students who must reconcile their desire for religion with their sexuality.

3:00 PM THE DYBBUK
Agnieszka Holland's (Europa, Europa) retelling of the classic supernatural Yiddish play.

5:00 PM HITMAKERS: THE TEEN WHO STOLE POP MUSIC ♪
A look at the Jewish kids from Brooklyn who defined a magical period in rock 'n' roll history.

7:00 PM LA PETITE JERUSALEM
A young Orthodox Jew tries to reconcile her study of Western philosophy with her upbringing and culture.

9:30 PM KNOWLEDGE IS THE BEGINNING DANIEL BARENBOIM AND THE WEST-EASTERN DIVAN ORCHESTRA
An emotionally powerful documentary about "The Peace Orchestra" as it travels across political boundaries in the name of music.

NOON TELL ME A RIDDLE
An elderly couple (Melvyn Douglas and Lila Kedrova) have grown alienated from one another, but embark on a cross-country reunion with their children. Directed by Lee Grant.

2:00 PM

Intimate profile of Kirk Douglas and his son Michael, and their often tempestuous but loving relationship. Includes a question and answer session with director Lee Grant.

6:00 PM
Follows the story of photographer Marti Friedlander, from her youth in a Jewish orphanage to her adult life in New Zealand

8 PM
The remarkable story of Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore—French surrealist artists, rebels, and Nazi resisters.

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MAJOR SPONSORS

Hillel, student council spar over speaker

By SHERI SHEFA
Staff Reporter

Hillel at York wants the York Federation of Students to backtrack on its implication that Hillel is a racist organization after the student council demanded that Hillel apologize for comments about radical Islam by a speaker the Jewish group invited on campus.

Nonie Darwish, an Egyptian-born, pro-Israel Arab American and former Muslim, spoke on March 29 at York University in a talk titled, "Why I support the State of Israel."

Adam Hummel, president of Hillel at York, said Darwish caught him and other organizers off guard when she strayed from her announced topic to criticize radical Islam.

After the lecture, Hummel said he spoke to members of the campus group Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights who were offended by Darwish's comments, and he said he apologized to those who approached him.

Within hours of the lecture, the YFS issued a public statement in which Ahmed Habib, YFS' vice-president of equity and services, and Shamini Selvaratnam, YFS' vice-president of education, demanded a formal apology from Hillel and condemned the organization for Darwish's remarks, which they described as racist and Islamophobic.

"[The lecture] further increases tension on campus between students surrounding a [sic] already sensitive topic. York Federation of Students is alarmed that such racist remarks would be condoned by a well-established organization like Hillel."

Tilly Shames, Israel affairs director at Hillel of Greater Toronto, said the statements paints Hillel as a racist organization.

"We felt Hillel, at least Hillel at York, was being presented as an Islamophobic organization, and we're concerned that the YFS has spread this message to the campus community and student groups… We won't stand for that," Shames said.

They are pointing a finger at us and insinuating that our organization is Islamophobic

"They pushed us into a corner," Hummel said. "We issued a statement to Ahmed Habib saying that we stand by [Darwish's] right to freedom of speech. They are pointing a finger at us and insinuating that our organization is Islamophobic. Because we defended her right for freedom of speech, they're suggesting that we agree with her."

Corrie Sakaluk, YSF's president-elect, said she wants Hillel to issue another statement to apologize for and denounce the parts of Darwish's lecture that could be perceived as Islamophobic.

"Freedom of speech is not meant to defend or justify hate speech," Sakaluk said, adding that Darwish made insensitive and hateful comments and "used sections of her time to make sweeping generalizations about Arabic and Muslim people."

Hummel and Keren Katz, Hillel's Israel affairs chair at York, did release a statement to the YFS executive that said "Hillel at York denounces Islamophobia in all its forms," but Shames said she is still waiting for the YFS to release a statement of its own saying it "recognizes Hillel as a diverse and pluralistic organization that condemns racism of all kinds."

She said she hopes a future YFS statement will put Hillel in a more positive light and will not further tarnish the group's name.

Although the YFS has yet to release such a statement, Sakaluk said in an interview with *The CJN* that her group's "comments are not meant to paint Hillel as a racist organization," but she added that since Darwish was Hillel's guest, Hillel should take responsibility for her comments.

Shames said Hillel is also deciding how to respond to an article in York's main student newspaper, *Excalibur*, that misquoted Darwish and took her words out of context.

The article misquoted Darwish as saying that "most Muslims are terrorists." However, what Darwish actually said was that statistically, "most terrorists are Muslims."

"It may seem like semantics, but there is a major difference between the two statements," Shames said.

She added that Sakaluk declined to help Hillel tackle the issue with *Excalibur*.

"She seems to have disassociated herself from the issue and suggested we approach the editor of the newspaper," Shames said.

Unfortunately, Shames added, the issue the article appeared in was the last one of the semester, and another issue won't be published until May.

Sakaluk told *The CJN* that "she sympathizes with Hillel" about the article.

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Seders in Japan, with matzah at $10 a box

By BENJI FELDMAN
Special to The CJN

Guest Voice

KOBE, Japan — Between a mountain's green slopes and the waves of the Pacific Ocean lies a small Japanese port city named Kobe. It has a large number of foreign residents and is home to one of only two Jewish communities in Japan.

When climbing up the city's steep hill, you notice the fashionable shops lining the street. Halfway up the mountain, you walk along a number of thin roads with stone sidewalks. You think of Jerusalem, and you feel at home.

At the end of this winding trail, halfway up the mountain, you find Ohel Shelomo Synagogue, a large building by Japanese standards and my host for the two seders this year.

The synagogue hosts between 10 and 30 people every Shabbat. Its membership is low, and those people who do belong are mostly Israelis who have settled in Kobe.

The members befriended me and satisfied my thirst for Jewish sights and sounds. Their authentic Israeli accents were such a treat. My Hebrew came back to me quickly, and I found myself feeling as if I was back in Israel.

At the the first seder, 200 travellers and residents joined in for some imported kosher food. And with the seder's lively 80 or so Israeli participants, it was difficult to hear anything, let alone follow along, but I managed.

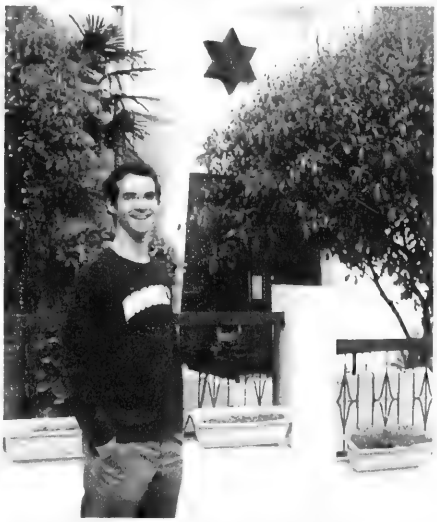
Israeli seder highlights included some digital photography, the lighting of cigarettes from the candles on the table and one young man who decided to half-moon some onlookers.

Rabbi Asaf Tobi is quite a leader. He's an Israeli Chabadnick who recently fathered his second son (whose name, unfortunately, escapes me).

On the floor of Rabbi Asaf's living room slept two Chabad shlichim, a local Jewish man who snores in a very peculiar way, and me.

Mendy, the rabbi's eldest son, was the alarm clock for all the guests in the apartment. He never failed to casually walk into the room at 6:30 a.m. with his toy truck, ringing its bells as if he was in a Santa Claus parade.

Continued on page 28



Benji Feldman stands in front of the Ohel Shelomo Synagogue in Kobe, Japan.

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First time I had witnessed a bris

Continued from page 27

After Shacharit on the Friday morning of Pesach, Rabbi Asaf held his son in his lap as a mohel, flown in from Israel for the special simchah, circumcised the rabbi's son.

It was the first time I had witnessed a bris, and I squeezed the arm of the Israeli stranger next to me as the event took place. After the audience exhaled and the baby's cries subsided, the room erupted in mazel tovs and dances.

The bris was an extra special experience that I was thrilled to share with the community.

To get me through the holiday, I bought three boxes of imported matzah for the equivalent of a measly $10 each. I also procured a stock of tuna, potatoes, vegetables and salt. Packing my lunch has become my favourite pastime.

And there's nothing like explaining what matzah is to a Japanese person. If you leave it at, "It's a kind of cracker," you can save yourself about three hours a day!

I can't wait to hear the stories about the seders of friends and family back in Canada. And though it's been a great experience to be here in Japan, Pesach makes me realize how difficult it is to be away from home and how much I miss my friends and family.

Benji Feldman is a former CJN photographic intern who is teaching English in Kobe, Japan.

YIDDISH CORNER

Edited by: ALEK SILVER

ייִדיש־ווינקל

רעדאַגירט פֿון: אַלעק סילווער

פון אומקום צו ווידעראויפבוי

(געדאַנקען צו יום השואה און יום העצמאות)

פֿון אַלעק סילווער

ווען די שורות וועלן דערשיינען וועט שוין זיין נאָך דעם ווי די ייִדישע וועלט האָט אָפּגעצייכנט דעם יום השואה מיט פֿאַסיקע אונטערנעמונגען. די ועלבע ייִדישע וועלט גרייט זיך אויך איצט צו פֿייערן דעם 58סטן יום העצמאות פֿון מדינת ישׂראל. די צוויי טעג, וועלכע קומען איינער נאָכן אַנדערן — יום השואה און יום העצמאות — כאָטש זיי זיינען אין צוויי באַזונדערע חדשים פֿון ייִדישן קאַלענדאַר — סימבאָליזירן זיי דעם סינטעז פֿון אומקום און ווידעראויפבוי.

עס איז קיין ספֿק נישט, אז די בידע דאָטעס, טראָץ דעם וואָס עס איז צווישן זיי דאָ אַן איבערריס פֿון דריי יאָר, זיינען ענג פֿאַרבונדן אייניע מיט דער אַנדערער. אין 1945 האָט זיך נעענדיקט דער גרויסער חורבן — דער אומקום פֿון ייִדישן פֿאָלק. אין 1948 איז אויפֿגעקומען די נייע ייִדישע מדינה — דער ווידעראויפבוי. א גאַר גרוי־סע צאָל קרבנות זיינען נעפֿאַלן ביי בייַדע נעשעענישן. און דאָס איז די סיבה פֿון אונזדער געדענקען, פֿון אונ־דזער דערמאָנונג, פֿון אונדזער פֿייערונג.

עס איז צו האָפֿן, אז יעדער וועט זיך אין דעם טאָג אַריינטראכטן אין דעם גרויליקן חורבן, וואָס עס האָט פּאַסירט צום אומשולדיקן ייִדישן פֿאָלק אין 20סטן יאָרהונדערט. דער חשבון פֿון די קרבנות איז שוין באַקאַנט יעדן אייניעם — זעקס מיליאָן, אַריינגערעכנט א מיליאָן און א האַלבן קינדער.

עס איז שוין א סך געוואָגט און געשריבן געוואָרן וועגן די שוידערלעכע יאָרן 1939–1945. עס זיינען באַקאַנט די „פּאַבריקן פֿון טויט", ווי אוישוויץ, בער־גען־בעלזען, מאַידאַנעק, בוכענוואַלד און נאָך, און נאָך. עס זיינען באַקאַנט די רציחות פֿון נאַצי־דייטשלאַנד און זייערע אייַנזאַצגרופּעס אין סאָוועטן־פֿאַרבאַנד. עס איז אויך שוין באַקאַנט דאָס שטילשוויגן פֿון דער אָרומיקער וועלט בעת דער האָלאָקויסט שחיטה. איז עס אונדזער האָפֿענונג, אז דער טאָג פֿון יום השואה וועט זיין — און **ער מוז** ווערן — א דערמאָנונג פֿאַר דער מענטשהייט, אז נאָך אזא געוואַלד טאָר מער נישט פֿאָרקומען — נישט צום ייִדישן פֿאָלק און נישט צו אַנדערע פֿעלקער.

איצט גרייט זיך דאָס גאַנצע ייִדנטום, סיי אין מדינת ישׂראל, סיי אין די תּפֿוצות צו פֿייערן דעם 58סטן יום העצמאות יום־טובֿ פֿון ווידעראויפבוי פֿון דער צוזאַמענבונד פֿון בייַדע דאָטעס. פֿון געשיכטלעכן שטאַנדפּונקט איז דאָס אונשטיין פֿון דער ייִדישער מדינה געווען דער וויכ־טיקסטער עלעמענט פֿון פּיזישער און מאָראַלישער בא־דייטונג פֿאַר דער באַציונג פֿון פֿאָלק נאָכן חורבן.

נאָכן סוף פֿון דער צוויטער וועלט־מלחמה זיינען די רעשטלעך פֿון מזרח־אייראָפּעישן ייִדנטום געבליבן שטיין פֿאַר א טראַגישער לאָגע: פֿון איין זייט — דער פֿאַרלוסט פֿון 6 מיליאָן, פֿון דער צוויטער זייט — די הייַמלאָזיקייט פֿון די מיט ניסים לעבנגעבליבענע, וועל־כע האָבן מער נישט נעהאט קיין הייַמען, ווויניק זיך צוריקקערן. די שנאה צו די לעבנגעבליבענע מצד זייערע נעכטיקע שכנים האָט מאָראַליש (און טייל מאָל פֿיזיש) אַריינגעבראַנגט א ראוש צוקיין זיי.

איז ינגער תקופֿה, ווען די טויערן פֿון א סך לענדער זיינען נעווען פֿאַרמאַכט פֿאַר ייִדן; ווען דער נעכטיקער קאָצעטניק האָט זיך אַנגעטראָפֿן אויף שנאה, אַדער אין בעסטן פֿאַל — גלייכגילטיקייט; אט איז ינגער תקופֿה איז דאָס אונטשטיין פֿון דער ייִדישער מדינה נעווען א ליכטיקער שטראָל אויפֿן פּינצטערן ייִדישן הימל.

וועלכע יום העצמאות נעפֿייערט מיט שטאָלץ, פֿרייד און ספּעציעלער דאַנקבאַרקייט פֿון גאַנצן ייִדישן פֿאָלק. וועלכער אַרן וועלכער וועט איבערגעהרט אונדזער אויס־נעמטער וווּנטש: שלום אין דער ייִדישער מדינה אַרן שלום אויף דער גאַנצער וועלט.

Coast to Coast

Cotler says Canada can play role in both Afghanistan and Sudan

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — Canada can play a role in both the Afghanistan and the Sudan conflicts, mainly through diplomacy in the latter case, Liberal public safety critic Irwin Cotler said in the House of Commons.

"I want to say that I do not think this is a matter of these two being mutually exclusive," the Mount Royal MP said during a special debate on the Afghanistan mission.

"I believe that Canada, in addition to Afghanistan, can play... a robust diplomatic role and can exercise moral and political leadership... I believe that a robust diplomatic initiative can do that without in any way impugning or undermining our involvement in Afghanistan."

Irwin Cotler

Cotler was responding to a question from Alberta Conservative MP Leon Benoit (Vegreville-Wainwright) on whether he was suggesting that Canada should shift its focus from Afghanistan to the three-year-old conflict in Darfur in western Sudan.

"Canada cannot be involved in all missions," Benoit said. "Canada may choose to be involved in Darfur at some time down the road. I have no way of knowing that. It will be examined in the future."

Cotler used the Afghanistan debate to spell out a 10-point "action plan" he proposes to ease the humanitarian crisis in Darfur, where he said "mass atrocity, including war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide by attrition" continue with impunity.

Cotler is spearheading the all-party Save Darfur Parliamentary Coalition, which was launched at a press conference on Parliament Hill April 6.

Cotler reiterated his support for Canada's military deployment in Afghanistan, as well as for assistance in the country's democratic development and holding accountable those responsible for past abuses.

He noted that he had taken the same position during a debate on Afghanistan in the House on Jan. 28, 2002.

The Darfur coalition is urging the United Nations to expand the African Union (AU) forces' mandate in Sudan to give it authority to intervene militarily to protect civilians. The coalition is also demanding the immediate addition of 5,000 international troops to the 7,000 AU forces now in Sudan.

Cotler told *The CJN* these could come from individual countries or through the United Nations or NATO, for example.

The coalition wants 20,000 troops in place by October to enforce an expected ceasefire and help assist with refugee return.

Cotler did not call for a major increase in Canada's military presence. He said Canada could contribute a headquarters brigade, for instance, which would control artillery movements.

Canada is currently providing limited military and technical assistance to the African Union. This includes up to 80 Canadian military and civilian police personnel, as well as helicopters, transport aircraft and armoured personnel carriers, basic equipment, and lending expertise. But its financial allocation of $170 million makes it one of the mission's top three international donors, according to government information.

Other points of the action plan include disarming the Janjaweed, the Arab militias carrying out the violence upon the indigenous black population,which, by many reports, have the backing of the Muslim government in Khartoum; support for "targeted sanctions against government leaders;" and bringing the perpetrators of atrocities before the International Criminal Court.

In addition to Cotler, the participants in the launching of the coalition were Stéphane Dion (Cartierville-St. Laurent), the foreign affairs critic who has since announced his bid for the Liberal leadership; Keith Martin (Esquimalt-Juan de Fuca), critic for the Canadian International Development Agency; Conservative James Lunney (Nanaimo-Alberni); and Max Kelly, a University of Toronto student representing Students Taking Action Now: Darfur (STAND Canada).

Cotler said he founded the coalition to "sound the alarm, to shatter the silence, regarding the ongoing crimes against humanity" in Darfur.

Cotler said retired general and Senator Roméo Dallaire, whose warning of an impending massacre fell on deaf ears while he was commander of the UN forces in Rwanda in 1994, has since joined the coalition.

Cotler told *The CJN* the Martin government, in which he was justice minister, did "comparatively better than other governments" in dealing with Darfur, but it "was not as sustained as it should have been - it needed to be a bigger priority."

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Quebec 'oblivious' to Islamists, Pipes says

By DAVID LAZARUS
Staff Reporter

Analyst raps Israeli policy; urges Palestinians to accept defeat

MONTREAL — Quebec shows a "complete disregard" for the number of potential radical Islamists who might be streaming into the province, and it's "by far, the worst of any area in North America" in this regard, controversial Middle East analyst Daniel Pipes said in Montreal recently.

Responding to a question from the audience during a State of Israel Bonds event at Congregation Beth Tikvah, Pipes added that the province seems "oblivious to the problem" and shows an "unwillingness" to deal with it.

Pipes, founder of the Philadelphia-based Middle East Forum and Campus Watch, compared Quebec to the Netherlands and Sweden, which he said initially ignored the rise in militant Islamism in those countries, among both immigrants and native-born Muslims.

"It's a big problem in Quebec," Pipes said, suggesting that like the two European nations, Quebec's traits as a "liberal society… disinclined to judge," combined with an "open immigration" policy, could spell big trouble within 20 years.

He said the mentality in the province is that if a terrorist incident were to occur, the attitude would be, "What did we do wrong?"

Pipes said the "single most specific thing" Quebec authorities should do is to have a "full-time person" following the situation.

(Repeated calls to Quebec Immigration Minister Lise Theriault and her press attaché Marie Paradis for comment on Pipes' remarks were not returned.)

In his formal talk, Pipes said the only way Israelis and Palestinians will find peace is if one side actually "gives up," instead of Israel pursuing policies that merely involve trying to "manage" and "control" the conflict.

"Since 1948, Israel's war goal has been to win acceptance, and the Arab war goal has been to eliminate Israel," he said.

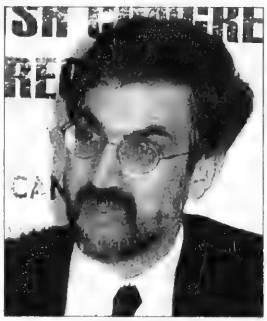
"Only one of the goals can prevail."

Israel, he said, makes a mistake in focusing its policies on what Israel does instead of on the Palestinians.

Israel's disengagement from Gaza last year was a mistake because it gave Palestinians renewed hope that Israel will eventually be gone for good, Pipes said.

"Anything that dissuades the Palestinians from seeing that their goal can be achieved [would] be positive… Disengagement made Palestinians feel closer to eliminating Israel."

Pipes said Israel's policy of unilateralism "does not address the basic question… and if not addressed, the conflict goes on and on."



Daniel Pipes

Israeli policy should be that there will be "no discussions on final status, no money, no arms, no concessions," Pipes said. "Palestinians need to come to terms [with the fact] that they lost, but that it's necessary to go on. No more pieces of paper."

He added that "20 per cent of Palestinians now accept Israel, and 80 per cent do not. That number has to be reversed."

Pipes said efforts must be made to have Jerusalem recognized by the world as Israel's capital by urging nations to move their embassies there, and the world must also accept that Palestinian refugees don't include the descendants of those who left Israel in the 1948 War of Independence.

Palestinians have suffered immensely because of "dictatorships, poverty and backwardness" and would "benefit more from their own defeat than the Israelis," he said.

"They must accept the fact that the conflict cannot be won."

Asked how the world could be persuaded to accept Jerusalem as Israel's capital, Pipes said part of the problem is Israel's own media.

"People look at the western media and wring their hands. But look at [the daily newspaper] *Ha'aretz*, or the Israeli Broadcasting Authority. If the Israeli media are harsh on Israel, what do you expect from the outside world?"

Replying to another question, Pipes described the election of a Hamas government in the Palestinian Authority as "honest terrorists succeeding dishonest terrorists," the latter reference being to PA President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party.

He said Israel "created its own monster" by allowing Hamas to run in the elections, and he called the terror group a "far more determined and disciplined enemy."

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Israel the No. 2 spot for MPs' sponsored travel

By JANICE ARNOLD
Staff Reporter

MONTREAL — After Taiwan, Israel was the top destination for members of the House of Commons accepting trips paid for by outside groups in 2005.

Fourteen MPs, from all parties except the New Democratic Party, travelled to Israel under the sponsorship of the Canada-Israel Committee (CIC) or its affiliated Quebec-Israel Committee. Twenty-three went to Taiwan, the majority paid for by the Chinese International Economic Co-operation Association or other groups seeking to promote trade relations.

The information was made public by federal ethics commissioner Bernard Shapiro and is available on his office's website.

The commissioner's office, which was created in March 2004, is required to publish annually a report on "sponsored travel" by members of the House, as defined by their Conflict of Interest Code.

This is the first full-year report; Shapiro previously submitted one covering only the last three months of 2004.

The code requires members to declare any sponsored travel costs exceeding $500 within 30 days of their return. This is travel that arises from or relates to their position, and is not wholly paid for personally, by Parliament or a government body, by their party or any interparliamentary association or friendship group recognized by the House.

They are required to disclose who paid for the trip, its value, its length and purpose and who accompanied them.

The code does not set a cap or other restrictions on sponsored travel.

CIC government relations director David Cooper said he does not think the new light shed on sponsored travel will cause members to hesitate to accept such trips.

"Not at all," he said. "We are now preparing another trip, and there has been no challenge in getting anyone to come, nor has anyone cited the report."

About seven MPs are expected to go on a CIC trip in May, the first one organized exclusively for women. Another for everyone is planned for the summer.

The CIC organizes two or three such trips each year, Cooper said, and there are no plans to change that.

"Our trips have an excellent reputation on the Hill; they are well-balanced, highly educational and rigorous. No one views them as a junket," he said.

Cooper said New Democratic Party members have participated in previous years.

Cooper emphasized that taking a politician to Israel is an effective form of advocacy.

"There is no better tool in our arsenal for explaining Israel's story than bringing them there. They get a sense of the country's geography and topography that no seminar can [impart]. For example, nothing beats looking down from the Golan Heights to the kibbutzim below in the Galilee to understand Israel's strategic concerns."

Also, he said, spending a week with an MP is a good way of forming a personal bond.

The CIC also sponsors Israel trips for parliamentary staff. They do not have to report sponsored travel to the ethics commissioner.

Cabinet ministers and parliamentary secretaries are not permitted to accept sponsored travel.

However, three future ministers were on CIC trips last year: Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day, Fisheries and Oceans Minister Loyola Hearn and Justice Minister Vic Toews.

In the case of Day, who attended the annual Government of Israel conference in December, only his hotel costs of $1,157 were covered by the CIC.

Hearn and Toews, who went on a week-long July trip described as for the purpose of obtaining "information on the situation in Israel," list tabs for transportation, accommodation, meals and touring expenses totalling $7,482 and $5,123, respectively, for themselves and their wives.

Sponsored travel to Arab and/or Muslim countries was infrequent, according to the report. Former Liberal and later independent member, David Kilgour, who is no longer sitting, visited Egypt, Morocco and Tunisia for "meetings with government and business leaders," sponsored by the Christian Embassy.

Another former Liberal and independent, also now out of politics, Carolyn Parrish, listed a trip encompassing Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and Israel to "observe refugees." The sponsor is reported only as "combined."

She also went to Pakistan to learn about its "culture and customs," which she declared was half paid by "Friends of Carolyn Parrish, with non-tax-receiptable donations contributed by community members," and the other half by herself.

Shapiro reports that in 2005, there was a total of 67 instances of sponsored trips to a wide number of destinations in Canada and abroad by 44 of the 308 members of the House.

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Feature

The last Jewish egg farmer in Quebec

Chickens seemed to fascinate my father and he was determined to establish his own farm

By HOWARD GONTOVNICK
Special to The CJN

STE-SOPHIE, Que. — For most people, eggs are something one has for breakfast or ingredients in a recipe. You find eggs in a supermarket, in baked goods, or served in a restaurant.

Well, in my case, the relationship is a little different. You see, for almost 50 years now, chickens and eggs have played a major role in defining who I am. At the same time, chickens and eggs have had an important impact on Jewish culture and the economic life of many in our community, which is a fact that is often forgotten. Do you remember the days when you could buy a dozen eggs at your front door from your local eggman – who spoke Yiddish? It is a tradition that has long since disappeared along with many Jewish farmers in Quebec.

When I was a young boy, there were several occasions that certain unfriendly neighbourhood boys would play on the fact that my father was in the "egg business." I was teased and called many uncreative names, sometimes getting into fist fights. Clearly, these were circumstances that were definitely not conducive to appreciation of my father's profession. Most probably influenced by this, I recall an occasion when I deliberately referred to my father as a salesperson, fearing the verbal abuse and worrying about what others would think of me. In time, maturity set in and I began to appreciate what my father did and how important farmers actually were.

My father, Louis Gontovnick, was born in the city of Montreal just after the depression. My grandparents, Rifka and Burach, had originally emigrated from eastern Europe in the hope of making a better life in Canada. Had it been up to my Zaide Burach, my dad would have gone to rabbinical college and our world would have been a much different place. However, chickens seemed to fascinate my father and he was determined to establish his own farm.

My dad's story begins with his initial experiences working on a farm during his formative years in the late 1940s. Inspired by farming life in Ste-Sophie and the people he knew who had established farms, he worked hard and put in long hours so he could learn as much as possible about the poultry business. Shlepping bags of feed and cleaning the chicken houses kept him in good shape, but the work occupied most of his days. After he had a few years of experience, it was time to take a chance and try to make his dream come true.

In the late '50s, Ste-Sophie, Que., was a small town in the Laurentians with a considerable Jewish population. With roots as far back to 1905, there was a strong and vibrant Jewish community flourishing at the time. It is one of the original farming colonies established by the Jewish Colonization Agency, and chicken farms for both eggs and broilers have had a long important history in the region. For my father, Ste-Sophie was the perfect location. With some money of his own and the support of his family, he purchased a piece of farmland on Second Pasley Road in the early 1960s. There he would build his first two-storey chicken house and the beginning of a new life.

During the 1960s and '70s, the control and distribution of eggs in Quebec was drastically changing. With the introduction of governmental marketing boards and controlled pricing, my father became an important contributor to radical developments in the egg industry. For many years, he served as a representative on several regional and federal committees, while continuing to remain involved with the farm in all its capacities. Each day was a new challenge as well as a wonderful opportunity.

With the assistance of his farmhand, Earl Urquhart, my father would feed the chickens, clean the building, and pick and process the eggs. After these daily farm chores, my dad would load his small pickup truck and head out to sell the eggs in and around the greater Montreal area. At the end of a long and difficult day, he would make his way to our home in Chomedey, Laval, only to begin again early the next morning.

From Ste Agathe to Montreal and places in between, my father could be seen delivering his eggs from house to house, to restaurants and to most of the major Jewish institutions in the region. I can remember many times delivering eggs in the early morning hours to the Jewish General or the Maimonides hospitals and benefiting from venturing into the nearby kitchens. Everyone knew my dad and they were all his friends.

With a limited number of customers and the price of eggs in the vicinity of 50 cents a dozen, this surely wasn't a high-profit business. Even so, he continued to work hard and enjoyed meeting and kibbitzing with the different people he would encounter along the way.

Throughout the 1980s and early '90s, the business grew considerably. My brother, Norman, and I joined, and we expanded our sales base into the commercial and wholesale markets. With our unique and original packaging, like Super Lou Jumbos, Oeufs Nature (we were the first to offer lower cholesterol eggs) and the clear plastic six-egg package called Oeufs Plus, our products created a positive association between the name Ste-Sophie and farm-fresh eggs. At that time, this once-small operation suddenly expanded into a fleet of 10 delivery trucks and a large processing plant with more than 20 regular employees. Then in 1994, the processing and commercial division was transferred elsewhere, and Norman and I were off in different directions.

These days after over 50 years in the farming business, my dad continues to operate his original egg farm in Ste-Sophie. With more than 15,000 chickens on site, most of the work is mechanized and watched over by a crew of two regular employees. Very different from the original facility, today's egg farm is equipped with automated machinery that feeds the chickens, provides water and ventilation and advances the eggs to a packaging device for further processing.

As for Ste-Sophie, the town has changed considerably. My father often recalls the times, friends and situations that made this community a special place. Today, less than a handful of Jewish families still live and operate businesses in the area. The village can be a quiet place compared to days gone by. Nevertheless, every fall the area is reborn as the little synagogue adjacent to our farm becomes a busy place. People come from everywhere to participate in the annual High Holy Days services.

For the last Jewish egg farmer in Quebec, it has been a journey filled with pride and satisfaction knowing that his life work contributed to the lives of so many people. Although he doesn't talk about it much, I know that my dad feels proud of what he has done and continues to do. Thinking about this has left me with a sense that his work was more than a job but rather a responsibility, and most of all, a way to maintain a respectable reputation. I remember many times when a customer would call in a state of panic that they were short of eggs and needed some eggs quickly. Immediately, with little hesitation, my father was off to the farm no matter what the weather conditions were like. From being a part of this experience, I have learned many valuable and timeless life lessons from my father and his profession. All too often we forget to tell others how we value them and appreciate the things they have done for us. From the complex to the simple, the impact of another's presence in one's life can have far-reaching consequences that are often unrecognized or acknowledged.

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Olmert to form 'a top-heavy government'

By DAN BARON
JTA

JERUSALEM — Interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has big plans for Israel. And he is about to form a big government.

The prime minister entered what appeared to be a final week of coalition talks Sunday, with a deal all but clinched between his Kadima party and Labor.

With at least three other factions also set to come aboard, Olmert is looking at a mammoth cabinet of 27 ministers.

Such a top-heavy government is a price he believes he has to pay if he wants to push through further Israeli withdrawals from the West Bank: Kadima won last month's elections by a slim margin and by itself commands nowhere near a parliamentary majority.

For Labor leader Amir Peretz, the coalition talks scored a personal coup: the Defence Ministry. Having been denied the Treasury Ministry, which Olmert intends for Kadima to hold, the former union chair appears likely to be the successor to Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz and lead Israel's security apparatus through a stormy period despite having no military pedigree.

"From his first day on the job, Amir Peretz will have to prove the legitimacy of him being there. Everyone will be scoring his performance and seizing on his mistakes, all the time," wrote Alex Fishman, defence reporter for *Yediot Achronot*.

Aware of unease in Israel over how he will handle the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority, Peretz made it known that he would choose a deputy defence minister with top-brass experience.

The leading candidate is Labor's Ephraim Sneh, a retired brigadier-general in the Israeli military and veteran member of the Knesset foreign affairs and defence committee.

"The Israeli people can sleep well at night," Sneh told Israel Radio. "We need a defence minister with the proper combination of boldness and prudence, an ability to assess and decide," traits that Peretz possesses, Sneh said.

Labor was promised four other ministries — education, agriculture, infrastructure and tourism — as well as two ministries without portfolio.

As the nominations became clear, there were disappointed candidates on both sides of the talks.

Former Shin Bet chief Ami Ayalon and veteran economist Avishay Braverman, denied portfolios, said in interviews that by joining Labor, they had helped Peretz in the polls.

Uriel Reichman tendered his resignation from Kadima, saying he had only entered politics on the understanding he would be education minister.

Also miffed was Meir Sheetrit, a former finance minister who looks likely to lose out on a new stint in the post to Avraham Hirschson.

Mofaz was more reticent. According to media reports, Olmert may tailor a new, trade-related portfolio for the ex-defence minister in order to keep him in the cabinet.

That left only Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni keeping her position, while Shimon Peres was promised the Regional Co-operation Ministry he ran under the Barak government.

What does that leave for the other prospective coalition partners?

Avigdor Lieberman, head of the hawkish, pro-immigrant Yisrael Beiteinu, looks likely to win the Internal Security Ministry, though objections by Israel's attorney general threaten this. Lieberman has vowed to crack down on crime in Israel. He has been more circumspect on Olmert's West Bank plans, saying unilateral withdrawals will only embolden Palestinian terror.

Lieberman will also gain the Immigrant Absorption Ministry.

Shas, the religious party appealing mainly to Sephardi Jews, is expected to receive the welfare and housing portfolios. It is also expected to appoint a minister without portfolio who will have authority over religious matters – perhaps an indirect effort to rebuild the Religious Affairs Ministry, dismantled by the secular Shinui Party in the last government.

The last clutch of cabinet posts will go to the Pensioners' party, which took a surprising seven seats in the elections. The party's leader, former spymaster Rafi Eitan, will become the first Israeli pensioners' minister, having had the post custom-made. One of his colleagues is expected to take over the Health Ministry.

Iran poses a potential existential threat to Israel, new PM says

Continued from page 1

he gave then-prime minister Ariel Sharon in 2004 before he brought his disengagement plan to the cabinet.

"Olmert is a new prime minister, and he wants to hear these commitments again," the official said, noting they would be domestically valuable for Olmert to market his convergence plan.

Bush's statement spelled out that the United States would support Israel's position that the Palestinian refugees should return to a future Palestinian state rather than to Israel, that it would be unrealistic to expect a full Israeli withdrawal to the pre-1967 Green Line and that the United States is committed to Israel's security, "including secure, defensible borders, and to preserve and strengthen Israel's capability to deter and defend itself, by itself, against any threat or possible combination of threats."

This last commitment, the official said, was especially important for Jerusalem to hear now, as Tehran continues to publicly threaten to destroy Israel.

Olmert referred to the Iranian nuclear threat in Sunday's cabinet meeting, but urged the ministers to keep a low profile and not to issue threats or warnings against Iran. He said Israel should leave this to others who are leading the international campaign to stop Tehran's nuclear march.

He added, however, that Iran poses a potential existential threat to Israel. He said the issue is at the top of Israel's agenda and that the country is preparing for all scenarios.

At the same time, he repeated what he has said numerous times in the past: "This is not only a threat to Israel," but also to Europe, the United States and all of western civilization. As such, Olmert said, it would be an error for Israel to place itself at the head of the world campaign against Iran.

In her briefing to the cabinet, Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni discussed whether the UN Security Council was likely to impose meaningful sanctions on Iran, saying that the Russians and Chinese oppose such measures.

Russia, Livni said, is continuing to have independent contact with Iran in an effort to gain stature as a leading player on the international stage.

Turning to the Palestinians, Livni said the international community remains committed to the three conditions it has set for granting the Hamas-led PA legitimacy. She warned, however, that it would become more difficult to stand firm on these principles if the impression was created that there is a humanitarian crisis in the PA.

Livni said the recent Hamas cabinet decision to create a new security force and to appoint wanted terrorist Jamal Abu Samhadana as its head had further eroded the PA's position in the international community.

Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz told the cabinet that the recent terror attack in Tel Aviv, as well as the number of thwarted attacks, show that Israel is in the midst of a "growing terror wave." He said there are currently some 70 intelligence warnings of terrorist attacks, including 15 "localized alerts," a significant increase from February.

At the same time, Mofaz said the security forces have had a number of successes and that since the beginning of the year, they have thwarted 10 suicide attacks and arrested more than 160 terrorist suspects.

Mofaz said that while there was a significant decrease in the number of Qassam rocket attacks from Gaza last week – 16 compared to 33 the week before – on Friday, the Palestinians tried to launch a Katyusha missile toward Israel. This was the second time they tried to launch a Katyusha, the first being on election day, March 28.

Mofaz said Israel holds the Hamas-led PA responsible for the increase in terrorist attacks and the overall deterioration in the security situation.

Mofaz briefly discussed Egypt's relationship with the PA, saying that Cairo is trying to moderate Hamas's hard-line positions.

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Proposal to amend Auschwitz's name receives mixed reaction

By DINAH A. SPRITZER
JTA

PRAGUE — Poland has long asked that its name no longer be used to refer to the Nazi concentration camps established on Polish soil.

Now Poland has made an official request to change Auschwitz's name.

The Polish government last month asked the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to change the name of the site from "Auschwitz Death Camp" to "former Nazi German Auschwitz-Birkenau Death Camp." The area is a UN cultural heritage site.

UNESCO is expected to respond to the request by mid-2006.

The debate goes to the heart of the question of how Polish behaviour during the Holocaust is remembered.

The name change is intended to stop the description of the camp by the international media, including the *New York Times* and the German magazine *Der Spiegel*, as a "Polish death camp," which offends many Poles because the camp was run by Germany.

Many Jewish groups and individuals, both in Poland and around the world, are backing the Polish request.

The Union of Religious Jewish Communities in Poland, representing the country's estimated 7,000 to 10,000 Jews, has released a statement in support of it.

Petr Kadlcik, the group's chair, said it is not historically accurate to assign to Poland the "institutional and national responsibility for the Third Reich's policy."

Jewish organizations including the Anti-Defamation League and Israel's Holocaust museum, Yad Vashem, have also supported the name change.

And Menachem Rosensaft, the founding chair of the International Network of Children of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, said in an e-mail that the Polish government's request is "absolutely legitimate. The death factory of Auschwitz-Birkenau, where more than one million Jewish men, women and children were murdered, was a German camp, conceived by the Nazi-German government and operated by Germans."

Poles have long complained that their victimization by the Nazis has been ignored. The issue was complicated by the fact that Poles were seen both as martyrs, since the Nazis labelled them "subhumans," and as victimizers because some were involved in anti-Semitic acts during and after World War II.

But not everyone agrees with the Polish government's request. Maram Stern, deputy secretary-general of the World Jewish Congress, accused Poland recently of trying to rewrite history with the proposed change.

Stern said that although the camp was built by Germany, everybody in the region knew of its existence, and workers were recruited from neighboring Polish villages.

This latter claim has been denied by the Polish government and some academics have refuted it.

An official with the Auschwitz museum criticized Stern's comments. "It is a pity that people from the World Jewish Congress, an organization whose name suggests that it represents the opinion of Jews living all over the world, say something which is totally absurd," said Karoslaw Mensfeld, a spokesperson for the State Museum of Auschwitz.

Israel Gutman, Yad Vashem's chief historian, said the name proposed by Warsaw "does not fully convey what really happened in this place.

"I appeal to the Polish government [that] the phrase 'site of the mass murder of Jews' be inserted into the camp's name," he wrote in a column for Poland's *Dziennik* newspaper last Friday.

Gutman's proposal was immediately attacked by the Polish historian Wladyslaw Bartoszewski, a former Auschwitz prisoner who favours the name change.

"Such a name would demand an additional commentary, because the version proposed by Gutman is not completely true," said Bartoszewski, a former foreign minister who was a member of the anti-Nazi resistance.

He noted that along with Jews, 22,000 Gypsies, 15,000 Soviet prisoners and 80,000 Polish Christians were murdered in Auschwitz, a fact no single name could possibly convey.

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Divestment backers challenge Anglican Church

By JONNY PAUL
Jerusalem Post

LONDON — Supporters of divestment are challenging the Church of England's Ethical Investment Advisory Group (EIAG) after it rejected the church's call to divest from firms whose products are used by Israel in the territories.

In February, the Church of England heeded calls from the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem for "morally responsible investment in the Palestinian occupied territories" and agreed to divest from companies, such as Caterpillar, "that profit from the illegal occupation."

Riah Abu al-Assal, Anglican bishop of Jerusalem, contested Israel's use of Caterpillar bulldozers to demolish Palestinian homes and, in a vote, the Church of England voted to divest.

But last month, the EIAG voted unanimously against the decision, saying it "could find no compelling evidence that Caterpillar is or has been complicit in human rights abuses."

Two recent initiatives have surfaced against the EIAG decision: the "Interfaith Group for Morally Responsible Investment" under the auspices of Rev. Stephen Sizer, and War On Want, a U.K. charity that has opposed the EIAG decision in writing to the Church of England Commissioners.

Sizer, the vicar of Virginia Water in Surrey, is an ardent pro-Palestinian campaigner and divestment advocate. Signatories to his letter to the EIAG include a number of pro-Palestinian, anti-Israel charities and non-governmental organizations and Jews from the pro-Palestinian and anti-Zionist camp.

His letter urges the Angican Church to "make morally responsible choices in our investments in Israel and Palestine."

Caterpillar products were used for "human rights abuses," Sizer said, asserting that, "at best, the Church of England is condoning these abuses and, at worst, is complicit [in them]." He urged the advisory group to "visit Palestine and see first-hand the devastation caused by the use of Caterpillar bulldozers by the Israeli military."

Sizer met last week with the Archbishop's assistant secretary for international, ecumenical and Anglican communion affairs, Rev. Anthony Ball, and the interfaith relations adviser for the Archbishop's Council of the Church, Rev. Guy Wilkinson.

Wilkinson minimized the meeting's importance in a letter to the co-ordinator of Anglicans for Israel, Simon McIlwaine. "The EIAG did not overturn the Church of England's decision on disinvestment, since there was no decision to overturn," he said.

The other effort to reverse the EIAG's decision is headed by War on Want, a charity formerly led by radical British MP George Galloway that is very active in anti-Israel activities. It collected 19 signatures from Christian, Jewish and human rights groups on the pro-Palestinian side of the divide for its letter to the Church of England Commissioners.

The letter said 60 per cent of Palestinians live in acute poverty, "[a number that] tripled in just over four years," and refers to "despair" and "suffering" caused by Israeli policies.

It cites the "separation wall" and house demolitions as sources of poverty and blames western governments for Hamas' victory in Palestinian elections.

War on Want has campaigned vigorously to suspend the Israel-EU trade deal and called for sanctions against Israel.

France denies visa to Hamas minister

BY HERB KEINON
Jerusalem Post

JERUSALEM — Israel is "very satisfied" France will not issue a visa to Palestinian Authority Planning Minister Samir Abu Eisha to attend a conference in Paris later this week, a senior Foreign Ministry official said Saturday night.

This is the second times in as many weeks that France has denied a visa to a Hamas representative to attend a conference on its soil, and the third time that Hamas representatives haven't been allowed into Europe in less than a month. Belgium denied a visa to a Hamas representative at the end of March.

Unlike the other two refusals, which were explained as due to "technical reasons," this was the first time that a European official came out and said that the visa was denied in line with European policy to cut off political contact with the Hamas-led PA.

While Jerusalem was pleased at the French position regarding Eisha, there was concern that Norway would be the first European country to grant a visa to Hamas members and allow a delegation to visit there in mid-May at the invitation of a pro-Palestinian NGO.

One official in Jerusalem said Norway has indicated it might grant the visas, but that Norwegian government representatives would not then meet with the delegation. The official said that while Norway is not a member of the European Union, it has said that it would abide by the decisions made by the EU regarding Hamas. Norway's decision whether to grant visas to the delegation would be a "test case" of this policy, he said.

Israel Briefs

Terror victims identified

The nine people killed in the suicide bombing in Tel Aviv on April 17 were identified. They were Philip Balhasan, 45, of Ashdod; Ariel Darhi, 31, of Bat Yam; Victor Erez, 60, of Givatayim; Benjamin Haputa, 47, of Lod; David Shaulov, 29, of Holon; Lily Yunes, 42, of Oranit; Marcelle Cohen, 75, from France; and Rosalia Basalia, 48, and Pirosca Boda 50, of Romania.

Scores of bombings foiled

Israel has foiled scores of Palestinian suicide bombings this year, the head of the Shin Bet security service said. Briefing the cabinet last week, Yuval Diskin said 88 attempted suicide bombings had been prevented since the beginning of the year, including about a dozen within an hour or two of the planned attacks.

Katsav addresses Iranians

President Moshe Katsav has warned the Iranian people that their radical regime, with its insistent drive for a nuclear capability, poses a grave danger to global peace and security and is leading them toward the abyss. In an interview with *the Jerusalem Post* ahead of Independence Day, the president sent a message to Iranians stressing that "Israel is not against the Iranian people," and that he himself has "great love for Persian culture, Persian history." The Iranian-born president said Iran enjoys oil revenues that could potentially ensure a high standard of living and quality of life for its people. But instead of using that money to alleviate poverty, distress, illiteracy and the other economic and social problems facing many of his citizens, Iran's "fanatical, extremist president" Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his regime are investing all of their resources in developing a nuclear capability

Iranian terrorists seek Brits

An Iranian terrorist group said it wants to recruit British Muslims for attacks in Israel. A spokesperson for the "Committee for the Commemoration of Martyrs of the Global Islamic Campaign" made the disclosure in comments to Britain's *Guardian* newspaper. "The first target is Israel. For us, that is the battlefield," Mohammad Samadi said. "All Jews are targets, whether military or civilian."

According to the daily, the terror group enjoys Iranian government backing. In 2003, two British Muslims carried out a suicide bombing in Tel Aviv, killing three Israelis. Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack, while Israeli officials said it was sponsored abroad. One of the bombers was linked to terrorists who carried out last year's suicide attacks on London's transit system.

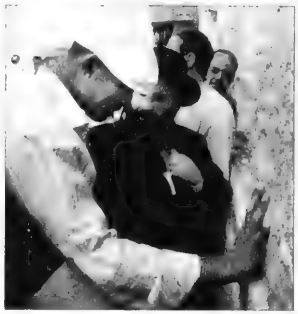
Senator says U.S. backs keeping key settlements

Former prime minister Ariel Sharon helped shape a new consensus in U.S. attitudes toward the settlements, to the point where there is now "solid bipartisan support" for Israel's retention of the major settlement blocs, according to U.S. Senator Joe Lieberman. In an interview with the *Jerusalem Post*, Lieberman also said the United States might be sympathetic to Israel's annexation of such areas, were interim Prime Minister Ehud Olmert to implement his plan to withdraw unilaterally to the route of the West Bank security barrier. "I think the prevailing opinion here, particularly now with Hamas having won the elections on the Palestinian side, [is] that the Israeli government will be justified in taking unilateral action to secure defensible borders," Lieberman said.

Disband Hezbollah: report

A report by envoy Terje Roed-Larsen as a followup to Security Council Resolution 1559, which called for Syrian forces to leave Lebanon, urges the Lebanese government to dismantle Hezbollah. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in the report that it's now also time for Syria to talk with Lebanon about exchanging embassies and marking the border between the two countries. The report urges Syria to play a positive role in helping to build Lebanon

- JTA and Jerusalem Post



THE SMITHS COME TO JERUSALEM

Actor Will Smith and his wife Jada Pinkett-Smith visited the Western Wall last week. Standing with them is Rabbi Shmuel Rabinovitz.

[Israel Sun photos]

August 15, 2006 be a part of history

In preparation for this summer's Canadian Nefesh B'Nefesh Aliyah Flight (Aug. 15th) NBN will be hosting several Pre-Aliyah events in Toronto in the month of May.

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Sunday, May 14th	**10:00am-12:00pm, 4:30-6:00pm**
Monday, May 15th	**9:00-11:00am, 3:00-5:00pm**
Tuesday, May 16th	**9:00-11:00am, 3:00-5:00pm**

* By appointment only. Please visit our website to schedule an appointment.

Sunday, May 14th
Nefesh B'Nefesh will be presenting at the IMP Israel Property Expo
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NBN presentation schedule at Expo:
12:00pm Retirement as a viable option in Israel
1:30pm Community options: finding the right community
3:30pm Retirement as a viable option in Israel

Monday, May 15th
"Lunch with NBN" 12:00-2:00pm
Location TBA
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Cafe Oleh: "Meat & Move" 7:00pm
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Tuesday, May 16th
"Lunch with NBN" 12:00-2:00pm
Location TBA
Join the staff of Nefesh B'Nefesh for an informal lunch and conversation

NBN Pre-Aliyah Seminar 7:30-10:00pm
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Arts & Travel

Artist Barry Oretsky is known for his high realism

By BARBARA SILVERSTEIN
Special to The CJN

It's been 45 years since Barry Oretsky made the fateful announcement few Jewish mothers ever want to hear.

At the age of 14, he declared that he was going to become an artist. He left the academic stream at Harbord Collegiate and transferred to the commercial art program at Central Technical School.

The Toronto-born Oretsky, 59, an acclaimed painter who was inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts last year, exhibits in major galleries across North America and in London, England. He recalls that, as a teenager, he was given no parental support for his artistic aspirations.

"When I chose to make the move, it was a stressful situation. I had to prove the validity of my choice. I had to prove art was my gift, and I had to do extremely well to remain in the art school in Central Tech."

Today, an Oretksy painting carries a hefty price tag, but collectors will have the opportunity to own a more affordable original work at his first ever photography exhibit. The show, titled "Aspects," is running at Gallery One at 121 Scollard St. until May 9.

Oretsky is known for his high realism. "I paint in the 19th-century manner of the Orientalist school of painting," a style of painting in which the image is often derived from photographic resources.

He says this painting technique should not be confused with photo realism, a less sophisticated replication of the image.

Photography allows the artist to hold on to an image, he explains. "If you don't transcribe it quickly, you'll lose the situation, because nothing is static."

His works – particularly his reflection images – are complex paintings. "The reflection imagery is physically and mentally challenging because of the complexity and length of time it takes to produce."

Artist Barry Oretsky takes a break in his studio.

Oretsky travels in Europe in search of the "perfect image," and a collection of the photographs resulting from these trips is on view in his current show.

He says he's been doing photography since 1970, but he never wanted to show this work. "I never wanted to confuse the issue. I was a painter. Photography was a means to an end, a part of the process. But people who saw my collection of images said, 'Why don't you show them?'"

He notes that it takes between 15 and 20 months to prepare for a major exhibition. "I'm always painting for the next show. It's exhibit or die, because you can disappear off the radar screen."

Oretsky has had a varied career in advertising and taught art in several schools in Toronto and in Israel since his graduation from Central Tech in 1965.

The following year, he won a full-year scholarship in post-graduate painting at St. Martins School of Fine Arts in London, Eng. He then went to Israel, where he worked on Kibbutz Maayan Baruch on the Lebanese border. He taught art at Tel Chai District Art School, and to this day, he maintains a close relationship with his "adopted kibbutz father," sculptor David Fine.

Between 1966 and 1972, Oretsky made several trips between Toronto and Israel and completed his military service in Israel. He also worked as a graphic artist at an Israeli advertising agency. He returned to Toronto and taught for three years.

In 1973, Oretsky made aliyah, arriving in Israel at the start of the Yom Kippur War. He left his young family at an absorption centre and rejoined his unit. The family subsequently settled outside Tel Aviv, where he again taught art and worked as a graphic artist for three years.

The family of four then returned to the Toronto area, where Oretsky headed the art department at Thornhill Secondary School for eight years. He continued to paint, but says he had little time to devote to his own art.

Oretsky remarried in 1987, and his new wife, Paula Perlmutar, encouraged him to give up his day job and paint full time.

Rehs Gallery, a well established dealer in New York City, took him on. "I was the only living realist painter they handled. I had a one-man show in 1989 in New York and things took off from there."

Since then, he has had shows in Toronto, Vancouver, London, Los Angeles and Palm Desert, and he's exhibited in major group shows.

The father of four says he does not live the traditional artist's life. "I live a Jewish family life. I've shlepped my kids to Bialik and CHAT and I paint on a schedule. I want to produce as much work as I can in my lifetime."

He says he feels very fortunate that he can devote his working life to painting. "To be full time for 18 years, it's been phenomenal. I have arrived at a level of proficiency I never dreamed I would arrive at."

To learn more about Oretsky's paintings, visit barryoretsky.com. For information about the photo exhibition, call 416-929-3103

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Arts & Travel

Comedian Myron Cohen still funny on DVD

By MARVIN GLASSMAN
Special to The CJN

"Lots of comedians wanted to be Myron Cohen, but they couldn't because he was unique," comedian Steve Allen says in introducing viewers to the late Myron Cohen (1902-86) on a DVD of Cohen's comedy routine of 1976.

Two one-hour DVDs – *On Location With Myron Cohen* and *Myron Cohen Revisited* – were released in Canada and the United States in March by Kultur. Both were originally American cable network HBO specials.

"Cohen's mastery at combining storytelling, a Yiddish dialect and facial expressions like a closed eye, a shrug, couldn't be duplicated. Bob Hope couldn't tell dialect jokes, neither could Jack Benny. Myron Cohen had this form of comedy as art. Nobody else can do it," Allen says.

Cohen's Yiddish dialect tales, mostly of Jews in New York from his generation, came from his many years of working in New York's garment industry as a salesman in a high-stress industry. Cohen told these stories as a sales ploy to sell his brands to prospective buyers, and the buyers, friends and family encouraged him to go into show business when he was 45 years old in 1947.

Cohen had success in nightclubs, in the Catskill Mountains and on the weekly *Ed Sullivan Show*, where he appeared 47 times (11 appearances short of the record 58 appearances Wayne and Shuster made on the show). He also appeared 10 times on Johnny Carson's late-night talk show.

Cohen's humour was based on linguistic misunderstandings and cultural quirks, but he never used his put-on Yiddish accent as a way of demeaning his Jewish heritage. "The stories I tell are true and uplifting. The jokes are only demeaning if you're trying to demean, and I will never do that," Cohen says in *Myron Cohen Revisited*.

Myron Cohen

Both DVDs feature Cohen at his best, alone with his audience for 60 minutes. The 1976 *On Location With Myron Cohen* was filmed in Warwick, R.I., and *Myron Cohen Revisited* was filmed in Sarasota, Fla., in 1978.

Cohen's best stories come from tales of life as a senior, life as a Jew, husband and wife tales, and jokes about sex, but not of the blue kind one hears at comedy clubs. Words alone don't do justice to Cohen's tales without his dialect and funny facial gestures, but here are four gems from the DVDs:

• A policeman comes to break up a fight between a young black man and an old Jewish man. The policeman asks what happened.

"This ole Jewish dude called me a black bastard," says the black man.

"Is this true?" asks the policeman.

The Jewish man replies, "Oy, officer, this man is a fine gentleman. I would never call him such a name. I don't know what got him mad. He asked me for directions to the Regency Hotel and I told him [in a Yiddish dialect], 'You're a black bast it.'" (If you're not laughing, the Jewish man meant to say, "You're a block passed it.")

• A man from Texas comes to Israel and tours the sites with an Israeli. "Y'all should come visit my home," the man from Texas says. "When I drive, it takes me 10 to 15 hours to go across all the land I own."

"I totally understand," the Israeli says. "You know I used to have a car that drove like that."

• A Jewish man and woman file for divorce after 40 years of marriage. She says to the judge [Yiddish dialect]: "I put up with this creep for 40 years. I vant him to leave me the same way he found me."

Judge: "That's impossible."

Woman: "Vat you mean? He found me as a widow and he should leave me the same way, as a widow."

Judge to woman: "I am on your side in the divorce. I award you an allowance of $1,000 per week plus an extra $100 per week for other expenses."

Husband: "That's really nice of you judge. You're a nice guy for doing this, and I will chip in $50 myself."

• A man buries $50,000 in his backyard behind his home. The next day, he finds his money is gone and notices a trail of footprints to his next door neighbour's house, an Arab, and confronts him.

"You better tell me where my money is or I will kill you with my gun," he tells the Arab.

"No speaking English," says the Arab.

The Arab has an Israeli friend visiting him, and the man says, "You better tell the Arab in his language to tell me where my money is or he is a dead man.

"The Israeli asks the Arab where the money is, and the Arab says, "I buried it near the cherry tree in your backyard."

The Israeli tells the man waving the gun, "You better kill him. He won't say where the money is."

On Location With Myron Cohen and *Myron Cohen Revisited* DVDs are on sale in retail stores and online at www.amazon.ca or other websites such as www.kultur.com. For further information, call Kultur at 732-229-2343.

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D YOAV SHAMIR
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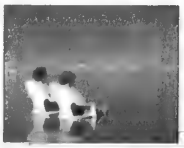
CANADIAN PREMIERE
On August 15th, 2005, the Israeli government ordered the removal of Jewish settlers from the Gaza Strip. Years of confrontation with Palestinians have earned the Israeli army a reputation for firmness, but for the first time its iron fist is turned on fellow Jews.
BLOOR CINEMA, APRIL 30 6:30 PM
ROM THEATRE, MAY 4, 3:45 PM

THE BEACH BOYS
D HONI HAMEIAGEL
82 MIN. ISRAEL
WORLD PREMIERE
For the past thirty years, avant garde artist Honi Hameiagel has filmed his friends hanging out and cruising for women on a beach in Tel Aviv. An engaging and unconventional portrait of masculinity, ethnicity and a life lived within the complex Israeli reality emerges.
ROM THEATRE, MAY 1, 7:00 PM
ISABEL BADER THEATRE, MAY 3 4:15 PM



THE CEMETERY CLUB
D TALI SHEMESH
90 MIN. ISRAEL
INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE
Every Saturday at 11 am, a group of elderly citizens meet on Mt Herzl, Israel's national cemetery, where they conduct a weekly parliament. Near the graves of Israel's founding fathers, in the shade of a tall pine tree, they discuss their nation's fate.
BLOOR CINEMA, APRIL 30, 1:00 PM
ROM THEATRE, MAY 1, 4:30 PM

ENCOUNTER POINT
D RONIT AVNI, JULIA BACHA
92 MIN. ISRAEL, OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES, USA
CANADIAN PREMIERE
An Israeli settler, a convicted Palestinian fighter, a bereaved Israeli mother and a wounded Palestinian ex-prisoner risk their lives to promote a nonviolent end to the conflict. A film about the everyday leaders within our midst.
AL GREEN THEATRE, MAY 4, 7:00 PM
ISABEL BADER THEATRE, MAY 7 4:30 PM

MARTYR STREET
D SHELLEY SAYWELL
90 MIN. CANADA
WORLD PREMIERE
Martyr Street in Hebron, once a bustling market - and one of the most dangerous streets in the world - is now desolate. Award-winning director Saywell talks with Palestinians and Israeli settlers, invoking the time of Abraham to situate today's conflict.
ROM THEATRE, APRIL 30, 9:15 PM
ROM THEATRE, MAY 7, 12:00 PM

RAISED TO BE HEROES
D JACK SILBERMAN
53 MIN. CANADA
WORLD PREMIERE
A look into the lives of a group of Israelis, from 18-year-old high school students to long-term officers, who refuse to serve in the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Presented with THEY CHOSE CHINA
AL GREEN THEATRE, APRIL 30, 6:15 PM
ROM THEATRE, MAY 3, 1:15 PM

SISAI
D DAVID GAVRO
56 MIN. ISRAEL
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE
In this intensely emotional cinematic journey, a 20-year-old Ethiopian immigrant, having lived with adoptive parents in Israel, returns to his homeland to meet his biological father. Presented with LA TRAVERSÉE (Spotlight on France)
INNIS TOWN HALL, MAY 3, 6:45 PM
INNIS TOWN HALL, MAY 6, 1:30 PM

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United 93 *sets high bar for future movies on 9/11*

Film recounts how passengers tried to overpower hijackers

By SHELDON KIRSHNER
Staff Reporter

Four commercial airliners were hijacked by Arab terrorists on that day of infamy on Sept. 11, 2001, when the world suddenly changed. One of the commandeered aircraft, United Airlines Flight 93, entered the realm of American mythology after passengers and crew tried to overpower the four hijackers in a valiant, yet futile, attempt to abort their suicide mission.

Flight 93 crashed in a field near Shanksville, Penn., killing all aboard. Two weeks ago, at the sentencing trial of 9/11 terrorist Zacarias Moussaoui, the heart-rending cockpit recording of the passengers' horrific ordeal was played in public for the first time.

Now, in *United 93*, a movie written and directed by Paul Greengrass, the drama is superbly recreated.

Billed as the first Hollywood film about Sept. 11, and scheduled to open in local theatres on April 28, it unfolds in real time, with a cast of unknown actors who turn in excellent performances.

More a docudrama than a straight feature film, *United 93* unreels against the gut-wrenching backdrop of related events during which hijackers crashed planes, like guided missiles, into the World Trade Center in Manhattan and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

Indeed, almost two-thirds of *United 93* dwells directly or peripherally on these incidents, which defined Sept. 11.

The film starts as the hijackers recite Islamic prayers in advance of their rendezvous with destiny. They are portrayed as tense young men who will stop at nothing to achieve martyrdom.

The scene shifts to Newark airport, where crew members indulge in idle chatter as they prepare for United Airlines flight 93's 5½-hour trip to San Francisco.

As the passengers settle in and the plane is readied for takeoff, the hijackers sit nervously in their seats.

Meanwhile, at the national air traffic control centre, another morning dawns. But within moments, ominous news filters in of a possible hijacking.

The mounting tension is palpable.

CNN, the cable news TV network, reports that a light plane has hit one of the two towers of the World Trade Center. Smoke billows from a tower. When flight controllers across the river in New Jersey subsequently witness an airliner crashing into the second building, they finally realize that the United States is experiencing a major terrorist incident.

Efforts to scramble U.S. fighter jets to intercept other possible intruding aircraft are stymied by bureaucratic delays and communication lapses, underlining the fact that the United States was patently unprepared for a catastrophe of this scale.

Amid these disasters on this sparkling late summer day, the United Airlines aircraft ascends. Passengers chat, look out the window, fiddle with laptops, eat breakfast.

It seems like a perfectly routine flight, except to the hijackers, who fidget and squirm.

Pandemonium breaks loose when they seize the plane in a torrent of Arabic and a fit of body lunges, hand motions and screams. The sheer terror that the passengers felt to the marrow of their bones is evoked by Greengrass in concise, masterful strokes.

In similar fashion, he captures the panic that overtakes the hijackers when they conclude that some of the passengers intend to foil their dastardly plot.

In *United 93*, Greengrass distills the horror and the heroism in sober and grim style. This is a strong, riveting film that has set the bar high for future movies about Sept. 11.

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Eye on Arts

By Bill Gladstone

FILM FEST EXPLORES BLACK-JEWISH MUSICAL CONNECTION

Toronto's 14th annual Jewish film festival, which unreels May 6 to 14 at the Bloor Cinema and Al Green Theatre, features some 27 feature films, 43 documentaries, 16 shorts and animated films and other cinematic offerings, making it the largest of more than 100 international Jewish film festivals by number of films shown.

Sarah Silverman

Headlining the nine-day festival is *Sarah Silverman: Jesus Is Magic* (May 6, 9:30 p.m.), featuring Silverman, a gutsy comedian presenting her one-woman show, consisting of a series of outrageous jokes, song parodies and racy comic sketches. "No subject is taboo… [off-colour] language and sexual content," the program warns.

For the old-fashioned and the scatalogically challenged, the festival's "Rhythm & Jews" thematic track of 12 musical films will likely seem much more melodious. The lead piece, *From Shtetl to Swing: A Musical Odyssey* (May 7, 3:15 p.m.) sets the tone. A French-made documentary from director **Fabienne Rousso-Lenoir**, it traces the birth of American music from its roots in the Yiddish tradition through to vaudeville, Tin Pan Alley, Broadway, Hollywood, the Big Band era and jazz.

Hosted by actor **Harvey Fierstein**, *From Shtetl to Swing* celebrates the contributions of **Irving Berlin**, **George Gershwin**, **Al Jolson**, **Sophie Tucker**, **Molly Picon**, **Eddie Cantor**, **Fanny Brice**, **the Marx Brothers**, **Benny Goodman**, **Artie Shaw** and other legendary talents

In this and other films in this appealing series, a key theme is the cross-pollination between immigrant Jewish and black music and culture. "The blending of Jewish and black musical traditions is actually the story of American popular music," said festival curator **Ellie Skrow**

Other offerings in the series include:

• *Porgy and Bess*: director **Trevor Nunn's** production of the Gershwin musical, the only version endorsed by the Gershwin family

• *Somewhere Over the Rainbow: Harold Arlen*: focusing on the life and career of the famed *Tin Pan Alley* composer.

• *Hitmakers: The Teens Who Stole Pop Music*: highlighting **Carole King**, **Neil Sedaka** and other Jewish songwriters of the "Brill building" era.

• *Godfathers and Sons*: a study of the legacy of Chicago's groundbreaking Chess Records.

• *Blue Note: A Story of Modern Jazz*: a musical tribute to the famed jazz label and its German-Jewish founders.

• *Immaculate Funk*: a look at producer **Jerry Wexler's** collaboration with **Ray Charles**, **Aretha Franklin**, **Etta James** and other musical greats.

• *Paul Robeson: Here I Stand*: a profile of the deep-voiced African-American singer-activist who became a symbol for Jews around the world.

• *Strange Fruit*: the story behind **Billie Holiday's** controversial ballad.

• *Brooklyn Babylon*: a love story between an Orthodox Jewish woman and a Rastafarian musician.

Accompanying the series is a panel discussion (Al Green Theatre, Nadal JCC, May 9, 8 p.m.) that focuses on the history and issues related to the synthesis of Jewish and African-American music from the 1880s to the present.

As usual, the festival presents a wealth of screenings and a number of free events. For details, please visit the website, www.tjff.com. Tickets may be ordered online or by phone, 416-324-9121.

For the first time, students with appropriate identification will be admitted free to any film or event five minutes before it starts, provided seats are available. "We've always made low-cost admission to students a priority, and now adding free rush seats, when available, is a logical next step," said **Helen Zukerman**, festival executive director and co-founder.

* * *

Auschwitz Trumpeter Remembered: Ken Shuldman, author of *Jazz Survivor: The Story of Louis Bannet, Horn Player of Auschwitz*, celebrates the life and legacy of the late musician and TV host, who lived in Toronto for more than three decades. Bannet "played for kings and queens, monsters and madmen, and somehow survived the hell of all hells to become a renowned bandleader and host of one of Canada's most beloved television shows," Shuldman recalled. Israel's Judaica Centre, 870 Eglinton Ave. W., Thursday, April 27, 7:30 p.m. Kosher refreshments, free admission, everybody welcome.

•Warsaw Ghetto Program: The Winchevsky Centre commemorates the 63rd anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising with a screening of the Canadian documentary *Out of the Fire*, a talk by survivor and resistance fighter **Faye Schulman** and a performance of the **Toronto Jewish Folk Choir**. Free admission. 585 Cranbrooke Ave., Sunday, April 30, 7:30 p.m. 416-789-5502

* * *

At the Galleries

• The Bat Mitzvah girls of Netivot HaTorah day school in Thornhill are creating a *shulchan* (table) cover as a commissioned project with artists **Melanie Siegel** and **Rochelle Meister Diamond**. Recycled fabrics embellished with gold threads are being used to depict the windows of Jerusalem. The work-in-progress goes on display, along with other works by Siegel, at the Mill Pond Gallery, Richmond Hill, April 30, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students and their families are invited to view the work and sew a button on it. After its completion, the *shulchan* cover goes to the Baycrest Terrace Synagogue.

• **The Willowdale Group of Artists** presents more than 90 watercolours, acrylics, oils and mixed media pictures in its 59th juried art show. North York Civic Centre, 5100 Yonge St. April 29 to May 12.

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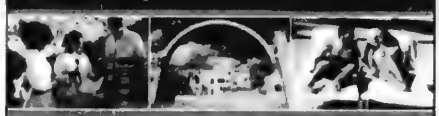

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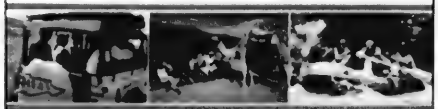

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Jonathan Safran Foer and September 11

By NORM RAVVIN
Special to The CJN

***Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer, Houghton Mifflin, 2005.**

It is difficult to approach the work of Jonathan Safran Foer without acknowledging his youth – he was born in 1977 – and the remarkable scope of his success. His first novel, *Everything is Illuminated* appeared in 2002, and rode the top of the *New York Times* bestseller list following raves from Joyce Carol Oates and Nathan Englander. It has been translated into more than 25 languages, and appeared as a film in 2005. *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close*, his second novel, was equally well received.

Norman Ravvin

Because of his youth, Foer has been feted as a wunderkind. In an appreciation of *Everything is Illuminated*, the respected novelist Francine Prose wrote that Foer has "his sights on higher-much higher – things than mere laughs, on a whole series of themes so weighty that any one of them would be enough to give considerable heft to an ordinary novel. A partial list of the book's concerns includes the importance of myths and names, the frailty of memory, the necessity of remembrance, the nature of love, the dangers of secrecy, the legacy of the Holocaust, the value of friendship ...and I'm not even mentioning a whole host of sub themes."

This description is apt for *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* as well, although it does not take up the legacy of the Holocaust. Its key theme is the effect of the destruction of the twin towers on New Yorkers in general, and on nine-year-old Oskar Schell in particular, whose father was killed in the disaster. Much of the novel's action spans a roughly one-year period, set between the first and second anniversaries of Sept. 11.

Although rebuilding at Ground Zero is stalled due to disagreements between developers, architects, the Port Authority, and the governor of New York, artistic work in response to Sept. 11 proceeds apace. In the one office tower completed at the site by developer Larry Silverstein, the large screen projection work of artist Jenny Holzer is prominent. A number of movies are due in the coming months, including a rendering of the events on board the flight that crashed in a Pennsylvania field, and an epic production about the fall of the towers by director Oliver Stone. Author Jay McInerney recently released *The Good Life*, a novel dealing with Sept. 11. But Foer was ahead of them all. His book can be read as a key document reflecting the way Americans will live with the events.

Though Francine Prose celebrates Foer's willingness to pack his books with a "series of themes so weighty that any one of them" could support a novel, not all readers will agree that this method succeeds.

Foer's second novel is not as free-wheeling as his first. Its narrative hangs on young Oskar's search for remnants and reminiscences of his father, which is motivated by a key found among the dead man's possessions. Because Oskar is one of those irrepressible, brainy youths we sometimes encounter in fiction about New York City, he embarks on great adventures in search of the key's meaning. He scours Central Park. He finds his way around the outer boroughs, and interviews a variety of sympathetic strangers in pursuit of a hoped-for link with his father.

In his ramblings, Oskar is a literary descendant of J.D. Salinger's smart, saintly youths in *The Catcher in the Rye*, *Franny and Zooey*, and the breakthrough stories *A Perfect Day for Bananafish* and *For Esme with Love and Squalor*. Salinger's genius came, in part, from his willingness to view sophisticated city life from the perspective of children and adolescents. Their vision, free of what *The Catcher in the Rye's* Holden Caulfield dubs phoniness, put American life at mid-century into remarkable focus. The outcome was a humourist's take on very serious themes, along with an opening, in adult literature, for the voice of youth.

Foer approaches his key event – the destruction of the twin towers – obliquely. Key motifs suggesting the events include the repetition of phone messages left by Oskar's father just before his death. "It's me again," one of them announces. "Are you there? Hello? Sorry if. It's getting a bit. Smoky. I was hoping you would." The word terrorist is used remarkably few times in the novel, and when the name Mohammed Atta abruptly appears, no direct link is made between the man and the disaster he brought about.

Foer's novel makes use of numerous illustrations to evoke Sept. 11. Their presence makes *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* a collaborative effort, the suggestion being that the work of photographers portraying the morning the towers were destroyed is somehow more telling and more intimate than anything that can be offered in prose. An image that re-appears many times depicts, on one side of the page, the familiar latticework of the towers' facade, while on the other side, a body falls limply across a white sky.

Oskar, desperate to recover some contact with his pre-Sept. 11 life, wonders if this falling body might be his father.

The outcome of Oskar's wanderings in New York's far-flung neighbourhoods is a knitting together of disparate city voices. With his precocious innocence, he coaxes stories, many related to Sept. 11, from nearly everyone he meets.

Alongside this action are more shadowy narrative strands. One of these portrays Oskar's grandmother's youth in prewar Dresden, as well as her own damaged marriage. Her life is shattered by the Allied bombing of Dresden (a provocative subtheme, but one that is only lightly worked out). These sections, told in the grandmother's voice, are disarmingly similar to those that depict Oskar. She, like Oskar, is a kind of naive savant, able to draw deep meaning from disaster. To further his musing about the willfulness of man to bring about catastrophe, Foer includes an excerpt from a Hiroshima survivor's testimony. There is no attribution in the novel regarding this section, and the reader must infer that it is Foer's own rendering of material he found in John Hersey's *Hiroshima*, or watched on documentary footage.

The effect of the many weighty themes in *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* is that everything is not illuminated. The novel's conclusion – though admittedly one reached for by a child narrator – is childish, as it proposes the wish that everything on the terrible morning might go backwards. There is a too-clever use of photos at the end of the book, which enacts this wish.

One wonders what J.D. Salinger, silent in his house in the New Hampshire woods, might think of Oskar Schell, as he bangs his tambourine, charms doormen, surfs the web, rides the subway out to the Bronx, all the while offering up his youthful precocity as a balm to a city torn by terrorism. It may all be, as Holden Caulfield might say, a little phony.

Norman Ravvin is chair of Concordia University's Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies. His books include the story collection, Sex, Skyscrapers and Standard Yiddish *and* A House of Words: Jewish Writing, Identity and Memory.

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Rabbi recommends making a living will

By CAROLYN BLACKMAN
Staff Reporter

Whether or not to continue a patient's treatment is one of a number of halachic issues related to end of life, says Rabbi Eliezer Breitowitz, rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva Darchei Torah.

Speaking at a recent panel discussion sponsored by Useful Ideas, a firm of financial security advisers, Rabbi Breitowitz said that one of the factors to take into consideration is the definition and time of death.

"Obviously, beyond this point there is no need to continue treatment, yet an issue arises when the person is still alive and the caregivers want to discontinue treatment. Halachah says we cannot actively do something to shorten life."

Halachah does not recognize the right to die, he said, "because a person is not considered a master of his own life. At best he is a trustee. It is not his prerogative to squander his life.

"On what basis do we make our decision? If the patient cannot decide himself, we [could] concoct the scenario in which he is committed to Halachah, yet his caregivers are not."

Time of death, said Rabbi Breitowitz, is the cessation of breathing, "but with the development of technology that can take over respiration, a person can be dead but still breathe with a machine."

In hospitals, he said, there is tremendous pressure put on families to withdraw life support. "It frees up equipment and it facilitates organ donation. They consider it the moral choice."

The time is coming when OHIP will refuse to administer care to patients who are brain dead, "and that will put additional pressure on families because the cost will be too much," he said.

Halachah does not describe a certain course when we talk about withholding treatment, he said, but there are situations when it is best not to initiate treatment.

This includes when a person is terminally ill and his life expectancy is less than one year, the underlying condition is irreversible, or else a person is in great pain and the only possible consequence of treating him would be to extend his life in a painful state, Rabbi Breitowitz said.

Judaism thus attempts to strike a balance between prolonging life and the recognition that life may become unbearably difficult and painful, he said.

A living will, said Rabbi Breitowitz, attempts to spell out in advance which treatments should be employed and which should not. If a person is unable to make his own decisions, [his proxy] needs advanced directive.

"By giving informed consent, nothing can be done to a person against his wishes, and specific instructions are given about what should be done under certain circumstances."

A proxy is obligated to follow instructions, said Rabbi Breitowitz, and in the absence of instructions, he has to figure out what the patient would have wanted.

He urged the group to fill out a [living will form] and "give thought to it. It is also important to distribute it to family or physicians – anyone who is in the position to make a decision. It should not be stashed away."

There are two different attitudes to Halachah, said Rabbi Breitowitz. "Some look at it as an obstacle course and others look at it as a path to an enriched and spiritual life.

"When you make a decision without guidance, imagine the doubt, fear and guilt that ultimately arises. Imagine [again] your peace of mind if you know you followed Halachah."

The beauty of Halachah, he said, is that it gives us the confidence that we did the right thing. A living will facilitates that.

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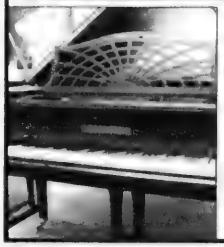
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Coast to Coast

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD: The Yorkminstrels theatre group is putting on *Oliver!*, based on the classic novel *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens, at the Leah Posluns Theatre for seven performances from April 22 to 30. Pictured are, from left, Emma Burke-Kleinman, Candice Barkin, Rachel Mervin (who are in the children's chorus), Micha Baltman (as Dodger), Shawn Molko (as Oliver) and Jeff Pybus (who plays Charlie and is also in the children's chorus). For tickets, call 416-291-0600.

Cutting off Hamas 'a no-brainer,' ex-envoy Norm Spector says

By DIANE KOVEN
Ottawa Correspondent

OTTAWA – Prime Minister Stephen Harper and his government did the right thing by refusing aid to the Hamas-led Palestinian Authority, says Norman Spector, a former Canadian ambassador to Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

As keynote speaker at the fourth annual Passover lunch sponsored by the Ottawa chapter of Canadian Friends of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Spector praised Harper for acting quickly – even ahead of U.S. President George W. Bush in withholding aid as long as Hamas refuses to recognize Israel and denounce terrorism.

"To me it was a no-brainer that the day that Hamas took over, we would cut our funding," Spector told the April 18 gathering at Agudath Israel Congregation.

"Whatever you think of the policy… it was rather remarkable to see Canada being the first to act… by getting out first, Harper showed he was not a Bush follower."

Rather than simply withholding aid, however, Spector said he would advocate using Canadian aid to the Palestinians to try to influence Hamas' behaviour.

"I accept the argument that we and other countries should accept the result of that election. As a society, democracy is one of our fundamental values," he said.

"For all this talk that Hamas was elected because of corruption, by and large there is not an understanding in Palestinian society that Israel has a legitimate right to exist, and that is why there is support for terrorism. The war we are in is an ideological war. It is a war of ideas and fundamentally that is what has to be changed if there is to be a change. I think we make a mistake by not constructively engaging them… in trying to use the pressure and all the leverage that western governments have to get Hamas to change their position."

Spector admitted, however, that "the odds are not great" Hamas will modify its approach.

But he criticized those who advocate cutting off all contact with the group.

"I think we should be finding some way to explain to Hamas what it is going to take to become an accepted and respected member of the international community, and even if there is just a one per cent chance of success, we should take that chance… you never know – we might just succeed," Spector said.

"We cannot foreclose any possible avenue to trying to resolve this conflict, and as good as it feels to say we have cut off all contact with them, it won't work."

Israel's ambassador to Canada, Alan Baker, also spoke to the gathering, "as a graduate of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and the father of a graduate of the Hebrew University and the husband of a spouse who, until a year-and-a-half ago, was a member of the staff of the Hebrew University."

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The CJN will not enter into any correspondence with contestants

Send your entry to: **"Golda's Balcony" Contest**, The Canadian Jewish News, 1500 Don Mills Road, Suite 205, North York, Ont. M3B 3K4 or fax to: 416-391-0949

Employees and family members of The CJN and The Elgin Theatre are not eligible to enter

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By MARVIN GLASSMAN
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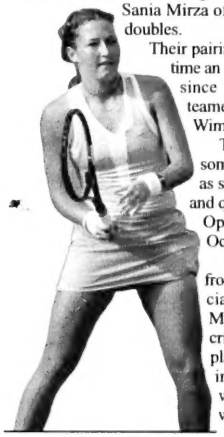

Shahar Peer
[Alese & Morton Pechter photo]

Their pairing in October marked the first time an Israeli paired up with a Muslim since Aismal Qureshi of Pakistan teamed with Israel's Amir Hadad at Wimbledon in 2002.

The Mirza-Peer team has posted some impressive results, finishing as semifinalists in the Japan Open and quarter-finalists at the Thailand Open in consecutive weeks in October 2005.

Peer has received much praise from fans, family and tennis officials in Israel for playing with Mirza, but Mirza has been widely criticized by Indian Muslims for playing with Peer. Despite angering many Muslims by teaming with an Israeli – as well as wearing a short skirt and even playing tennis at all – she is not dismayed.

"Shahar and I have become friends and nobody is going to come between our friendship as well as doubles partners," said Mirza, 19, following her first- round loss at the NASDAQ-100 Open in Key Biscayne. "I have been accustomed to being criticized by some and know that I am a role model to many girls in India, so I will not back away."

Pakistani tennis officials had threatened to ban Qureshi from playing in the Davis Cup because he had teamed with an Israeli, but Mirza faces no such pressure because India maintains diplomatic relations with Israel.

Nevertheless, in February, numerous threats while playing a tournament in Bangalore, India, may have affected her choice of doubles partner. According to a report in Israel, Mirza was quoted as saying, "It is best that Peer and I don't play together this time… There is no reason to arouse their [Muslims'] ire." Mirza went on to win the doubles title, while Peer finished as a doubles semifinalist.

"I want to emphasize that politics will not get in the way of my choice as a doubles partner. I like Shahar and know that I will play well with her. I was going to play doubles in Key Biscayne with her, but she selected another player," said Mirza.

Peer, who was born in Moakim, a settlement in the West Bank, is surprised at the headlines she and Mirza are making.

"I never like to mix sports with politics. Sania and I are just tennis players, not ambassadors [for] world peace. If people take pride in us playing together, that's great. I don't think of her as anything but a good friend and tennis player," said Peer following her first-round loss at the NASDAQ-100 Open.

Peer, 18, is in her first year in the Israeli army but has not traded her tennis racquet for a rifle. "I am a secretary to a colonel, not in combat, and he is my biggest fan playing tennis. The army has not limited my schedule in any way," she said.

Peer won her first pro tournament in Pattaya City, Thailand, in February. She's ranked 36th in the world – the highest among Jewish women players – while former Soviet resident Anna Smashnova is ranked 42nd. It is the first time in history two Israelis have been rated among the top 50 pro women players.

As Israelis, Peer and Smashnova face obstacles, as do the Israeli men's doubles team of Jonathan Erlich and Andy Ram, when pro tournaments are scheduled for Dubai, United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Both Arab nations ban anyone with an Israeli passport from entering the country.

None of the four players travelled to the Arab countries for events last February, nor do they have plans to do so in the future, despite the reassurances of tournament officials that special exemptions would be granted for the Israeli players.

Larry Scott, chief executive officer of the Women's Tennis Association, who is Jewish and a former player, said that "no player that is otherwise eligible to play at these tournaments should be forbidden to play or the tournaments would lose our sanction."

"I can't play there no matter what Scott says because I am in the army," said Peer. Although Smashnova feels strongly about playing in Arab nations, Erlich and Ram are considering it.

"We can't say we will never go there, but Jonathan and I have to think about this a great deal before agreeing to go there," said Ram. Erlich and Ram made headlines of their own by becoming the first Israelis to finish as semifinalists at the NASDAQ-100 Open.

Along with tournaments in Dubai and Qatar, the women's tennis circuit will stop in Tel Aviv later this year.

"I am definitely eager to play back home in October and look forward to being there," said Peer.

Barring injury, Canadian fans will see Peer and Smashnova compete in Montreal at the Rogers Cup, to be held Aug. 12 to 20. Fans in Toronto can see Erlich and Ram attempt to improve last year's finish as doubles finalists at the Rogers Cup, Aug. 5 to 13. For more information, visit www.tenniscanada.com.

CHAT wins prestigious YU hoops tourney

NEW YORK — The Community Hebrew Academy of Toronto (CHAT) made a little basketball history earlier when it became the first team from outside the United States to win Yeshiva University's (YU) Red Sarachek Basketball tournament.

CHAT defeated Frisch School of Paramus, N.J., 52-42 April 3 to claim the coveted high school championship.

The tournament took place at YU's Max Stern Athletic Center in Washington Heights, New York.

On its way to the ultimate victory, CHAT defeated last year's champion, Young Israel of Century City, one of two tournament teams from Los Angeles. The two players credited with CHAT's successful run in the tournament were guard/forward Kevin Treger and the team's 6-7 centre Jared Mintz, who finished the championship with a game-high 21 points.

Before CHAT's win, no team outside the United States had ever advanced to the championship game of the Sarachek Tournament, which began in 1992.

Other Canadian teams that have participated in the tournament in the past several years include Hebrew Academy of Montreal and Yeshivat Ohr Chaim of Toronto, both of which also qualified this year.

The 2006 tournament featured 18 Jewish high school basketball teams representing schools in Los Angeles, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, Memphis, and Boca Raton. YU's High School for Boys (Marsha Stern Talmudical Academy), Ramaz of Manhattan, Frisch, and North Shore Hebrew Academy of Long Island rounded out the New York-area contingent.

The annual Sarachek Basketball Tournament is named for YU's legendary men's college basketball coach, Bernard "Red" Sarachek, who died Nov. 25 at age 93. Sarachek was widely considered a basketball innovator and trailblazer.

Argo lineman Noah Cantor retires

Four-time Grey Cup winner Noah Cantor has announced his retirement from the Toronto Argonauts, bringing to an end a solid 11-year career in the Canadian Football League.

The defensive lineman said he was retiring to spend more time with his family in Vancouver.

"My children are getting older and my business has been growing and I need to focus my energy in those areas," Cantor said in a news release. "The last three years of football have been great. My time with the Argos has been the most fun I have had in my career because of my incredible coaches, the close bond I share with my teammates and the support of the owners, our fans and the entire organization. I have had an amazing 11-year career in this league and I know I will miss it. I will definitely continue to cheer on the Argos for years to come."

A native of Ottawa, Cantor broke into the CFL with the Argos in 1995 after attending Saint Mary's University. In his first three-year stint with the Boatmen, he won Grey Cups in 1996 and 1997. He joined the B.C. Lions in 1998, winning a third championship in 2000.

After five years in Vancouver, Cantor returned to Toronto in 2003 and won his last Grey Cup the next year while leading the club in quarterback sacks with 10. Cantor also finished with a career-high eight passes knocked down. He was rewarded as an East Division all-star and a CFL all-star.

Adam Rita, general manager and vice-president of football operations for the Argos, said he will miss his longtime friend.

"Noah has had a brilliant CFL career in both Toronto and B.C. I've known Noah for his entire career and feel honoured to have shared the past 11 seasons with him. We've been fortunate to have had a player of his abilities. Noah's locker room presence and his determination and desire on the field will be missed. He's moving on with his life now, and his future looks bright. On behalf of the entire Argonauts organization, I wish him the very best of luck."

Cantor owns and operates Vera's Burger Shack, a restaurant chain in Vancouver, where he lives with his wife Donna and their three children, Rachel, Maya and Wesley.

My dad: ahead of his time

By MICHAEL GORDON

I recently visited my father, who at 95 years of age still manages reasonably well in a Chicago retirement home, with lots of support from my sister.

The Senior Side of Life

I was impressed with how alert he was, and how well he communicated and responded to questions – humorously and with cogent answers. He watches movies and reads the newspaper each day, though his tendency to keep and scatter papers around his apartment causes some consternation for his housekeeper. Lately, he has required some assistance bathing and getting dressed, and he needs supervision with his medication. Other than that, he walks (assisted by a walker) and attends a daily lunch program run by the City of Oak Park that uses his retirement home as its dining room. My father enjoys the company and the subsidized price.

During my trip, we ate breakfast at one of his favourite pancake houses. As I watched him finish a hefty (American-size) omelette with all the trimmings, I mused that he must have done something right to be in such relatively good shape at his age. He did have a heart attack in his 60s and cardiac bypass surgery in his early 90s, but to get to 95 and be able to eat an omelette, he must have had some formula for successful aging, particularly since he smoked for many years, as did many of his generation.

I have memories of him breaking off pieces of uncooked broccoli and cauliflower and eating them– and hearing my mother ask how he could eat them raw. He also loved raw turnip and rutabaga, as well as almost every other uncooked vegetable (including potatoes, at times). These food preferences seemed weird in those days, long before the onset of the North American health food craze. I recall family trips from Brooklyn to the outer reaches of Long Island, which was primarily farmland at the time, to buy vegetables, which he nibbled on as we drove home, occasionally making satisfied comments as he tasted fresh cabbage or, best of all, a beefsteak or plum tomato.

My father also inadvertently started hmself on an exercise program, not for health reasons, but out of financial necessity – he acquired a local newspaper delivery business. He awakened early in all seasons and drove and ran around a 50-square-block area for 1½ to two hours each day delivering newspapers. On Sundays, the deliveries expanded to include about 300 to 400 Sunday *New York Times*, so it was not just running but weightlifting that kept him in shape.

During my high school years, I helped my father on Sundays, and when I got my driver's licence, I helped out on weekdays as well, although not every day, as I had some early morning classes and swimming practice. Each day, my father did the routine, driving up a street, stopping, then running with half a dozen rolled-up newspapers (the *New York Times* and *New York Daily News*) that he deftly tossed toward customers' front doors. Each paper would hit its target and slide down gently to where the homeowner could conveniently pick it up to read with the morning coffee.

So, my father was both an exercise maven and a nutrition guru without ever having read or heard of either concept, which had yet to appear in the popular media. But he exercised and ate well consistently for many years, and even in the face of his smoking history, these habits likely helped him reach his 95 years.

He still enjoys raw vegetables, though he's no longer able to run around. But he loves to read newspapers, and he's pretty good at getting about with his fancy, wheeled walker.

Sesame-Crusted Tilapia Fillets

Tilapia has a lean, white flesh, a firm texture and a sweet, mild flavour. The crispy, sesame seed crust lends a nuttiness that accents the fish without overpowering its delicate nature.

4 tilapia fillets
1 tblsp. soy sauce
1 tblsp. sesame oil
1/4 tsp. freshly ground pepper
6 tblsps. sesame seeds
1 tblsp. vegetable oil

Place fish in single layer in shallow baking dish. Drizzle with soy sauce and sesame oil; sprinkle with pepper. Let stand 10 minutes. Press sesame seeds onto both sides of fillets.

Heat vegetable oil in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add fish; cook 4 to 5 minutes or until golden brown and fish just begins to flake, turning once.

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Epi on Education

My problem with Jewish continuity

I have told the story before, but ... In the first difficult days of the Yom Kippur War, Jews started wearing a badge that said "Israel Must Live."

Seymour Epstein

An Israeli shaliach (emissary) who is also a personal friend asked me how I would feel if he wore a button that read "Epi Must Live."

"Sick," I answered.

That was the last time I spoke of Jewish survival.

"Jewish continuity" is a survivalist slogan. A few years back, well-meaning people turned the phrase into a veritable campaign for Jewish education. Jewish education, though, has never been about mere survival. It's all about creative growth and development.

As we find ourselves in the shivah days between Yom Hashoah, Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha'atzmaut, we must remember that both in the catastrophe of the Nazi Holocaust and in the Zionist revolution that created the Jewish state, we see the evidence of Jewish creativity, imagination, pride and courage.

In the horrific years of World War II, wherever there was an opportunity for some form of resistance – spiritual or militant, passive or overt – Jews, who acted not for survival or continuity, resisted for the sake of Jewish greatness. Indeed, there were sad times when the survivalists differed forcefully with the militants on this very issue.

Israel was not created by minimalist survival thinking, nor by Jews who were satisfied to continue the status quo of the Jewish people. It took innovative thought and creative imagining to establish political and cultural Zionism as a mainstream direction for the Jewish people. And it took force, born of pride and courage.

Forget about the Jewish problem for a moment and think about education in general. It cannot be merely about continuity, or we will be dooming our grandchildren to a world like ours, full of hate, war, and ecological disaster.

Education in general, and Jewish education specifically, is based on the premise that the world we live in can be enhanced and that it is our responsibility to do so – not by survivalist continuity, but rather by creativity, innovation and personal growth.

Epi (Seymour Epstein) is the vice-president of Jewish Education at UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Trusting my inner student

By AVRUM ROSENSWEIG

I once met a very gifted man who stopped playing piano after 25 years because he said he'd had enough of it. I couldn't understand how someone could stifle his creativity just like that.

URBAN WRITER

About a year ago, after four years of painting, I stopped as well – just like that. Within that 48-month period, I had painted more than 50 pictures including one of a cousin who perished in the Holocaust and another of a tallit with Jewish letters in the background floating up to the sky.

I was different than the piano man, however, because I wasn't bored nor was I uninterested in learning more brushstroke techniques or more about colour to create light and shadows. I hadn't had enough; I had just hit a creative wall.

I have never been much for teachers, choosing instead to learn things on my own. I chose this path because traditional education – lecturing and remembering – never worked well for me. I therefore believed it was possible to achieve real growth by figuring things out on my own and thought this was in sync with Leonardo da Vinci's words, "A painter ought to study universal Nature, and reason much within himself on all he sees." I pushed myself harder and harder to see things as I felt they really are and convert those images onto canvass.

Growing in this way worked well for me, at least for a while. I discovered that using my fingers to paint would create a bold expressionistic texture; that there was much grey in nature and dabs of it throughout a landscape would add more realism.

I read books on Rembrandt, van Gogh and Picasso. I even dabbled in the philosophy of art, reading *What Art Is* by Ayn Rand in a bid to determine if painting is just a sophisticated form of arts and crafts or indeed as Rand contends, "The indispensable medium for the communication of a moral idea." Was I spending my time on something that would bring me closer to truth or simply upping the crayon standard?

Eventually I hit a wall, or perhaps the wall hit me. As hard as I tried, I couldn't master the challenging technique of painting creases on a frayed Turkish shirt, and as time passed, I seemed to be losing focus, getting lost in layers of thought. I was spiralling backward, so that my animals looked less animated and my flowing water looked stagnant and detached from the shores surrounding it. But I contended, this was my downward drip, and insisted I preferred stymied progress to mimicking someone else's instruction.

I think I was mistaken, however, and never truly understood the teacher-student relationship. I didn't understand that an art teacher adept at his/her craft wouldn't paint the creases for me, as I feared, but would instead encourage me to look closer at the folds and pleats in Renoir's fashionable Pri Madonna in *The Parisian* or Alfred Sisley's water in *Flood at Port-Marly*, and subtly promote my wonderment so that it translated into self-actualization. I missed the fact that instruction from someone else would enhance what lay within me, not detract from it.

I have since set up an easel in my study and a canvas seduces me every time I open the door. I am looking for an art teacher whom I will defiantly learn from, at least until I trust my inner student.

I once met a man who stopped pounding those ivory keys. I think he didn't want to be a student of that instrument and that it is possible for someone to decide they have learned enough. I don't believe that is the case with my art and me.

Avrum@veahavta.org SUDAN

MIMRAN & SHIFRIN

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